



Statements and Speeches

No. 82/6

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND DISARMAMENT

A Statement by Ambassador for Disarmament A.R. Menzies, to the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence, Ottawa, February 3, 1982

Questions of security and disarmament are much in the minds of people the world over in these troubled times. Leaders of government and their officials, non-governmental organizations and ordinary citizens grapple with the vexing question of how best to build a better and more secure future in face of the serious threats to the peace that prevails.

The carnage of 1914-18 was said to be the war to end all wars. Twenty years later the world was plunged into darkness again. More than 100 wars have been fought in the developing countries since the Second World War, killing 25 million people and driving millions more into refugee camps. In Central Europe, about two million North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and Warsaw Pact troops armed with sophisticated conventional and nuclear weapons face each other. Additional risks are inherent in the spread of nuclear weapons technology to non-nuclear weapon states. Over \$500 billion was spent on armaments last year alone — money that is sorely needed for improved social welfare and economic development.

In the debate on foreign policy in the House last June, the Prime Minister began by saying that "our world has become unpredictable and unstable" and "more dangerous". He said that "there is a generalized condition of crisis expectation". He reminded the House that "all the great problems of the world are interrelated: the problems of East and West, North and South, of energy, nuclear proliferation, refugees, sporadic outbursts of violence and war — all of these form a complex of cause and effect".

A major cause of instability today is the strain in East-West relations, which has resulted in an erosion of that climate of confidence defined as *détente* in the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, signed by 35 heads of state or of government in Helsinki in 1975, of which Canada was a member. The Soviet arms build-up, the invasion of Afghanistan, the failure of the United States to ratify the SALT II Treaty [Strategic Arms Limitation Talks], and the excesses of martial law in Poland have all been contributory factors.

A significant source of instability lies in the irregularity of the cycle of armaments modernization in the major military powers. Prime Minister Trudeau spoke of this again in his speech in 1978 at the first Special Session. He said:
