

STATEMENT DISCOURS

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AFFAIRES
EXTÉRIEURES.



NOTES FOR A SPEECH BY
DOUGLAS ROCHE,
AMBASSADOR FOR DISARMAMENT,
TO THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF
THE 39TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

CANADA AND THE COMMON COMMITMENT
OF PEACE

NEW YORK
OCTOBER 30, 1984

MR. CHAIRMAN,

AS I SPEAK FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THIS VITAL COMMITTEE, I WANT TO PAY TRIBUTE TO YOU AND YOUR PREDECESSORS WHO HAVE GUIDED THE IMMENSELY DIFFICULT WORK OF MAKING PROGRESS IN ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT MEASURES. I ALSO REMEMBER WITH RESPECT MY PREDECESSORS WHO HAVE REPRESENTED CANADA. THIS COMMITTEE HAS BEEN ENRICHED BY MANY REPRESENTATIVES FROM MANY COUNTRIES WHO HAVE DEVOTED THEMSELVES TO THE ELUSIVE SEARCH FOR SOLUTIONS TO THE COMPLEX PROBLEMS OF PEACE AND SECURITY.

BUT, DESPITE THESE VALUED EFFORTS, THE FACTS AND FIGURES RECOUNT IN TELLING DETAIL THE ARMED WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE, THEY BEAR WITNESS TO THE MODEST NATURE OF WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED.

AS I BEGIN MY WORK HERE, I ASK MYSELF: WILL ONE MORE SPEECH, ONE MORE ANALYSIS, ONE MORE RESOLUTION CHANGE THIS SITUATION? DO THE GOVERNMENTS REPRESENTED IN THE COMMITTEE NEED MORE IDEAS, MORE COMMITMENT, MORE PASSION FOR A SOLUTION? SHOULD WE DEVOTE MORE TIME, MORE ENERGY, MORE MONEY TO THE PROBLEM?

I HAVE CONCLUDED THAT NONE OF THESE ARE REALLY NEEDED. WHAT IS NEEDED IS THE POLITICAL WILL OF NATIONS TO START IMPLEMENTING THE 129-PARAGRAPH FINAL DOCUMENT OF THE FIRST SPECIAL SESSION ON DISARMAMENT. THIS DOCUMENT WAS AGREED TO BY A HISTORIC CONSENSUS: WE MUST SEEK TO REDISCOVER THAT CONSENSUS THROUGH THE EXERCISE OF POLITICAL WILL. THAT IS THE ESSENCE OF THE PROBLEM WE FACE TODAY.

THEREFORE, MY FIRST TASK IS TO REPORT TO THIS COMMITTEE THAT THE NEW GOVERNMENT OF CANADA INTENDS TO EXERCISE THAT POLITICAL WILL TO WORK WITH OTHER NATIONS TOWARDS THE PREVENTION OF WAR IN THE NUCLEAR AGE AND THE INAUGURATION OF AN ERA OF ASSURED PEACE FOR ALL THE WORLD. THESE ARE THE CENTRAL ISSUES CONFRONTING OUR GENERATION AS CANADA'S PRIME MINISTER, THE RIGHT HONOURABLE BRIAN MULRONEY, POINTED OUT RECENTLY. IN DOING SO, HE SAID:

"THERE CAN BE NO LET UP IN OUR EFFORTS TO REDUCE THE THREAT OF WAR. NO MATTER HOW FRUSTRATING OR DIFFICULT, NEGOTIATIONS MUST BE PURSUED...THE EXERCISE OF POLITICAL WILL IS NOWHERE MORE IMPORTANT THAN ON THIS ISSUE ON WHOSE OUTCOME THE LIVES OF OUR CHILDREN AND OF HUMANITY DEPEND."

THESE WORDS WERE ARTICULATED BY THE CANADIAN PRIME MINISTER, BUT THE SENTIMENT COMES EQUALLY FROM THE CANADIAN PEOPLE. INTERNATIONAL TENSION AND THE ACCUMULATION OF WEAPONS, THESE LINKS IN A DEADLY CHAIN, ARE DEEPLY TROUBLING TO ALL CANADIANS -- AND AS RECENT STUDIES HAVE SHOWN, EVEN TO OUR CHILDREN.

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MR. CHAIRMAN,

CANADA IS A MEMBER OF A DEFENSIVE ALLIANCE. WE ARE NOT NEUTRAL. WE STAND FOR FREEDOM.

