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No. 67/22 **TOWARD THE CONTROL OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

Address by Mr. Donald S. MacDonald, Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, to the Canadian-American Assembly on Nuclear Weapons, Scarborough (Ontario), June 18, 1967.

This Assembly has been a very useful sequel to the International Assembly held almost exactly a year ago in this place. While our terms of reference have been more limited, emphasizing the continental as opposed to the global aspects of last year's seminar, they are nonetheless pertinent and topical. The Canadian Institute of International Affairs and the American Assembly deserve special commendation for the imagination, persistence and expedition with which they have pursued the issues of nuclear-arms control and have enabled us to apply the knowledge and experience gained last year to issues which affect our two countries at this very critical juncture.

I think Canadian and American observers of the arms-control scene too often jump to the conclusion that, because they share one continent, a common culture, similar broad political interests and a common approach to defence through two important alliances, Canada and the United States take an identical approach to questions of nuclear-arms control. It is true we strike a very similar posture on most fundamental strategic and political issues. However, there are important differences of emphasis of which you will, I am sure, be well aware. These differences are also apparent in the way we each tend to look at specific arms-control measures.

Similarities of Approach

It is probably fair to say that both Canada and the United States agree that nuclear-arms control can and should contribute to the reduction of international tension. Neither is so naive, however, as to believe that nuclear-arms control or disarmament can be achieved overnight in a dramatic sweeping gesture. Rather we both maintain that it can be achieved only by careful, gradual and systematic steps. Since, in the final analysis, military confrontation is only symptomatic of underlying political conflict, we should not dispute the proposition that a resolution of outstanding international political issues is more fundamental to disengagement and détente than agreement on specific measures of arms control and disarmament. Nor should we question the proposition that our mutual security rests on a balance of military power, which it would be

foolhardy to disturb pending the evolution of more effective machinery for maintaining international order and settling international disputes. Our confidence in our potential adversaries is not such that we should wish to dispense with appropriate measures of verification in arms-control and disarmament agreements. In general, I think it can be said that we both take an active and optimistic, though realistic and pragmatic, approach to problems of reducing and eliminating the possibilities of armed conflict.

Differences in Approach

But, as I have already suggested, there are important differences of emphasis in the Canadian and American approach to nuclear-arms control. These arise out of differences in our political institutions, in our economic strength, in the size and nature of the armed forces we maintain, in our philosophy of national power, and in our conception of our respective roles in the international community. I shall not attempt to analyze these differences in detail; they are, I think, self-evident to anyone who reflects on them. Rather, I shall attempt to show how they affect our way of looking at the important contemporary problem of how to control and restrict nuclear proliferation. Some time ago, a participant in the arms-control debate coined the terms "horizontal proliferation" and "vertical proliferation" to describe, respectively, the spread of nuclear weapons to non-nuclear states and the increase in size and capability of the nuclear arsenals of existing nuclear powers. Both are integral and inseparable aspects of the proliferation problem.

Non-Proliferation Treaty

Let me take the former -- horizontal proliferation. The first step by which most of us hope that further horizontal proliferation can be prevented is through a non-proliferation treaty. The Canadian Government has never veered from the line that, while a treaty must, by its very nature, discriminate against the non-nuclear signatories, it is the only rational alternative to a process -- the continued spread of nuclear weapons -- which could lead to the ultimate catastrophe of nuclear war. At the same time, however, we have been urging the nuclear powers to understand and to appreciate the sensitivities and demands of the non-nuclear world. We believe, with many other non-nuclear countries, that the non-proliferation treaty should not be regarded as an end in itself but rather should be viewed as an important first step to more comprehensive measures of nuclear-arms control. If the treaty is to stand any chance of general acceptance, it must be seen to be but an initial step leading towards a more promising future. We also wish to ensure that it reflects a fair balance of obligations as between nuclear and non-nuclear signatories.

Occaionally we hear spokesmen for the great powers -- and the United States is not altogether exempt -- argue that, since the objective of a treaty is to prevent further proliferation, which is clearly in the general interest, then the main obligations must be borne solely by the non-nuclear signatories. As a non-nuclear country, we like to remind such spokesmen that, unless the nuclear powers are prepared to accept some real obligations apart from the hardly onerous undertaking to refrain from giving away nuclear weapons, a

treaty may not be negotiable with key non-nuclear states. They may well refuse to accede until they have what they consider to be an appropriate *quid pro quo* or reciprocal obligation from the nuclear powers.

