



Statements and Speeches

No. 80/16

A SECURITY IMPERATIVE FOR THE EIGHTIES

A Speech by the Honourable Mark MacGuigan, Secretary of State for External Affairs, to the World Federalists of Canada, Winnipeg, Manitoba, June 13, 1980.

I am very pleased to be able to address this audience of world federalists, a movement which under various forms and in various countries, has been very active since the end of the Second World War as a result of that terrible experience. This is a very important kind of audience because it represents many of the idealists — but often and usually I think, very realistic idealists — in our country. I have made no secret of the fact since becoming Secretary of State for External Affairs that I am a world federalist and this had provoked quite a few reporters' questions who always profess to see some inconsistency between being a Canadian foreign minister and being a world federalist. It has also provoked some curious letters to newspapers and to me, some demanding to know what world federalism is. I think it is symbolically very important that those of us who do have the opportunity of being in the public eye, like my Parliamentary colleagues, they are able to be recognized as people having this kind of idealism. This is also an interesting occasion to speak on the subject of disarmament, because this year is the mid-point between the first and second Special Sessions of the United Nations on Disarmament and I think that makes it an appropriate moment to focus on Canada's priorities, particularly in this area of arms control and disarmament.

I realize that in recent months it has been fashionable to assume that arms control and disarmament efforts have come to a complete halt, and some do not even acknowledge the real achievements which have taken place over the past 20 years in the field of disarmament. But the government does not share this pessimism and I would, to indicate that, quote from this year's Speech from the Throne:

"Canada's imperative is clear. This government must continue its strategy to suffocate the deadly growth in the nuclear arsenals of the world. We must, and we will, actively co-operate in international efforts to negotiate agreements on verifiable means of arms control and disarmament, and seek to rally others to a cause that is no less than human survival on this planet."

Those were the words which the government wrote for Governor-General Schreyer to read in the Speech from the Throne. Now, some people in high places in recent months have expressed the view that war is imminent or inevitable and that the only appropriate measures to take in these circumstances are those that strengthen our defence capacity. The government doesn't accept this analysis, even if it is made by distinguished generals, or by whoever it may be made. I don't believe that these people have the pulse of the world, and I don't believe that they are reading the signs any better than ordinary people nor nearly so well as those of us who have a more basic optimism.

We do know of course that the world situation is dangerous — all the more so because any use of force for any aggressive purpose by a superpower is bound to adversely affect the climate of international relations. And of course, just at the turn of the year, we saw the most unfortunate and illegal Soviet invasion of Afghanistan which has poisoned the international atmosphere for the whole of this year. I think, though that despite the fact that this unfortunate event not only has occurred but is continuing, despite the fact that we have had to take a series of measures directed at making the Soviets at least pay a price for this invasion, such as the Olympic boycott such as the embargo on grains and the limitation of our commerce, the cutting off of many visits, including all official visits to the Soviet Union, and many other things which I could mention. Although we have had to take all of these steps — and I think they were very important to be taken — this does not imply that *détente* has wholly gone. But in my view, and in that of the government, *détente* rests on a firm foundation of deterrence. One of the reasons that we can have *détente* is that we are militarily prepared, and in the last week I said — and I received some criticism for this — that we are not likely to have a war in Europe. That is extremely unlikely. It is not because I believe that the Soviet Union is incapable of launching such a war or in some circumstances is unwilling. But we are sufficiently well prepared, through NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization) and in other ways in Europe, that war there is most unlikely. It is in the context of a strong deterrence that I believe we are able still to speak about and hope for *détente*.

Whatever the state of *détente*, though, East and West, in fact all countries, have a common interest in limiting the spread of arms and in reducing stockpiles and expenditures on arms, particularly nuclear arms. There has been in the past year some strengthening of NATO forces through the modernization of theatre nuclear weapons as they are called in Europe.

I know that not everyone here will be or is happy about that. In fact, I received a copy of your telegram to the then Secretary of State for External Affairs protesting this move some months ago. I must say that in my view, though, this modernization of weapons, and the modernization of weapons which Canada is undergoing, is fully justifiable. It is at a kind of threshold level of protection. In the case of those nuclear weapons, they are the same kind of nuclear weapons which the other side possesses and which they are not likely to give up unless there is an equal bargain to be struck on our side. If we don't have something to bargain with, there is no bargain.

Three foundations of peace

The government is convinced that real security rests on a three-cornered foundation. First, there is the foundation of deterrence — the capacity to deter war and, if deterrence fails, to defend ourselves. But the second element is equally important and it is about that I really want to talk this evening. That is arms control. I wanted to set the foundation of deterrence because I believe that it is on this that everything else can be built. But I don't think that it is nearly enough. The second theme of arms control is equally important. The third element of the foundation of peace are mechanisms and arrangements for the peaceful settlement of disputes. Dispute settlement is not at the same level of sophistication in the world, unfortunately, as it is within our states where we have courts that make decisions. In the world, where we have courts nations are not always willing to refer cases to them. The limitations of course are

greater than that because then there is no way of enforcing the judgment which an international court may give.