WE ALSO STAND FOR NEGOTIATIONS, ALL NEGOTIATIONS, PARTICULARLY THOSE ON THE REDUCTION OF NUCLEAR ARMS. IN COMPANY WITH OUR ALLIES, CANADA HAS REAFFIRMED ITS WILLINGNESS TO REVERSE, HALT OR MODIFY THE EUROMISSILE DEPLOYMENT -- INCLUDING THE REMOVAL AND DISMANTLING OF MISSILES ALREADY DEPLOYED -- UPON ACHIEVEMENT OF A BALANCED, EQUITABLE AND VERIFIABLE AGREEMENT CALLING FOR SUCH ACTION. WE ARE FOR THE RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS -- UNCONDITIONALLY -- AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE DATE. THAT MANY OTHERS SHOW THIS DESIRE AND CONCERN IS BORNE WITNESS BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S RESOLUTIONS ON THIS SUBJECT.

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WE HAVE A COMMON INTEREST IN SURVIVAL; WE HAVE A COMMON INTEREST IN PEACE. THE UNITED NATIONS IS AN IRREPLACEABLE INSTRUMENT THROUGH WHICH THIS SUPREME GOAL MUST BE PURSUED.

THE UNITED NATIONS IS NOT A DISARMAMENT NEGOTIATING BODY. BUT IT CAN SET THE STAGE, AND DEFINE THE ATMOSPHERE. WE MEET TO SET PRIORITIES; WE MEET TO ENCOURAGE THE DIALOGUE ON ARMS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AMONGST ALL MEMBERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS. THIS WAS THE FUNDAMENTAL ACHIEVEMENT OF THE FINAL DOCUMENT OF THE FIRST SPECIAL SESSION ON DISARMAMENT. LET US BUILD ON IT.

A FIRST STEP MIGHT BE TO RECOGNIZE THE DEPTH AND BREADTH OF OUR COMMON INTERESTS, WHICH GO BEYOND THE DAILY ISSUES THAT SO OFTEN DIVIDE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY.

NUCLEAR WARS CANNOT BE WON AND MUST NOT BE FOUGHT. WE MUST BE LIBERATED FROM THE FEAR OF NUCLEAR WAR BY ACCIDENT OR SURPRISE. PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IS A COMMON, CONSTANT CONCERN. THE DANGERS OF DESTABILIZING WEAPONS ARE RECOGNIZED. CONFIDENCE-BUILDING IN ALL ITS FORMS, FROM IMPROVED METHODS OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT TO EFFECTIVE AND BALANCED MEANS OF VERIFYING ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENTS, ARE ESSENTIAL. ARMAMENT BUILDUPS BRING HIGH COSTS FOR DEVELOPMENT, NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY. ALL STATES HAVE LEGITIMATE SECURITY INTERESTS.

MR. CHAIRMAN,

THESE COMMON CONCERNS, THESE COMMON PRINCIPLES, ALREADY APPEAR IN VARIOUS FORMS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW. THERE IS, AS I HAVE SUGGESTED, AN OPPORTUNITY TO BUILD ON THEM.

THE TWO SUPERPOWERS HAVE, FOR EXAMPLE, LONG RECOGNIZED THE DEVASTATING CONSEQUENCES THAT NUCLEAR WAR WOULD HAVE FOR ALL HUMANITY; THIS RECOGNITION IS ALSO REFLECTED IN THE NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY AND THE FINAL DOCUMENT OF USSOD I, AND HAS BEEN GIVEN ADDITIONAL POIGNANCY BY SCIENTIFICALLY-BASED SCENARIOS OF NUCLEAR WINTER AFFECTING THE ENTIRE PLANET.

I HAVE SPOKEN OF THE COMMONALITY OF OUR INTERESTS. IN THE COURSE OF OUR DELIBERATIONS, WE WILL BE SETTING OUT, IN DETAIL, CANADIAN VIEWS ON ISSUES ON OUR AGENDA. IN THE MEANTIME I WOULD LIKE TO EMPHASIZE A TRIAD OF MEASURES DEALING WITH NUCLEAR ISSUES THAT WOULD OFFER HOPE:

-- FIRST, WE CALL FOR AN IMMEDIATE, UNCONDITIONAL RESUMPTION OF TALKS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION. WE WELCOME RECENT MOVES ALREADY TAKEN TO RESUME THIS DIALOGUE, WHICH IS ESSENTIAL TO SECURITY. IT IS ONLY AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE THAT AGREEMENT CAN BE ACHIEVED.

-- SECOND, WE CALL FOR RENEWED COMMITMENT TO NON-PROLIFERATION. THE OPPORTUNITIES TO DO SO WILL ARISE AT THE THIRD NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY REVIEW CONFERENCE IN 1985.

-- THIRD, WE CALL FOR PRACTICAL STEPS TO BE TAKEN TOWARD A NUCLEAR TEST BAN: THIS IS AN UNWAVERING OBJECTIVE OF SUCCESSIVE CANADIAN GOVERNMENTS, AND IN THIS WE JOIN WITH MANY OTHERS.

THERE ARE TWO OTHER VITAL AREAS OF COMMON INTEREST.

