

intrusive. The price of a treaty, in human endeavour, in self-limitations on sovereignty and in resources will be substantial. But experience shows that the cost of failing will be far greater.

In the meantime, there is a need for national self-restraint. It is of great concern to my Government that the spread of chemical weapons has continued and that they have again been used. We considered it a necessary and logical consequence of our policy on chemical weapons to ensure that Canadian industry not contribute, even inadvertently, to any use of chemical weapons. We hope others will do the same.

There is no doubt that there is a collective international desire for a comprehensive ban on chemical weapons. This is demonstrated each year at the United Nations General Assembly through a consensus resolution which Canada and Poland, among others, sponsor. This issue concerns not only 40 States negotiating a chemical weapons convention in the Conference on Disarmament, but also the world at large.

The Conference on Disarmament certainly derives strength from such a consensus, as it seeks to conclude a treaty of great complexity and unparalleled scope. Clearly, the speed with which today's Conference has been convened and the international response to it are cause for optimism about the future.

Mr. President, the elimination of chemical weapons from the face of the earth is not merely a pragmatic necessity. More than a common sense assessment of our security interests is involved. The issue touches on our sense of ourselves as human beings. We know that, individually and collectively, we are susceptible to insecurities, fears and animosities. This is a reality. Surely, it is the responsibility of governments to seek to limit our capability to inflict abhorrent cruelties and punishments on each other. Chemical weapons use, inevitably involving civilian as well as military victims, only provokes revulsion. Chemical weapons must be banned. We owe our citizens no less. Let us get on with the task." ■

Beatty Acts on Barton Report

The Honourable Perrin Beatty, Minister of National Defence, announced January 25, 1989 that he has accepted all 16 recommendations made by William H. Barton in a comprehensive review of research, development and training in chemical and biological (CB) self-defence within the Department of National Defence (DND) and the Canadian Forces.

Beatty also announced that he will be inviting representatives of the Soviet Union to Canada to tour our chemical research facility.

The aim of the Barton report, undertaken in July 1988, was to ensure that the Canadian Government's policy of maintaining only a self-defence capability with regard to CB agents is fully respected and that all CB self-defence activities in Canada are conducted in a professional manner, consistent with environmental and health regulations, and posing no threat whatsoever to public health and safety.

The Barton report concluded that all research, development and training activities in CB defence undertaken by DND are for purposes of self-defence, and that this is the only prudent option open consistent with the international obligations undertaken by the government.

The review gives the CB self-defence programme a clean bill of health, but also lists 16 recommendations to improve the management, control and public understanding of the CB self-defence program.

"I have directed that all these recommendations, without exception, be implemented without delay," Mr. Beatty said. "Indeed, most of them have already been acted upon."

Eight recommendations regarding Defence Research Establishment Suffield, including safety procedures and physical security arrangements, are cur-

rently being implemented and most will be in place by spring. Mr. Beatty has announced this will mean all outdoor testing at Suffield will be subject to the provisions of the new Canadian Environmental Protection Act, and DND will continue to comply with the Federal Environmental Assessment and Review Process. Full environmental audits will be carried out this summer at the Defence Research Establishments in Suffield and Ottawa.

As well, Mr. Beatty has directed that a large-scale containment facility be constructed at Suffield to further reduce the requirement for outdoor tests using chemical agents.

The Barton report notes that Suffield has, for many years, been a storage site for old chemical agents and that about 18 tons of chemicals are awaiting destruction. A disposal operation which began after World War II has been given new impetus and should take about three years to complete.

Mr. Beatty announced that in the interest of an open disarmament dialogue he will be inviting officials of the Government of the Soviet Union to visit Suffield. The purpose of the visit would be to allow them to view the facilities, observe the chemical agent destruction process Canada has been using and share information on related technical issues.

Canada long ago renounced the possession of chemical weapons and is fully and actively committed to the goal of a global ban on chemical weapons.

"At the Battle of Ypres in 1915, Canadian soldiers were among the first in the world to suffer and die from the use of poison gas in war," said Mr. Beatty. "As a country with forces committed to collective defence as well as international peacekeeping operations, we must ensure that our soldiers and peacekeepers can operate safely and effectively anywhere in the world. We owe them no less." ■