But of those three foundations of peace, the one I want to talk about primarily tonight is the element of arms control, although from time to time I will come back to the subject of deterrence.

Arms control

Because the dangers of nuclear war are real, the government attaches great importance to arms control and disarmament policy. Nuclear war is neither imminent nor inevitable. But it cannot be ruled out. No power wants general war. But global politics reflect increasingly the strains to peace which derive from resource imbalances, population pressures and technological and cultural change. Sometimes it results from sheer bad will or from the determination of some countries, such as Vietnam or the Soviet Union, to overrun and subjugate neighbouring countries. In these circumstances, we note that the countries are usually weak and not closely connected with other great powers, or are assumed not to have any strong links with countries which would protect them militarily. (In the case of Vietnam, however, that did involve them for a while at least in a conflict with China, which was potentially very serious for them.) But basically the risks of war are risks of inadvertent conflict caused either by miscalculation or by an escalation process that slips out of control.

If we add to these possibilities the inescapable advance of weapons modernization and the spread of the capacity to make nuclear weapons to more states or determined groups of individuals, we face a grim prospect. And we have no choice, we think, except on the one hand to continue to try to be prepared to deter any attack and, on the other hand, to control and reduce the weapons that are the greatest danger.

Continuing discussions

Despite the present poor climate of East-West relations, 1980 is a particularly active year in the field of arms control and disarmament. Talks between the superpowers on a test ban and on the use of chemical weapons are continuing. A review conference on the Biological Weapons Convention took place in March. The Second Review Conference on the Non-Proliferation Treaty will begin in August; and the United Nations Weapons Conference reconvenes in September. The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, which is scheduled to begin in Madrid in November, will be devoted, in part, to security issues. Finally, the negotiations on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions in Europe continue in Vienna.

In the Committee on Disarmament, where Canada is one of the 40 members, to date this year there have been potentially two significant developments. The first is the decision of China to take its seat on the Committee, so that all five nuclear powers are now present. The second is the establishment of four working groups to address such specific subjects as bans on chemical weapons and on radiological weapons. The Committee on Disarmament, as you know, is a negotiating body and its highest priority is a treaty to ban nuclear testing. It has not been able to move faster, however, than the nuclear weapons states will allow it to go. Unfortunately, as a result of the invasion of Afghanistan, progress in all of these negotiations will be slower than we would have otherwise anticipated. But we believe that they must be pursued with some sense of urgency. In the meantime, our priorities remain the same.

Priorities

Our first priority is to encourage the continuation of the SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty) process. The ratification of SALT II by the U.S. Senate will serve to encourage the resumption of the dialogue between the superpowers through SALT III which we hope for, with a view to agreeing on further limitations on strategic nuclear armaments and strengthening the stability of the nuclear balance. But of course we all know that SALT II is now stalled in the U.S. Senate, like the Canadian fisheries treaty, although for different reasons. It is stalled there as a result of Afghanistan; the American Senate is understandably unwilling to ratify in the official terms of the Constitution to advise and consent — on the ratification of that agreement. And it is very hard to say when the atmosphere in the U.S. Senate will change. I can't say that the Senate is wrong in taking that position, and it is a understandable reaction when the other superpower is engaged in this military exercise. But it will be unfortunate if, as a result of the invasion, we do not in the relatively near future see the ratification of SALT II. I think it will be hard to see any progress at all in the realm of disarmament unless we are able to come to that step. Our second priority is to promote the realization of a comprehensive, multilateral treaty banning nuclear weapons tests.

Third, we will assist in preparing a convention to completely prohibit chemical weapons.

Fourth, we will promote the evolution of an effective non-proliferation regime based on the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Fifth, we will participate actively in negotiations to limit and reduce conventional forces.

Finally, we will be striving, step-by-step, to ultimately achieve general and complete disarmament, consistent with the legitimate security needs of states.

We do have legitimate interests in these talks. We don't always have direct involvement because we don't ourselves have nuclear weapons. Nevertheless, because of our general interest, we are certainly very much involved in the general discussion involving all of these issues. Certainly a nuclear war will involve Canada very directly.