- WE CALL FOR URGENT EFFORTS TOWARDS PREVENTING AN ARMS RACE IN OUTER SPACE. THIS IS ONE OF CANADA'S HIGHEST PRIORITIES. WE THEREFORE WELCOME THE PROSPECT OF TALKS BETWEEN THE USA AND THE SOVIET UNION. WE SHOULD ALL GIVE FULL SUPPORT TO GETTING THESE TALKS STARTED.

- WE ALSO CALL FOR THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE BAN ON CHEMICAL WEAPONS. THE TRAGIC EVIDENCE OF RECENT USE OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS SHOWS THAT EXISTING INTERNATIONAL LAW IS NOT ENOUGH. THE USA DRAFT TREATY ON THIS SUBJECT IS A VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS ACHIEVING A COMPREHENSIVE BAN.

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THESE ARE STEPS, MR. CHAIRMAN, WHICH MUST NECESSARILY BE PART OF ANY GRAND DESIGN OF ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT. THERE ARE OTHER PRACTICAL STEPS THAT WE CAN TAKE TO TRANSLATE WORDS FROM PRINCIPLE TO ACTION. I WILL MENTION A FEW MEASURES WE HAVE TAKEN.

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-- TOGETHER WITH OTHERS, CANADA IS PARTICIPATING IN THE INTERNATIONAL SEISMIC DATA EXCHANGE WHICH IS NOW IN PROGRESS. SHOULD THIS PROJECT SUCCEED, IT WILL MARK AN IMPORTANT STEP TOWARDS THE VERIFIABILITY OF A TEST BAN TREATY.

-- CANADA IS STUDYING THE FEASIBILITY OF DEVELOPING A SYSTEM OF "SPACE TO SPACE" SURVEILLANCE TO ASSIST IN MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH ANY FUTURE AGREEMENT TO PREVENT AN ARMS RACE IN SPACE.

-- CANADA IS DEVISING MEANS TO DETERMINE WITH ACCURACY, BOTH TECHNICALLY AND ORGANIZATIONALLY, WHETHER OR NOT CHEMICAL WEAPONS HAVE BEEN USED.

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MR. CHAIRMAN,

I WISH TO CONCLUDE BY QUOTING TWO OF MY COLLEAGUES. AMBASSADOR MAJ BRITT THEORIN, CHAIRMAN OF THE SWEDISH DISARMAMENT COMMISSION, OBSERVED THAT A NUCLEAR CONFLICT BETWEEN THE SUPERPOWERS WOULD AFFECT EVERY NATION ON THIS GLOBE. NO NATION -- LARGE OR SMALL -- COULD ESCAPE ITS CONSEQUENCES. AMBASSADOR IMAI OF JAPAN NOTED THAT ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT ARE INSEPARABLY LINKED TO AN INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY'S NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY, AND IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO EXPECT UNILATERAL DISARMAMENT TO EMERGE AT THE EXPENSE OF A COUNTRY'S OWN NATIONAL SECURITY.

TOGETHER THESE TWO STATEMENTS DEFINE THE NECESSITY FOR MEASURES OF MUTUAL SECURITY, MEASURES REACHED THROUGH THE PROCESS OF AGREEMENT, MEASURES IN THE INTERESTS OF ALL. WE PLEDGE TO WORK WITH OTHERS TO THIS END.
MR. CHAIRMAN,

THE MESSAGE I BRING IS THIS: THE DETERMINATION OF THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT TO TAKE PRACTICAL MEASURES, AT HOME AND ABROAD, TO MAKE INCH-BY-INCH PROGRESS IN MEETING THE THREAT OF WAR, PARTICULARLY NUCLEAR WAR. WE BELIEVE IN SURE-FOOTED STEPS TOWARDS COLLECTIVE SECURITY AND MUTUALITY OF INTERESTS IN EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT.

NONE OF US CAN WORK ALONE. THE PROBLEMS OF OUR TIME ARE INSURMOUNTABLE IF ANY COUNTRY RELIES ON UNILATERAL ACTION. NEW MULTILATERAL EFFORTS CAN HELP IMPROVE THE ATMOSPHERE AND PUT SPECIFIC, WORKABLE IDEAS ON THE INTERNATIONAL AGENDA.

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IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT NO MAN IS AN ISLAND. THE SAME IS TRUE OF NATIONS. LET US SEARCH FOR NEW BEGINNINGS, HOWEVER MODEST THESE MAY BE. LET US WORK TOWARDS ENHANCING THE CREDIBILITY OF THE UNITED NATIONS, AND ITS ABILITY TO FULFIL THE AIMS AND PURPOSES OF THE CHARTER. LET US, IN SHORT, BEGIN THE SEARCH FOR COMMON SOLUTIONS TO COMMON PROBLEMS.

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