

...more letters

Pass the SALT if you please

My Brent Bennett is his Feb. 11th letter to the *Gateway* states nuclear arms limitation is a 'relevant and worthy cause' and that politicians should be pressured in all countries to act on this issue. I agree on the above two points, however, the rest of his letter leaves much to be desired.

If the Pentagon is not plunged on the path towards nuclear war then why is the Pentagon going full steam ahead with the deployment of offensive nuclear weapons?

Why is Reagan speaking of the feasibility of a limited nuclear war, a nuclear war that would be intended to be fought mostly in Europe at a cost of 20-30 million US lives (leaving aside the hundreds of millions dead in other countries)?

More specifically the USA is now, right now, going ahead with plans of the deployment of Pershing II and cruise missiles in W. Germany, a move that would reduce the warning time the Soviet Union has from 30 minutes to 4 minutes. The Soviet Union will no doubt install similar missiles in Cuba as a counter balance.

The question is why is the USA escalating the nuclear arms race? Why has Reagan set into motion the most gargantuan struggle for arms superiority the world has ever seen?

Also, I am accused of taking an anti-American stance. I am taking a stance against today's American government viz Reagan, Haig and Weinberger who are headlong on the path for nuclear war. They intend to win it at a cost of '20-30' million US lives. Who is anti-American? Nuclear war would be bad for everyone involved: Canadians, Americans, Soviets or anyone.

The nuclear arms race is not something that can be stopped over-night. It will not be stopped by one act or one petition. But it will be slowed, halted and reversed by successive Strategic Arms Limitation talks and that starts with the USA signing its half of the SALT II agreement.

Since the very first stage of the SALT talks control over the fulfilment of obligations stemming from the AOMS treaty and the Interim Agreement was carried out successfully by satellite, radar and other equipment. This equipment possessed by both sides is capable of obtaining data necessary for verifying the other sides observance of its commitments. It should also be remembered that these means are being constantly improved and made more precise.

Along with the principle of equal security, verification by national technical means has formed the basis of SALT talks.

The SALT II interconnects with SALT III in that it throws bridges over to the next treaty. This is another merit for the SALT II treaty. A new third round of SALT talks will begin once SALT II enters force.

Both sides are not smiling and shaking hands as Brent Bennett implies. The Pentagon has refused to follow the Soviet Union in signing the SALT II agreement. Not only that but the Pentagon has put the men whose idea it was to scuttle the SALT II talks in charge of future nuclear arms limitation talks.

Politicians must be pressured for nuclear disarmament. One of the best ways to ensure that Canadian politicians act is to pressure them through a Canada wide petition.

The Canadian Peace Council petition entitled *Peace is Everyone's Business* urges the Canadian government to press the United States for an early signing of a Strategic Arms Limitation treaty; to start talks on limitation of medium-range nuclear weapons, and for actively supporting the convening of a European Conference on Military Detente and Disarmament in Europe, since it is the world's most heavily armed area.

John Sharon
Eng III

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