Nuclear safeguards

I want to talk briefly about a number of areas of policies. One of these is the proliferation of nuclear weapons. We are among the most active countries in attempting to reconcile the two objectives of the non-proliferation regime which are: first, to ensure access to peaceful use of atomic energy, especially to developing countries, basically to the whole world; secondly, to apply a system of safeguards which minimizes the spread of nuclear weapons and reduces the risk of nuclear war. Of course, there are dangers even in the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The risk is that the use of peaceful nuclear energy can in some circumstances be turned to a weapon use and this is a situation which has concerned us and some other countries very directly. Now there has been some suggestion recently that Canada has softened its position with respect to non-proliferation. That was based on some reports with respect to Argentina where we had taken a strong line against making atomic energy available, because of their attitude with respect to non-proliferation. We had made a

agreement with Argentina whereby they would pay us additional funds for the nuclear plant which has already been largely installed in Argentina. There was no new agreement involved. In fact, when the Argentinians raised with me the question of whether we would lower our standards in order to do further business with them, I told them quite straightforwardly that there was no possibility of that whatsoever, and that if that was what they wanted, they would not be able to purchase from us.

We are also in the process of strengthening our non-proliferation treaties with other countries. When Mr. Vance was in Ottawa, I was able to sign with him a treaty whereby the United States and Canada accepted further restraints in our use of nuclear technology and nuclear materials which we exchange from time to time.

The same was true of Japan. In that case, we had already signed the treaty, but one of the last acts of the Japanese Parliament before it dissolved for the election was to ratify the protocol which Japan had signed with us to upgrade these nuclear safeguards and we are now negotiating even with countries that we trust. We want to apply additional safeguards to everybody in the world. We can't pick and choose among countries, so we have to apply them to everybody.

We intend to place a great deal of stress on this issue in the months to come. We think that even at a time when it is more difficult than at other times to arrive at agreement on weapons, that we will be able to do it with respect to the non-proliferation of nuclear materials and technology.

Also, there are the mutual and balanced force reductions that are being discussed in Vienna. These are a good example of an arms-control activity in which Canada plays a direct role. Since 1973, NATO and the Warsaw Pact countries have been seeking agreement on ways to reduce the levels of the opposing forces in Central Europe. Although, we have not yet got agreement in these negotiations, both sides find the dialogue useful, and Canada certainly continues to believe that a reduction of forces in Europe by both NATO and Warsaw Pact countries would ease East-West tensions and improve confidence. Besides being important in itself, this could lead to further progress in arms control and disarmament.

The limitation of conventional arms transfers continues also to be a priority for Canada. Over the years we have implemented a restrictive policy on the export of military equipment, and this is a good example of an area in which Canada makes its own decisions. When we reflect on the large number of wars since 1945, all fought with conventional weapons, this obviously becomes an area requiring increased attention. Canada has urged greater involvement by the United Nations through — as a first step — the collection of information about conventional arms transfers through reporting by states. There is strong opposition to controlling the production and transfer of conventional weapons, but Canada will continue to press for greater openness and, subsequently, for agreed measures of control.

Canada is also contributing to current international negotiations and other disarmament work in other ways. We are still interested in pursuing the strategy of suffocation announced by the Prime Minister at the Special United Nations Session on

Conventional
arms policy

Disarmament in 1978. At that time he suggested that the international community should attempt to reach agreement on four measures which, taken together, would slow down and eventually stop the strategic nuclear arms race. These measures were a comprehensive test ban; a ban on the flight testing of new strategic delivery vehicles; a ban on the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes; and an agreement to limit and then progressively to reduce military spending on new strategic weapons systems. To date, the reaction of these proposals by the nuclear-weapon states has been less than enthusiastic. In particular, there is opposition to bans on the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes and, pending further progress in the SALT negotiations, on the flight testing of new strategic delivery vehicles. We agree that SALT must have priority, but we will not abandon our ideas and we intend to raise them again as often as we believe it appropriate.

We are also pressing the United States, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom to complete their negotiations on a comprehensive test ban treaty. We had hoped that a draft agreement might be reached before the Review Conference on the Non-Proliferation Treaty, but the current international situation has not made that possible. Meantime we are participating in work on the verification arrangements for a test ban.

Unfortunately, there is no evidence of willingness to slow down military spending on new strategic weapons systems, which is the fourth point of the strategy of suffocation. Unless we can reduce competition in new weapons technologies we will have little success in stopping the arms race as a whole.

But the ratification of SALT II and the beginning of negotiations on SALT III would be important indications that the development of new strategic weapons systems could be brought under control. These steps would indicate to the world that neither side wishes to create the impression of attempting to gain superiority, either by attacking the other in a first strike or by deliberate concealment of military capacities. Canada does not manufacture or purchase strategic weapons of any kind for her own use. Nor, in fact, do we have nuclear weapons. We are the only country really which has that capacity which has not taken advantage of it. We have to bear in mind the implications for control of new military equipment, and in each case ask two questions: is such equipment of a type which can be concealed easily? Does it threaten to upset the East-West military balance?

