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NOTES FOR A SPEECH BY
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DISARMAMENT, TO PROJECT
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PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND
'THE VALUE OF CANADA'S PEACE
MOVEMENT'

CHARLOTTETOWN

JUNE 16, 1985

-- In Vancouver this April, 80,000 people joined in the annual March for Peace sponsored by End the Arms Race.

-- In Winnipeg last week 30,000 people participated in the 4th Annual Walk for Peace sponsored by the Winnipeg Coordinating Committee for Disarmament.

-- In Toronto 10,000 high school students took part in a massive peace celebration in front of Toronto's City Hall.

-- In Halifax in June, more than 300 women from Labrador City to Denman Island B.C. gathered for five days at an historic International Women's Conference to discuss alternative ways of negotiating peace.

These are but a few of the examples of the vibrancy of the peace movement of the 1980s in Canada.

Across the country thousands of individuals are involving themselves in a myriad of organizations, expressing their concern that the world has too many arms; demanding that the relentless upward-spiral of ever-more sophisticated and lethal weapons be stopped -- now.

The peace movement in Canada is gathering strength, continuously widening its body of support. In the 1960s, it was often dismissed as being left-wing and radical, representing a minority opinion. But in the 1980s the expanded peace movement -- lead by pioneering organizations such as Project Ploughshares and Operation Dismantle -- cuts across all ages, professions and backgrounds.

Lawyers, physicians, teachers, students, scientists and countless concerned individuals have formed associations so that they might act in concert in helping the public and politicians to understand the threat posed by the world's conventional and nuclear arsenals.

The new, broad-based membership of the movement reflects the universal danger of the nuclear threat and the realization that the debate over nuclear and conventional weapons is something that involves everyone. The Canadian public, through the peace movement, wants to participate in the determination of its future.

Since the early 1980s, coalitions of disarmament groups have been developing and growing throughout the country. Today there are disarmament networks in Montréal, Toronto, Hamilton, Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver -- representing hundreds of organizations and tens of thousands of individuals.

The growth of the peace movement has truly been remarkable. For example, the Toronto Disarmament Network which was established in early 1982 with 15 member organizations now includes more than 70 groups. In Vancouver End the Arms Race, established at the same time, encompasses 200 organizations, including churches, labour, community and professional groups.

The peace movement is becoming a national movement, and in November, the first attempt to form a national coalition of peace groups will take place in Toronto. This conference (assisted by a \$25,000 grant from the Disarmament Fund of the Department of External Affairs) will bring together more than 300 delegates from major peace groups across the country.

The members of Canada's peace movement are today's realists -- recognising that it is the height of idealism to think that the world can continue to amass vast nuclear and conventional arsenals and yet never use them. The peace movement is urging governments everywhere to recognise the new global reality that demands that cooperation replace confrontation in the conduct of international relations.

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While the marches and protests receive the most media attention, it is, in fact, the educational activities of the peace movement that are having the most profound effect. Through its efforts, the peace movement is not only helping to change perceptions but is influencing opinion across the country. Knowledge is indeed power and the efforts of the peace movement to educate the public are having a demonstrable effect on public opinion and awareness.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Rt. Hon. Joe Clark recognized this when he stated:

"The Canadian peace movement plays an essential part in the new Canadian dialogue: for the peace movement challenges assumptions, not just policy, and forces us to examine those assumptions more closely."

The peace movement has been instrumental in giving a sense of hope and power to individuals who have felt frightened and isolated in their concerns about the alarming trends in international relations. In a country as vast as Canada, the peace movement is an essential component in giving groups and individuals a common sense of purpose -- something that universally unites people and communities from Charlottetown to Whitehorse -- the preservation of life on the planet.

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney has also given his support to these efforts. Speaking of the peace movement last December in the House of Commons, he said:

"I urge them strongly to maintain the pressure at all times...the pressure of honourable people working for the pursuit of peace is the strongest assurance that a democracy is healthy."

The Government is serious when it says that it cares about the opinions of the Canadian public. Its commitment to dialogue is nowhere more evident than in the tabling of the Green Paper -- the first public review of Canada's international relations. Mr. Clark has said of the review process and Canada's future foreign policy that:

"...it should not be the exclusive preserve of bureaucrats and parliamentarians, but reflect the opinions and convictions of the Canadian public at large."

The Green Paper on Canada's International Relations was prepared precisely to aid the public review on the future directions of Canada's international relations. Few (if any) countries in the world have ever invited such open and extensive public participation in the foreign policy process.

