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ENDING THE ARMS RACE

Speech by the Honourable Paul Martin, Secretary of State for External Affairs, to the Amherstburg Rotary Club, Bob-lo Island, Ontario, August 31, 1967.

Just a week ago a draft non-proliferation treaty, designed to halt the further spread of nuclear weapons, was tabled in the Geneva disarmament talks. This long-awaited event is significant not only because we hope it will soon lead to the signing of a formal and universal agreement but also because it crystallizes so many of the central issues in the quest for disarmament.

Tonight I should like to discuss some of these issues with you:

The first, and most important, are the necessity and urgency of disarmament. The possible further spread of nuclear weapons and the measures which have been proposed for their control highlight the threat which modern armaments pose for humanity. It is true that we have achieved a precarious "balance of nuclear terror" in the world. The deterrent power of the West, and principally of the United States, has had the effect of restraining the Soviet Union from exerting political or military pressures arising from a large nuclear arsenal. But who is to say that the balance will not be upset? Or that an accident or miscalculation on either side will not cause a finger to be put on the nuclear trigger? Despite the so-called nuclear balance, we cannot afford to relax our efforts to control, and subsequently to eliminate, nuclear weapons as part of a comprehensive disarmament settlement.

The second important point illustrated by the tabling of the non-proliferation treaty is that we have made progress on the road to the ultimate objective of general and complete disarmament. Important advances have been made since the Second World War. For example, a treaty signed in 1959 made Antarctica a demilitarized zone. 1963 saw the conclusion of the partial test-ban treaty prohibiting nuclear explosions in outer space, under water or in the atmosphere. In recent years, the practice of applying safeguards on peaceful nuclear activities to ensure that they are not secretly being used for military purposes has been widely accepted. This year, the Outer Space Treaty barred nuclear weapons from that environment. Also in 1967, the independent states of Latin America and the Caribbean signed a treaty which is intended to create a nuclear-free zone in the area. And now the non-proliferation treaty. So we can say that we have succeeded in making some progress in controlling the weapons of war.

But it must be admitted that our achievements in arms control are not overly impressive when compared to the magnitude of the task, and this is the third facet of disarmament brought out by the tabling of the non-proliferation treaty. The proposed draft would not reduce the number of nuclear weapons in the world; it would only help to hold the line at the number of countries now possessing them. This would be a contribution to the control of arms, but it would not be disarmament. The same is true of all the examples which I listed a few moments ago. We have restricted weapons in some ways, but we have not really begun the enormous task of getting rid of these "engines of destruction" or even of reducing our arms expenditures.

The fourth point about disarmament which is brought home by the non-proliferation treaty is that, although disarmament measures undoubtedly improve the international atmosphere, they are more the result than the cause of political agreement. At a time when relations are strained because of the Vietnam and Middle East conflicts, the tabling of the non-proliferation treaty should contribute to an easing of tensions between East and West. The treaty itself, however, is the product, not so much of technical agreement, as of the recognition of certain political realities in various parts of the world. Thus, in the future, we shall be able to take real steps forward only if we have allayed the fears and mistrust which exist in both East and West. That is why Canada considers efforts to "build bridges to the East" to be so important - they lay the groundwork for political, and then arms control, arrangements.

Finally, the non-proliferation treaty negotiations have given us a good idea of the characteristics which must be embodied in any disarmament agreement if it is to be generally acceptable. It is clear, for example, that grandiose disarmament schemes, which are so attractive on paper, demand too much from a suspicious world. We shall only make solid advances through a step-by-step approach which will permit difficulties to be broken down gradually. For over two and a half years, the negotiators in Geneva and in the United Nations in New York, and the political leaders of many countries, have been concentrating their efforts on one particular disarmament objective - and the work has not yet ended. Even with the tabling of a draft non-proliferation treaty, more hard negotiations will be required to hammer out a text which will be accepted and signed by most of the countries of the world. We can expect that all disarmament agreements will require the same patient, unspectacular but persistent effort. In addition, the problems of verification and safeguards will have to be taken into account.

Much of the controversy surrounding the non-proliferation draft has come from the question of whether countries might be able to act clandestinely to circumvent the treaty's provisions. So also with any disarmament agreement. Before agreeing to restrictions on their armaments, countries will have to be satisfied that potential adversaries could not secretly break the rules and thereby obtain a significant military advantage.

Even as I discuss these principles and guide-lines to agreement, however, I realize, as you must also, that there are pressures in the opposite direction. That, while we talk of the importance of ending and reversing the

arms race, the race continues - and continues with the threat of acceleration.

