

policy. Indeed, as an indispensable component of alliance cooperation, Canada has welcomed visits by allied nuclear powered warships, and allied warships which potentially carry nuclear weapons for more than two decades. What the Government has done today is to reaffirm the continuance of a long standing, safe and necessary policy.

The cornerstone of Canadian defence policy is to deter the use of force or coercion against Canada and Canadian interests, both at home and overseas. As Canada has a very large land mass with vast ocean approaches and only a relatively small population with limited resources for defence, this objective can only be met within the collective security framework provided by an alliance such as NATO, which relies on a mix of nuclear and conventional weapons to sustain its strategy of deterrence.

Notwithstanding the recent and most encouraging events which have taken place in the Soviet Union, including President Gorbachev's response to President Bush's initiative on tactical nuclear weapons, that country still has, and will continue to maintain, a