

Another dimension of our security policy is our commitment to the deterrence of war through the collective security arrangements of NATO and NORAD. As a member of the NATO Alliance, committed to the defence of Europe, we shared the concern of our partners over the Soviet deployment, beginning in 1977, of the SS 20 missile. We regarded this as a destabilizing move, one that threatened a well-established balance of forces in Europe and posed a direct threat to the security of our allies and ourselves.

Accordingly, in December 1979, the NATO members, including Canada, took what has become known as the 'two track' decision to counter this Soviet threat: to deploy Pershing II missiles and ground-launched cruise missiles in Europe, beginning in 1983; and to begin negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States to limit land-based intermediate range missile systems on both sides.

Consistent with Canada's support for the 'two track' decision has been the negotiation of a framework agreement with the United States concerning the use of Canadian facilities and airspace for the testing and evaluation of US defence systems. Separate agreements would have to be negotiated for the testing of each system. Among the systems that could be tested is the guidance system for unarmed cruise missiles.

None of these separate agreements has yet been worked out, and Canada has the right to refuse any testing proposal. Each testing arrangement would be subject to Canadian control at every step of the process.

I have gone into the 'two track' decision at some length because it has been a matter of considerable discussion in Canada in recent months. And, in my view, a vigorous public debate on matters of international security is something positive. It expresses the deep-seated commitment on the part of the Canadian people to peace and security. It reflects the difficult balance between those objectives.

But international peace and security can be endangered by regional conflict as well as by direct confrontation between the super powers. It is partly for this reason that the the Arab/Israeli dispute remains an issue of the highest concern to the Government of Canada. Canadian policy on this question is both balanced and evolving with events. Let me highlight some of our particular concerns.