



"In Pursuit of Peace" Theme of PM Address to Consultative Group

"In Pursuit of Peace" was the theme of the following speech made by Brian Mulroney to the Consultative Group on Disarmament and Arms Control in Ottawa on October 31.

"We often think of the pursuit of peace in terms of meetings and summits, negotiations and agreements. Yet these are instruments, not goals, means not ends. The desired object of our quest is the careful construction of a framework for enduring security — security for tomorrow, as well as today. And security for all, not simply for some.

In the absence of a stable and secure international environment, all our domestic achievements and pursuits, as well as our aspirations for the future, are put in jeopardy. Just as peace cannot endure without justice and prosperity, so too prosperity is meaningless in the absence of peace. The shadows of our nuclear age are deep and terrible, but we must not allow ourselves to become overwhelmed by them; numbed into fatalistic indifference. For the spectres that man creates, man can also dispel. The pursuit of peace leaves little time for counsels of despair.

Unfortunately, we know that the spectre of war will continue to haunt us until a

just peace is secured for all time, not just our time. Yet fear of the future must not be permitted to take root in the youth of today, who deserve nothing less than the opportunity to live and grow in an atmosphere of hope and security.

So I approach the pursuit of peace with determination, recognizing both the enormity of the task, and the requirement for action. To those who say it can't be done, I say it must be done. To those who say Canada can't do it alone, I say we can do it together. And to those who claim it is none of our business, I say the search for peace is everyone's business.

Shortly after assuming office, I said that Canada would work relentlessly to reduce tensions, to alleviate conflict, and to create the conditions for a general and lasting peace. I added then, and I repeat: 'the exercise of political will is nowhere more important than on this issue, on whose outcome the lives of our children and of humanity depend.'

At this juncture, with the world hoping that the coming weeks will see a triumph of just such political will, it is appropriate to elaborate on this theme. I would be remiss, however, if I did not first congratulate the members of the

Consultative Group on Disarmament and Arms Control Affairs for the interest, expertise and responsibility each of you brings to this complex agenda. Certainly the revitalization of the Consultative Group has enriched the quality of opinion and advice available to the Government in considering these critical issues.

I think it is appropriate that the Consultative Group's current meeting is devoted to the multilateral arms control forums where Canada has 'a seat at the table' and thus can have a direct impact on the course of events. In your discussions here I hope you will identify and put forward practical suggestions as to how Canada can contribute to progress in these areas.

Canada is not and shall not be neutral in the struggle between freedom and totalitarianism. We are a member of the Western Alliance and we are members out of choice, not circumstance. It is an Alliance which requires military commitment and political solidarity. Yet it is also an Alliance which relies on consultation and consensus. A healthy allied military effort would not survive in the absence of such consensus. But the right to be heard must constantly be earned. Canada earns that right.

The pursuit of arms control and disarmament has its place beside the defence effort, peacekeeping and conflict resolution. All are essential components of Canada's approach to international peace and security. We must vigorously pursue each of these if we are to maintain Canada's sovereignty and independence. And the world at large should recognize that arms control is a component of, not a substitute for, a healthy national security policy.

A wise and correct approach to security cannot ignore the virtues of arms control, just as arms control cannot ignore the requirements of national security. The search for either at the expense of the other is fruitless. And the search for both is imperative.



Prime Minister Brian Mulroney addressing Consultative Group on Disarmament and Arms Control Affairs on October 31.