Disarmament studies

Canada is also contributing to United Nations studies on disarmament, especially those relating to the effects of nuclear weapons, confidence-building measures, and the relationship between disarmament and international development. For example the Department of External Affairs has funded two studies — one undertaken at l'Université Laval and the other at the University of Waterloo. The Laval study examines the impact that disarmament would have on the Canadian economy. The Waterloo study investigates the utilization of resources for military purposes in Canada and their impact on Canadian industry. Through contracts such as these as well as contributions to Canadian organizations concerned with arms control and disarmament, the Department has been encouraging research and stimulating public information activities in relation to arms control and disarmament. We have also

begun publication of a disarmament newsletter to help interested Canadians keep abreast of developments and activities in this field.

As Dr. Leddy knows, a consultative group of representatives of interested non-governmental organizations has met twice under the chairmanship of the Adviser on Disarmament and Arms Control Affairs. I hope the work of this group will lead to better mutual understanding of points of view and to practical measures of co-operation on education and research. The success of this consultative group leads me to think that the time may soon be ripe for the creation of an autonomous association for arms control and disarmament in Canada. Such an association could bring together experts and interested members of the public to analyze and evaluate the critical issues. We in government believe that it is important to raise the level of debate in Canada on these issues. Too often we have accepted without question the terms of the debate as it is conducted across the border or in Europe. In addition to focusing interest, such an association could also assist the government by providing reports and ideas on, for example, the negotiation of verifiable agreement — that is, realistic, practical and forceable agreements. Declaratory and vague proposals can lead to disillusionment and to the discrediting of the institutions which espouse them.

World federalists, I believe, have a special interest in pursuing measures which effectively strengthen the structure of international institutions, in particular the United Nations. As Secretary of State for External Affairs, I will follow this course of action and I look to non-governmental organizations to provide support. The recent decision of the government to appoint an Ambassador-at-Large for Disarmament testifies to our determination to encourage and seek arms control and disarmament agreements, as well as to our conviction that there will be continuing opportunities for constructive initiatives by Canada.

In summary, arms control and disarmament will be an important part of Canadian policy in the 1980s. We will continue to work with our allies and others to make negotiations successful; but we will also continue to reserve our right to speak out when we think that the pace is too slow or the agenda is too narrow. In this decade, even more than previously, arms control and disarmament is a security imperative. Canada is and will remain a member of NATO. Our security depends on co-operation within that alliance to prevent war. But at the same time, there is no doubt in my mind that the control and limitation of armaments, through negotiation, must be a vital ingredient of Western security policy.

In my view, not only is there no gulf between security and disarmament, but there is actually a continuity. I believe that we cannot have real security without having at the same time disarmament. Now I do not want to be misunderstood. What I'm speaking of is mutually-agreed disarmament. I believe that the arms race is better security — if we have to have an arms race — than unilateral disarmament. The powerlessness of the West in the Thirties led to war, just as surely and also with much worse consequences than the arms race did before 1914. But I think both of those are really second best choices. The best choice surely is mutually-agreed disarmament. I say that because of the cost of an armaments race, the expenditure of resources which is required in terms of the involvement of human lives, but most of all because of the

Mutually-
agreed
disarmament
best choice

instability which is inherent in a situation where nations are madly rushing to arm themselves with the latest weapons before somebody else or to catch-up with what the other person has done. That instability I think is not something which can be remedied by a further arms race, by continuing it or by escalating it. The only remedy for that kind of race is the agreement among countries to disarm.

Some might say that the alternatives are disarmament or destruction. I don't see the alternative as that stark. I see it rather as a choice between disarmament or insecurity. Always, of course, understanding that the disarmament that I mean is mutually-agreed disarmament. So that I see a real link between disarmament and security. Disarmament, I believe is a security imperative. We cannot have real security in the true and real sense of the word unless we have disarmament, unless we have that as a goal towards which we are progressing. The world cannot live on the point of constant frustration, constant instability, constant escalation of the arms race.

That I think is the choice that we have, the choice which is the path the government of Canada has taken. It's the path of seeking several things simultaneously, things which perhaps at first blush may not seem reconcilable. Of seeking at the same time the strength to protect ourselves but not feeling that we have to indulge in the latest search in weaponry and at the same time the search for disarmament. I would repeat that disarmament in our view must be by agreement. It must not be unilateral. I think that would be the worst possible choice. But I believe that there are enough similarly-minded countries in the world, and enough similarly-minded people in the world in all countries, that if we pursue this double goal with determination we will be able to increase very greatly the chances of world peace.

Canada has taken initiative before. We have been the country which has been most permanent in peacekeeping. And this really is another form of peacekeeping, this search for disarmament, and that will be one of the major goals of the government, because it is a goal without which we will all be the poorer, the world itself will be weaker and certainly without which the world would be permanently unstable. And I think that you can rest assured that there will be no flagging in our determination to press the countries of the world in the direction of as complete a disarmament as is possible at the present time. That is our goal and I hope that, with the assistance of groups such as yours, we can achieve that goal.