There are a number of areas in which the threat is immediate. I should like to mention two. One is the ominous tide of increased conventional arms acquisition by non-nuclear countries in the less-developed world. In some regions, the arms race is only an "arms walk"; in others it is a pell-mell scramble. In all it is a severe drain on the economic and technical resources of the poor countries and contributes to the increase of tension. In the Middle East, for example, the leap-frog acquisition of arms contributed to the recent conflict and could lead again to hostilities. We must find ways of putting an end to the renewal of this arms race. Although Canada recognizes the problems created by Soviet arms activities in the Middle East, and the reasons which have led Western countries to attempt to maintain a military balance in that part of the world, we regret the continued flow of arms into the area, and we support practical and equitable proposals for controlling all arms shipments. Thus Canada has expressed its support for the preliminary suggestion of President Johnson to institute a system of registering arms shipments to the Middle East. Our hope would be that registration would be followed by arrangements to limit the supply of arms. Unfortunately, the Soviet Union has so far shown little interest in this exploratory proposal. But we must continue to search for ways to reduce the flow of lethal equipment to this and other areas of tension in the less-developed world.

A second immediate problem of arms-race acceleration is the possible deployment of anti-ballistic-missile systems in the Soviet Union and the United States. Evidence that the Soviet Union is undertaking some ABM deployment and the progress made by Communist China in nuclear-weapons development have increased pressures for the United States to react in kind. The costs of constructing systems of defensive missiles are astronomical; some estimates range as high as \$40 billion. But even such sums spent on ABMs would not prevent the penetration of United States defences by Soviet missiles in an all-out attack. As for a potential Chinese missile threat, we understand that the time required for United States ABM deployment is sufficiently short to permit a wait-and-see approach for the moment. Apart from the question of whether ABMs would provide full protection, however, the effect of deployment upon East-West relations and the prospect for further arms-control measures would be unfortunate. As a result, Canada supports the United States in its current unwillingness to deploy an ABM system. In our view, the United States is pursuing the right course in attempting to obtain Soviet agreement in establishing a moratorium on ABM deployment and in limiting all forms of strategic missiles. We hope that these efforts will succeed.

So far I have mentioned only the security and political implications of arms and arms control. There is, however, also an economic side. I am appalled by the estimate that the nations of the world spend more than \$130 billion - a figure more than twice Canada's gross national product - on arms every year. While we can appreciate the security requirements which necessitate such expenditures, we also know what must be given up in the way of consumer goods, educational facilities and social services in order to pay this bill.

Military expenditures are concentrated in the Communist countries and in the West, but the sacrifices being made by the under-developed world as a result of arms purchases are even greater because of the narrow economic base in most emerging countries.

Some people have the view that armaments are good for business and, conversely, that disarmament measures would have a depressant effect on the economy. I do not agree. Studies undertaken by the United Nations, by the governments of many countries such as Canada and the United States and by independent analysts suggest that the transition to a civilian economy, while it would bring some problems, need not be painful. For example, the transition from the Second World War to peace-time, a more extensive operation than would be required by a gradual process of disarmament, was handled in the United States and Canada without undue strain. With planning, we should not fear the adjustment to a civilian economy and, as a result, disarmament, whenever possible on political and security grounds, should be welcomed in economic terms.

It is 150 years since the United States and Canada gave an example to the world with a disarmament agreement. That agreement, the Rush-Bagot Treaty, which put an end to naval confrontation on the Great Lakes, has stood the test of time and has contributed to the close and friendly relations which we now enjoy. Today, we need the example of a new Rush-Bagot Treaty, not to regulate bilateral Canadian-American security problems but rather to contribute to controlling the arms race around the world. With our experience in bilateral co-operation, Canada and the United States can give leadership in the search for world-wide arms-control and disarmament arrangements.

To do so, we must:

first, acknowledge the central importance of general and complete disarmament as a necessary security objective;

second, actively work toward that objective through the promotion and acceptance of limited, balanced and verified arms-control agreements reached with the Communist and non-aligned countries;

third, exercise restraint in participating in, or contributing to, the arms race whether nuclear or conventional, whether at home or abroad; and

fourth, support and seek moves which will reduce tensions between East and West and within the "third world", so that arms-control agreements will become possible.

I can assure you that Canada has exerted, and will continue to exert, all its efforts to facilitate these ends. Only through such efforts, joined with those of others in the West, in the Communist countries and among the non-aligned countries, will we lay the spectre of war and get on with the job of building a stable and prosperous peace. As a start, let us hope that a non-proliferation treaty will be successfully negotiated and signed in the near future to point the way to further progress on the road to a disarmed world.