

FILE

FPR

Transcript

Cruise missile testing in Canada:
CBC "Sunday Morning", October 31, 1982

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15
20 - CDA				

Security Identifier	UNCLASSIFIED
Accession Reference	
File Dossier	
Date	November 1, 1982
Number	FPR-943

COPIES
SENT

RECEIVED

Illo/
lips

CBC: "Refuse the Cruise" -- that was the rallying cry yesterday as the Canadian Peace Movement took to the streets. There were demonstrations in Toronto, Winnipeg and Edmonton to protest against Canadian involvement with the Cruise missile to be tested this winter in Alberta. Yesterday's biggest demonstration was in Ottawa.

Speaker: This is wonderful. There is a human river still pouring into this park (shouts of: We want peace).

CBC: That human river, 15,000 strong, snaked through the streets of Ottawa to a rally in the shadow of the Peace Tower. It was the largest disarmament rally ever held in the capital. (shouts of: ... six, seven, eight; we don't want to radiate)

The marchers chanted peace slogans as they passed the U.S. Embassy and the offices of the Litton company that makes the guidance system for the Cruise missile. Later at the rally, speakers said the Cruise marks a new and dangerous step toward nuclear war.

Speaker: People not immediately burnt to death, blown apart or asphyxiated, will find themselves in a nightmare world populated by the dying, the dead and the insane. Do we want our GNP to be used in a race towards such madness? (shouts of: No) Do we want to see the quality of brains and technology that developed those instruments to save life in our cancer hospitals be dedicated to death and destruction? (shouts of: No)

CBC: The protest marches were an important test of strength for the loosely knit coalition of groups that make up the Canadian Peace Movement. The Movement has grown quickly during the past two years, aided by the election of the military-minded Ronald Reagan, and the current plans to test the Cruise missile in Canada.

Filmore: This is Nick Filmore. Yesterday's demonstrations across the country are backed up by more than 200 peace organizations. There are big groups, like Project Ploughshares and Operation Dismantle, and little ones in dozens of towns and villages. The groups want to stop the testing of the Cruise missile in Alberta and the use of a Trident submarine on the West Coast. They want Canada to become a nuclear-free zone, and they want people to support referenda in favour of world disarmament. Following the lead in Europe and the United States, the

Canadian Peace Movement has grown rapidly over the last two years. Leo Panich, Professor of Political Science at Carleton University:

Panich: What's striking about the current movement is really how broad it is. When you look at the sponsors in the Ottawa region, it ranges from the United Church Presbytery to the Leeds Conserver Society to academics to the local N.D.P., then to groups much to the left of those who are normally involved in this kind of activity. It's incredibly broad.

Filmore: This new dimension has given the peace movement of the 80's respectability that was missing during the stormy years of the Vietnam War protest. Many of the prominent figures of this peace boom have been active for less than three years. Paul McRae, a Liberal Member of Parliament from Thunder Bay, is a new convert; he's been speaking across the country in support of the 'Yes' campaign for the municipal vote on disarmament. Mr. McRae joined the peace movement after attending a lecture given by visiting American generals.

McRae: It was only when I went to the World's Futures Conference in Toronto -- I suppose it was three years ago -- that I ran into some Pentagon types who were talking about the feasibility of fighting and winning a nuclear war, and that I was shocked -- this was a totally new thing to me -- that to me was a complete turnaround. Then when I got into the thing and started looking at it, what really scared hell out of me was the tremendous advances in technology that weren't present, say, 20 years ago, when I was kind of concerned.

Filmore: The backbone of the revived peace movement is the Church. Dozens of Canadian church organizations are providing workers and moral support. But more important, they're providing about \$1 million a year. There's been some labour support, but many rank-and-file union members are afraid that any reduction in Canada's military involvement will mean a loss of jobs. There's help from environmental groups because of their mutual opposition to nuclear power. Feuds among different groups in the movement have been kept out of the public eye, but the tendency of every group to insist on doing its own project has meant there's been no hard-nosed attack on any one major issue. Leo Panich:

Panich: I think it could be a lot better organized, obviously. It's a movement that's divided amongst many, many groups and that reflects the spontaneity of the movement, it reflects the extent to which it hasn't been the creature of political parties, the extent to which it hasn't been prepackaged, preplanned; it is very much a movement from the grass roots. But they certainly couldn't be said to be working in unison to the extent that would maximize their potential. I think that's true. And not least their fund-raising potential.

