

national attributes, an attribute that has been recognized the world over.

[*English*]

I hope too, since the discussion we are having here today concerns the lives of our daughters and sons, of our grandchildren and in fact the future of mankind, that nobody in this House will try to transform such a difficult discussion into a partisan debate where one side will try to gain political advantage. Such an attitude would be irresponsible. It would be done at great cost to real progress toward nuclear arms reduction and to peace itself.

● (1150)

[*Translation*]

I note that today's motion refers to only one of three resolutions on a nuclear freeze that were presented in the first committee of the United Nations and voted upon on November 20 this year. One was presented by the Soviet Bloc, the second by India alone and the third resolution, the one before the House today, by a number of neutral and non-aligned countries, including Sweden and Mexico. For the time being, I would like to comment on the resolution presented by Sweden and Mexico, though of course many of my comments will be applicable to all three resolutions on a nuclear freeze.

Canada fully recognizes the fact that the freeze concept has a great symbolic value, since it expresses the desire of mankind to be free of the threat of nuclear war. The idea of stopping the nuclear arms race and reducing the enormous quantities of nuclear arms present in weapons arsenals is attractive because of its simplicity, and it is also a general objective that, I am sure, is shared by both nuclear and non-nuclear countries.

Let there be no doubt about Canada's position on the nuclear arms race. This Government, speaking for all Canadians, is firmly in favour of significant, balanced and verifiable reductions in nuclear arms levels throughout the world.

Many Canadians, including some of my own constituents, consider that the present level of nuclear armament is a threat to life on our planet. However, just making statements in favour of a nuclear freeze does not constitute a valid response to this threat. We prefer immediate resumption of negotiations on the reduction of nuclear arms. We have said many times, and I say it again today, that Canada wants the present dangerous levels to be reduced through immediate and unconditional resumption of negotiations on arms reduction.

That is why the Canadian Government finds it very encouraging that bilateral talks will soon be held by the United States and the Soviet Union in Geneva. We hope that subsequently there will be substantial negotiations between these two countries, without prior conditions being set, the aim being to reduce nuclear arsenals significantly, while at the same time considering both parties' legitimate desire for security and seeing to it that they both respect any agreements made to reduce nuclear arms levels.

### *Supply*

In his statement to the United Nations General Assembly, the Right Hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) made it clear that Canada would use its influence to reverse the direction of the arms race and reduce the threat of nuclear devastation. This objective will be an ongoing priority of Canada's foreign policy. The Secretary of State for External Affairs went on to enumerate a number of practical, concrete and realistic initiatives in the area of arms control that would help achieve that objective. These initiatives included achieving further progress towards a complete test ban treaty, preparations for a successful conference on the Non-proliferation Treaty, which will be held next year with a view to preventing horizontal proliferation of nuclear arms, and the conclusion of an agreement on mutual and balanced reduction of conventional forces in Europe, which will reduce the threat of nuclear escalation. We feel that all these measures are practical and realistic ways of avoiding the threat of nuclear war.

I would like to repeat that a nuclear freeze, as requested at the United Nations, is neither a realistic nor a practical way of controlling armament and disarmament. Canada sees major deficiencies and serious shortcomings in all three nuclear freeze resolutions that were presented recently at the United Nations.

I would like to elaborate on our serious doubts about the practical aspects of the resolution presented by Sweden and Mexico. All agreements on arms control must reinforce mutual security if they are to achieve their basic goal. That will not be the case if present imbalances are maintained in the European theater, as provided in the freeze proposals. It is exactly because of these imbalances and the absence of an arms control agreement that we support NATO's two-track policy.

This policy is incompatible with the freeze concept. It presupposes the deployment of medium-range nuclear forces, which, however, could be withdrawn at the appropriate time.

The resolution presented by Sweden and Mexico asks for a ban on all further deployment of nuclear weapons and of their delivery vehicles. For us to agree with this resolution would be to perpetuate the present dangerous imbalance in Europe, without the assurance that this imbalance would one day be corrected. In fact, it would mean rewarding the Soviet Union for having destroyed the balance for its own benefit by installing SS-20 missiles and for having broken off subsequent negotiations on this type of missiles.

[*English*]

Canada shares the position of its partners in NATO. Canada knows that it is this alliance which is responsible for the relative peace which Europe has known for nearly 40 years.

[*Translation*]

A global freeze like the one being requested would also have the effect of sealing in the destabilizing components of the