On June 12 Parliament approved the creation of a Special Joint Committee of the House and Senate to discuss the Green Paper. The Committee will submit an interim report dealing with the United States' Strategic Defence Initiative and trade with the U.S. no later than August 23, and a final report no later than May 31, 1986. In preparing its reports the Committee will be seeking the views of Canadians across the country. Public input will be a fundamental and vital component of the review process. As Mr. Clark said in the foreword to the Green Paper:

"I encourage all Canadians with an interest in the future of their country and the contributions Canada can make to a safer, more prosperous and humane world to come to the Parliamentary hearings which will take place across the country and to make their views known."

There are several other ways in which the Government actively seeks and assists communication with the public on arms control and disarmament issues.

As Ambassador for Disarmament, I reconstituted the Consultative Group on Disarmament and Arms Control Affairs. The Consultative Group is made up of more than 50 representatives from non-governmental organizations, universities and interested individuals who gather regularly to discuss and tender advice to the Government on arms control and disarmament questions.

The Consultative Group has met twice in recent months, a general meeting in November and a smaller, sub-group meeting in April.

-- In November, the Consultative Group discussed a broad range of issues: from Canada's role and influence in Washington, Moscow, within NATO and the United Nations, to a careful examination of the arms control and disarmament agenda -- from chemical weapons to nuclear non-proliferation.

-- In April, a sub-group met to discuss in detail Canada's approach to the upcoming Third Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The Group also considered the question of SDI. Some members prepared a statement expressing their concern over superpower efforts to achieve a capability to deploy ballistic missile defence systems and the risks they could pose to both ongoing arms control negotiations and existing agreements, in particular the ABM Treaty.

The full Consultative Group will meet again for a three-day meeting this fall to examine Canada's role in the world's multilateral negotiating forums, which include: the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, the Vienna Mutual Balanced Force Reduction Talks, and the First Committee of the United Nations in New York.

The Department also provides an annual sustaining grant of \$100,000 to the privately-created Canadian Centre for Arms Control and Disarmament to assist it in its public information and research activities.

As well, the new Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security has been allocated funds which will increase from \$1.5 to \$5 million over the next five years. Under the guidance of a Board of fifteen distinguished Canadians, chaired by William Barton, and its Executive Director, Geoffrey Pearson, the Institute will finance and conduct research and information programmes designed to raise the level of public knowledge and discourse on the entire range of questions relating to international peace and security.

Also, in 1979 the Department of External Affairs established a Disarmament Fund for the purpose of helping Canadians discuss, research and disseminate information on arms control and disarmament issues.

Since its inception the Fund has disbursed \$1.5 million to a total of 149 recipients, including a wide range of prominent Canadian groups, non-governmental organizations and academic institutions from virtually every province. A full report on this unique method of assisting public discourse has just been published.

With assistance from the Disarmament Fund, which last year provided \$753,000 to 53 groups:

-- Scientists at McGill University's Institute of Air and Space Law are undertaking research projects relating to arms control, disarmament and outer space.

-- The Prairie Christian Training Centre in Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan held a "Prairie Region Peacemakers Workshop."

-- Project Ploughshares has undertaken research and documentation projects and publications and a national conference on the broad theme of "Disarmament and Development."

-- The Arts Faculty at the University of Moncton is organizing an international conference on the themes "La politique, les armes et la paix; le développement et la paix; l'éducation et la paix."

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The peace movement in Canada is in a privileged position. The democratic nature of our political system means that government is both sensitive and responsive to the opinions of the public -- this is not the case in many parts of the world. This places a special responsibility on the peace movement in Canada, not only to air its concerns, but also to give the Government the best advice it possibly can on questions relating to arms control and disarmament. In order to accomplish this task the peace movement must continue to be informed and balanced in its opinions, as well as active and vocal in making its concerns widely known.

There are many ways of conveying opinions -- through marches, letter-writing campaigns, meetings with Members of Parliament. Through the Disarmament Fund, the new Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security, and the foreign policy review process, the public has the opportunity to present new perspectives and to suggest new approaches.

The Canadian public, through the peace movement and individually, must respond to the questions and challenges set out in the Green Paper. The call for public participation has been made strongly and repeatedly -- by the Prime Minister, by the Secretary of State for External Affairs. I would add my voice to theirs -- reminding all concerned Canadians that, as the Green Paper states:

"The imperative of ensuring security at lower levels of nuclear weapons requires that no proposal or line of thinking on a possible solution be dismissed without careful examination."

The Canadian public, through the review process, must bring forward its concerns, its views and above all, its ideas.

The search for peace is not a one-person or one-nation crusade. It must be cooperative effort, only then will it succeed. Canada's peace movement is not simply important, it is vital and indispensable in the search for genuine global security.