What sort of obligation do they have in mind? One that has been mentioned is the extension of security guarantees to exposed and insecure non-nuclear signatories by the nuclear powers. Such guarantees obviously imply commitments and risks, involving perhaps embarrassing and troublesome entanglements in causes and purposes to which a guarantor might not be especially sympathetic. But is it not true that such commitments and risks are inseparable from status as a great power? Surely this is part of the price which the nuclear powers must pay if their monopoly of nuclear weapons is to be maintained. Canada has found it necessary to reiterate, both in public and in private, that the alternative may well be the diffusion of control over nuclear weapons and the emergence of an unstable situation with worse consequences than would be entailed in the provision of acceptable guarantees.

Another obligation we should like to see is the acceptance of safeguards on nuclear fuel for peaceful purposes by the nuclear as well as non-nuclear signatories. It is logical enough for the nuclear powers to argue that, since the purpose of safeguards in a non-proliferation treaty is to prevent the clandestine production of nuclear weapons by non-nuclear signatories, safeguards need apply only to the latter. But, if it is correct, as the nuclear powers insist, that safeguards would in no way inhibit the peaceful nuclear activities or expose them to commercial espionage, why then do they reject such safeguards for themselves? An ardent supporter of the IAEA and its safeguards system, Canada has been advocating a non-discriminatory safeguards article in a treaty. I must also express my satisfaction at indications that at least some of the nuclear powers have become more receptive to the idea of accepting international safeguards on their own peaceful nuclear programmes.

A further obligation we are urging the nuclear powers to accept in conjunction with a non-proliferation treaty is a precise commitment to offer a nuclear explosive service for legitimate peaceful purposes to the non-nuclear states, which, as you know, will be asked to give up their right to conduct their own "peaceful" nuclear explosions. There is, understandably, some reluctance on the part of the nuclear powers to acknowledge more than the principle. They say it is impossible to lay down the detailed procedures before such a service becomes technically feasible, but this is small consolation to those non-nuclear states which genuinely feel that their right to the full and unfettered use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes is being unfairly restricted. We think the nuclear powers should go much farther than mere acceptance of the principle; they should demonstrate their intentions in this respect by undertaking a commitment elaborated in reasonable detail, even at the cost of future ability to dictate the precise terms under which the service will be offered. And I think such a commitment should specifically include a supervisory role for an international agency such as the IAEA or some similar body.

The discussion of peaceful nuclear explosions brings me now to the problem of "vertical proliferation". Non-nuclear states are almost unanimous in their demand that the nuclear powers should, in return for the renunciation

of the nuclear option by non-nuclear states, give a firm undertaking to embark upon specific measures of nuclear-arms control -- such as an agreement to reduce or at least to freeze their holdings of offensive and defensive nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles, a comprehensive test ban, and a cessation of the production of nuclear weapons. I am not suggesting that the nuclear powers consider measures which will, in the last analysis, disturb or upset the stability resulting from the present nuclear stalemate, but I am suggesting that, in the interests of maintaining that stability, they should be prepared to accept some reduction in strategic offensive forces. I should further suggest that United States-Soviet disagreement on what would be a reasonable and fair concession, carried to the point of frustrating the negotiation and general acceptance of a non-proliferation treaty, might, like some of the other issues I have already mentioned, do greater long-term harm to their own and everyone's security through the loss of the present opportunity to take the first and essential concrete step towards nuclear-arms control.

We are all aware of the "Plowshare" programme in the United States. We should probably not all agree -- in fact, I understand even the sponsors of the programme do not all agree -- on the economic benefits that "Plowshare" may yield in future. Indeed, while recognizing the possible future benefits of this programme, some of us are concerned about its effects on current attempts to curb nuclear proliferation. There is, I should suggest, evidence to support the view that the Plowshare programme tends to encourage non-nuclear states to want to develop this capability for themselves. There is increasing evidence to suggest that countries with a real nuclear potential will not easily accept the argument -- with which we in Canada agree -- that because nuclear bombs and peaceful nuclear explosions are indistinguishable, the present non-nuclear countries should surrender in perpetuity their access to a technology which holds promise of significant future benefit. What is the answer? We should suggest that the United States might be frank and specific about the undertakings they have already expressed in general terms by agreeing to a suitable article in the non-proliferation treaty. Moreover, the time may have come when the nuclear powers might consider whether an increasing role in the direction and management of the Plowshare programme might not be vested in the IAEA or some similar international body. Of course, this would be on the condition that the nuclear powers retain full control of the explosive technology involved.

