Address by J. Alan Beesley, Canadian Ambassador for Disarmament, to Toronto Board of Education Conference, "Thinking and Deciding in the Nuclear Age" October 26, 1982.

I am delighted at this opportunity to participate in this Conference on "Thinking and Deciding in the Nuclear Age". While the topic is a somewhat formidable one it is encouraging that students representing the next generation of decision-makers are focussing on such fundamental questions, the moreso given the widespread view that the present generation of decision-makers have fallen short of their own expectations and, undoubtedly, yours.

This is my first address to a Canadian audience since being appointed last week as Canada's Ambassador for Disarmament. From what I have just said it is clear that the audience is an appropriate one.

The subject which I am addressing is at once the most complex, the most controversial and the most critical of our times. In many ways it is also the least understood. I would like to share with you a number of perceptions related to the arms control process which have developed in recent years. If I raise more questions than I answer, I will have succeeded; if the questions I raise prompt you to look more closely at the issues, I will have succeeded even more.

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We are experiencing an era of great international turmoil. Relations between the nations of East and West are strained. The gun rather than the ballot box rules in many areas of the world. People everywhere are anxious, even angry,at the peril of an unchecked arms race.

The basic concepts of the arms control process are generally known to us all, but let us explore them to see which are the most valuable, and which can lead us to the goal we all hope for -- a more secure world. I will also make some comments on some of the current arms control negotiations and arms control agreements. We must also take into account the fact that, in the final analysis, the success or the failure of any attempt at arms control negotiation depends a good deal upon the environment within which it is conducted.

At the outset, I should say that there is nothing abstract about arms control, and arms control negotiations. There have been lively debates in the House of Commons. There has been a Second Special Session on Disarmament at the United Nations in New York. Arms control has prompted the largest public demonstration on any issue since the Second World War in Central Park in New York last June. In Canada there have been debates over a series of significant aspects of the question, including whether cruise missiles should be tested in Canada.

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Speaking at the second United Nations Special Session on Disarmament - UNSSOD II as it is known - in June, Prime Minister Trudeau said "only the deaf cannot hear the clamour arising all over the world against the arms race. In some countries, people's anguish and anger are freely expressed. In some others, people's voices are muffled by repression, but can still be heard by us. In both cases, however, the message is clear. Men and women from every country are addressing a most urgent appeal to their leaders. They are telling us to start building a system capable of restraining the suicidal rivalry in which we are stuck."

It is of no less significance that so many world leaders attended the Special Session, including President Reagan, Prime Minister Thatcher, former Chancellor Schmidt and, of course, Prime Minister Trudeau. What this reflects, I believe, is the fact that well-meaning people everywhere -- ordinary citizens and leaders of governments -- fervently desire a more secure world.

Proceeding, then, from this premise we must, as reasonable beings, ask ourselves how we are to build this better world. Sadly, there is no easy answer, no quick fix to this vexing question. The problems are manifold and complex. They are rooted in fear and mistrust, and nurtured in some instances by self-interest and narrowness of view. The collective conscience of individual states is as prone to these failings as is the individual human being. There are then some very high hurdles to clear -- some of them cast in our way by others, and, yes, some of them of our

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own making. Too many countries have not honoured the Charter of the United Nations to which they adhere, with its pledge that "all members shall refrain from the threat or use of force in international relations".

International Environment

Negotiations are not conducted in a vacuum, but there are few kinds of negotiations which are as sensitive to events outside the room as negotiations on arms control. Indeed progress, or otherwise, resulting from these negotiations can often be read as the barometer of the international environment. Thus, the period of détente was characterized by a series of arms control agreements, ranging from the Partial Test Ban Treaty (1963), which banned all but underground nuclear tests, to the Outer Space Treaty (1967) aimed at preventing the militarization of outer space, to the non-proliferation treaty of 1968. These and other treaties were, in one sense, reflections of events elsewhere. The end of the Cold War, "the thaw", and the development of Willi Brandt's Ostpolitik, which allowed a new accommodation between East and West in Europe, culminated in the high-water mark of détente -- the Helsinki Final Act of 1975. While not exactly a treaty, it nevertheless represents the moral commitment of states to continue the process of normalizing relations between East and West in the economic, political and cultural spheres. Today, one of the most difficult questions to contemplate is the degree to which the Helsinki Final Act, and the commitment of states to it, has been affected by the downturn in East-West relations.