Filmore: The Canadian movement hasn't attracted the money that has gone into the peace programme in the United States, the hundreds of thousands of dollars donated by the Rockefeller

children and a small group of other prominent liberal families. The peace movement in Canada is about one year behind what's being done in the United States, and Michael Cook, a member of the executive of Project Ploughshares, says the lack of money is one of the main reasons.

Cook: There's not much money in the peace movement and perhaps that's one of its greatest weaknesses. People continually say to us: O.K., fine, we accept argument A, B, C; but then what do we do? what are the alternatives? It's a very difficult question and it's one that I don't think the peace movement is always very prepared to answer, precisely because there's no money in the peace movement. We do not have people -- we have one, two, three, four people, who are doing research.

Filmore: The peace movement has not had what I can call a clear victory that has changed Canadian defence policy but they say they have had some important gains. Six Members of Parliament from all three political parties broke away from the House Committee on External Affairs and Defence. They submitted a minority report which supported several aims of the peace movement. Paul McRae, a Liberal Member of that minority group, said he could not support the government on the testing of the Cruise missile. He said the testing was in direct conflict with Prime Minister Trudeau's policy of suffocation: a proposal made in 1978 at the U.N. to suffocate the expansion of sophisticated weapons by refusing to develop and test them. Mr. McRae describes what happened at a Committee meeting:

McRae: We had a draft report sitting in front of us and we came to the point where we were talking about the policy of suffocation and one of the members on the Committee made the motion saying: Notwithstanding the policy of suffocation, we think we should go ahead and -- this is paraphrasing it -- test the Cruise missile. At that particular point, all six of us walked out, without looking at the other, because it just made no sense.

CBC: Alan Beesley was named as Canada's new Disarmament Ambassador two weeks ago. He defends the testing of the Cruise in Canada as part of the country's policy of building a deterrent force. Mr. Beesley says the peace movement is wrong when it accuses the government of being hypocritical with its policy of testing new weapons at the same time it makes peace proposals.

Beesley: I would fear that if I were to agree that there was hypocrisy in the Canadian position, then I think there is such a universal hypocrisy that there's no point in attempting any progress, and that I don't accept. If one puts any value at all upon the notion of deterrent, and that has been the basis of the NATO policy for many years and like it or not, as an idea it has worked; it has deterred aggression. So if we accept that there is a valid thesis of deterrent, then we have to play our part in it.

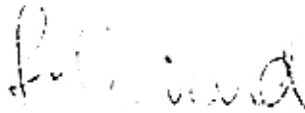
Filmore: A measurement of the progress the peace movement has made will be taken at the upcoming Liberal Party national policy convention. The NDP has had policies in favour of disarmament for several years, but this is the first time it's been an issue for the Liberal Party. Paul McRae believes that if a solid disarmament position can be taken by the Party, it will encourage Prime Minister Trudeau to act.

McRae: I don't think it would be very hard for him to really move in a much stronger direction, if, for instance, the Party at its convention next week has a strong endorsement of this freeze movement and the policy of suffocation, and so on. I think that would be quite possible, and also if the Party is looking around and seeing what Canadians are thinking. Here's an issue that doesn't cost anything; it's an issue that Canadians are feeling about if they're voting the way they voted in Regina, then I believe that this will change the whole government's approach to the thing.

Filmore: Political scientist Leo Panich says the actions of the Liberal Party alone will not be enough to change the federal government's defence policy, but Mr. Panich does believe the power of the overall peace movement will eventually have an effect.

Panich: What this is is a very long struggle; it isn't going to change Canadian defence policy overnight. Nevertheless, I do think that it will have effects. I think that the Canadian government and most of the Canadian bureaucracy that's concerned with this -- although by no means all of it, but most of them -- are incredibly dubious about the reassertion of American dominance in this area. The trouble is, they don't have any backbone. They never have had, vis-à-vis American military policy. And in so far as there is a groundswell of opinion, and that's clear, it may do something to stiffen the resolve.

Filmore: On Friday, External Affairs Minister Allan MacEachen said the government will not change its mind on the testing of the Cruise, despite what appears to be a growing split in the Liberal caucus. Most observers in the peace movement didn't expect Canada would back down on its commitment to the Americans. It's more likely, they say, that Canada will try to make an impact by attempting to discourage the Americans from deploying the missile next year, as scheduled, into Europe. For Sunday Morning, this is Nick Filmore.


Françoise Girard
Deputy Director
Press Office