On each of these points I have mentioned on the relation between horizontal and vertical proliferation and between obligations of the nuclear and non-nuclear signatories to a non-proliferation treaty, the Canadian position is not fully in accord with that of the United States. We feel that the United States and its nuclear colleagues should be prepared to go beyond the cautious commitments, hedged by an understandable concern for their own interests, which I might recall some non-nuclear states have labelled as the arrogance of power. As we are now witnessing around the world, great-power hegemony no longer works as it did in the nineteenth century; the current Middle Eastern crisis provides eloquent testimony to this. We do not maintain that such commitments need be part of a non-proliferation treaty. In fact, we are concerned lest the attachment of complicated conditions to a treaty make it impossible to negotiate at all. However, there is no reason why the nuclear powers could not undertake,

separate from but in association with a non-proliferation treaty, commitments which would make a real contribution to the prevention of further proliferation (horizontally and vertically) and to a consolidation of international stability.

Reference to "balance of obligations" and proliferation leads me to a separate but closely-related facet of the nuclear problem -- Ballistic Missile Defence. When the non-nuclear countries speak of mutual obligations, they are alluding to their insistence that the nuclear powers give evidence of a willingness to reduce their nuclear armouries -- or, at a minimum, agree not to enlarge them. The demand is that, if the nuclear-arms race cannot yet be reversed, it should at least be stopped. In this respect, deployment of Anti-Ballistic Missiles by the United States would be widely construed as a rejection of the expectations of many non-nuclear countries.

A year ago, at the first Scarborough conference on nuclear weapons, the Canadian Prime Minister discussed the ABM question and, without being categorical, cast doubt upon some of the arguments in favour of deploying this new weapons system. Since then, there have been significant developments in relation to this issue: there is substantial evidence of Soviet deployment of ABMs; there has been a widening of the public debate on ABMs in the U.S.A. and the West; there have been further advances in missile and related technology; tentative provision in the U.S. defence budget for some ABM production in the fiscal year 1967-68, and, possibly most important, we have witnessed an attempt by the United States to initiate a discussion of ABMs with the U.S.S.R. The Russians have suggested that the discussions should be broadened to include offensive and defensive strategic nuclear-weapons systems, and the United States has agreed to this. Thus the past year has provided us with considerable new information about the BMD issue. In these few minutes I want to set before you some tentative Canadian thoughts on this issue and to raise some questions.

First of all, it is probably quite clear from our deliberations here that we in Canada strongly support the United States initiative to interest the U.S.S.R. in discussing a moratorium on ABM deployment. We realize that the talks have scarcely begun and that the prospects for early agreement are not bright, but we think that the U.S.A. should continue to press the issue. We also appreciate that during this period of desultory and inconclusive diplomatic exchanges the U.S.S.R. has continued its deployment programme, but we do not believe that the U.S. deterrent, with its considerable superiority, is in immediate danger of losing its credibility. Finally, we realize that the Soviet Union has insisted that, in order to consider ABMs, the whole strategic balance must be taken into account; in our view, this demand need not be a negative consideration. In fact, we think that talks which encompass the whole strategic nuclear-weapons field might lead to the all-inclusive agreement for which the world has been waiting. Therefore we fully support the repeated refusal of the U.S. Administration to begin the deployment process until the possibilities of agreement with the Soviet Union have been exhausted.

But circumstances could change. Or, even in the existing situation, the U.S. Administration could begin to review its present stand against deployment. How would we in Canada view such a development? The question is hypothetical and as a politician I prefer not to hazard firm answers to hypothetical

questions. Still, in the context of our discussions here, in which ideas have been freely and personally exchanged among friends, I might venture some conditional answers to such questions. You will understand, I am sure, that my views are indicative only and certainly do not represent a final and firm official Canadian position.

There are two sides to the problem. The first can be considered primarily an American issue, with indirect implications for other countries. The second aspect concerns Canada and other countries more directly.

Taking the specifically U.S. aspects first, I should offer the following observations:

First, despite the undoubted technical improvements in ABMs in the recent past, the U.S. Administration has suggested quite convincingly that the so-called "cost-exchange ratio" between offensive and defensive weapons is unlikely to favour the defence, so that a considerably smaller amount of money spent on offensive weapons would offset any protection the U.S.S.R. might be thought to gain through deployment of a BMD system. Expressed in terms of anticipated casualties, a smaller expenditure on offensive weapons would return the level of casualties in a nuclear exchange to the figure expected before the defensive expenditure made by one side (the U.S.S.R.).

A second point concerns the extent of deployment. In this connection, we have heard a good deal about light and heavy defences, about postures A for 25 and B for 50 cities, about point-versus-area defences, and about defences against attacks from the U.S.S.R. or from China. While I agree that there are valid choices to be made between the various alternatives, I sometimes have the impression that the "light" posture for defence against China represents a compromise between no ABMs and a very costly "heavy" system. It is to be hoped that ABM deployment -- if there were to be one -- would be undertaken solely on the military and technical merits of the system, taking due account of the implication for other countries and for the international community as a whole, and would not be decided solely on the basis of some compromise between competing pressures within the United States.

Again, most supporters of ABMs seem to have conceded that deployment would not be effective in the sense of offering complete protection against the U.S.S.R. They believe, however, that the threat from Communist China could and should be countered. In answer to this assertion, I should argue that the Chinese missile threat is neither immediate nor assured. More important, however, lead times for deployment of ABMs are shorter than they would be for Chinese missile systems, so that a "wait-and-see" approach would scarcely endanger Western security.

Finally, even if the heaviest ABM system were deployed, assuming that the U.S.S.R. reacts, it appears doubtful that United States security would be greatly enhanced. This is a point which has been repeatedly made by President Johnson and Secretary McNamara, and I have heard little convincing argument to the contrary.

These have been some U.S. considerations, but they do not tell the whole story and I should like to go on to outline other issues which involve not only the U.S.A. but also Canada and the rest of the world. The first of these issues to be faced with ABM deployment would be the effect upon any movement toward détente between East and West. Although it has been argued that political developments are not dependent upon changes in nuclear-weapons systems, I should think that, in this case, the deployment of ABMs would signify, if not create, a less propitious environment for fruitful East-West contact.

Secondly, deployment would almost certainly interfere with developments in the arms-control field. In my view, this effect would be particularly evident if deployment were decided upon during the critical period of negotiation of the non-proliferation treaty. Countries which have been insisting on a "balance of obligations" between nuclear and non-nuclear powers would be disillusioned about the intention of the two super-powers seriously to take steps to hold the line on the acquisition of arms. In such circumstances, world-wide acceptance of a non-proliferation treaty would be seriously endangered.

To take another example: concern is felt in many quarters even now about the relation between continued underground nuclear testing and the desire to perfect ABM warheads. In the event of actual ABM deployment, I can visualize that a comprehensive test-ban would be even more difficult to achieve than it appears to be today. These are but two examples of several which could be cited in support of the idea that ABMs would be unhelpful in the movement toward arms control and disarmament.

Finally, there are two ways in which ABMs would be thought to have implications specifically for Canada. In the first place, we should have to assess how a new space-defence system would affect our own security. We share this continent with the U.S.A. and we could not ignore the fact that a substantial change was being introduced into the continental defence picture. Whether our response to deployment in the U.S.A. would be active or passive and, if the former, to what extent, is a problem which would have to be squarely faced. We could not afford -- and should not want -- to ignore such a development. The military and economic problems suggest that, for Canadians, ABM deployment would be an uninviting prospect, in national as well as international terms.

In conclusion, I should like to remind you of the theme of my remarks. It is that, though we adopt a similar broad fundamental approach to many international questions and to arms control and disarmament in particular, there are important differences of emphasis in this approach, as revealed in the way we look at the problem of nuclear proliferation. Being particularly close to the United States, we in Canada like to think we understand something of the point of view of the most powerful nation in the world. Being a non-nuclear middle power, we also like to think of ourselves as a representative of that large community of nations which are not normally privy to the councils of the great powers. As a friend and partner of the United States we do not hesitate to urge on it greater recognition of the view of the non-nuclear states and to make certain important concessions to their position, even if it means some

sacrifice of national prerogatives. Specifically, we should urge the United States to consider:

(1) The extension of credible security guarantees to non-nuclear states lying outside the umbrella of nuclear alliances;

(2) the acceptance of international safeguards on its own peaceful nuclear activities;

(3) the extension of peaceful nuclear-explosive services, genuinely under the supervision of some international agency;

(4) the undertaking of specific commitments to nuclear-arms control;

(5) continued efforts to reach agreement on ways of limiting and controlling strategic offensive and defensive nuclear-weapons systems.

The United States, in our experience, places great stock in the views and concerns of the smaller nations and is often among the first of the great powers to respond in a positive way to their legitimate demands. In the present circumstances, I believe it can set a compelling example to its colleagues in the "nuclear club".

For its part, Canada will waste no time or effort in urging its fellow non-nuclear states, some of which may be reluctant to make sacrifices in terms of their own options, influence and prestige, to take the difficult decisions which are the essential first step to the realization of an effective non-proliferation treaty.

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