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How does this change affect the arms control process? There have been a number of signs indicating the decline in the tempo of arms control negotiations. The Salt II treaty has not been ratified. Talks on a nuclear test ban treaty involving the USA, UK and USSR have been suspended. Other talks on a variety of issues, from outer space to chemical weapons, have been broken off. Only recently have negotiations resumed on strategic weapons (START) between the super powers; only recently have discussions begun on what are called intermediate-range nuclear forces (IMF).

The world had high hopes for the recent UN Special Session on Disarmament. Here were the 157 states of the United Nations, many of them represented at the highest level, gathered in concentrated session to encourage progress in halting and reversing the arms race. When the session ended without having reached final agreement on a new comprehensive program of disarmament, the disappointment and the frustration were evident. A disservice is done to UNSSOD II, however, if it is written off as a good effort gone wrong. Of course, the results were disappointing and all too meagre, but I am convinced that the present state of arms control and disarmament negotiations is better because of UNSSOD II.

First of all, the Special Session managed to preserve intact the validity of the United Nations as a forum for constructive deliberation on arms control and disarmament. Despite the temptation by some to force a vote on resolutions that could not achieve consensus,

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nations chose the path of realism rather than a procedure that could only devalue the system.

Another significant achievement of UNSSOD II was its reaffirmation of the Final Document of UNSSOD I. The programme of Action of that Final Document highlighted the importance of the negotiating process. Nor should it be overlooked that some progress was made on negotiating a comprehensive program of disarmament at UNSSOD II. It was probably too much to expect that three years of negotiations on a comprehensive program in the 40-member Committee on Disarmament could be concluded in five weeks by 157 nations, particularly given the strained international environment. Work will continue on the program in the Committee on Disarmament, building on the work that has gone before in the Committee and at UNSSOD II.
There were other more particular results at UNSSOD II -- a world disarmament campaign was launched and guidelines for its implementation in all regions of the world agreed upon. Canada played a leading part in building the consensus on these guidelines. Indeed, it was a Canadian paper that formed the basis of discussion on this issue at UNSSOD II, leading to consensus.

There are of course other arms control negotiations which have continued, such as those in the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva, yet the general slowdown in negotiations is the result of a number of concrete factors. The last decade is distinguished from the one before by a new reality: East-West relations have now gone beyond their traditional bounds of Europe and the Atlantic to encompass

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the entire world. In the space of roughly ten years, the Soviet Union, already before a super power, has become a global power in every sense of the word, although this super-power status rests essentially on its military potential alone. One of the consequences of the Soviet humiliation through the Cuba missile crisis in 1962 has been the remarkable growth of the Soviet navy. At the same time the Soviet Union has presented a number of challenges in various parts of the world; in Angola, in the Gulf, in the Horn of Africa, in Asia -- and of course in the Arab world.

The deployment of Soviet medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe -- more highly accurate and mirved -- presented the NATO alliance with a painful dilemma: whether to respond, or whether to ignore. Pressures both ways on European governments were, and are, very great. The NATO decision of 1979, to which Canada was a party, to offer to negotiate the withdrawal of these missiles is still the subject of controversy in Europe, and indeed in Canada, since this "two-track" decision envisaged the modernization of NATO medium-range weapons to balance the Soviet preponderance. The dilemma is that to reply with NATO's own missiles could intensify the arms race; yet without that possibility it is unlikely that the Russians would be encouraged to negotiate. Some have argued that the solution is unilateral nuclear disarmament, as indeed has been endorsed by the Labour Party in Britain. There too, the difficulty is that there is no guarantee that one can rely on the moral scruples of a potential opponent not to attack simply because one is defenceless.

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North-South and East-West

So far, we have examined only the East-West dimension of the international environment. Let us now consider the North-South and the South-South dimensions. Since World War II there have been well over 150 full-scale wars. All of these have been in the Third World, and have ranged from conflicts involving millions of casualties at the time of the division of the Indian sub-continent into two separate states, to wars of secession, to ones of old imperialism, to wars of new imperialism, that is wars of member states of the Third World against each other.

Here, I would like to draw some conclusions from the nature of the international environment inasmuch as it relates to the arms control/disarmament process:

1. There is a paradox in that the area /where many consider that tension is highest, between East and West, is the only one where arms control negotiations are being seriously pursued -- SALT/START and the force reduction talks in Vienna are examples. The concept of collective security -- that is membership in a military alliance -- does seem to work. We can say that NATO has been an important and positive factor in providing the stability in Europe which has allowed peace for over a generation.

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2. The carefully-negotiated series of agreements, and indeed informal understandings between East and West, developed often in conditions of great difficulty over the years, have few counterparts outside the East-West context. This is the significance of Afghanistan: Soviet behaviour in Afghanistan broke the rules. In the Third World there are no arms control or international security negotiations, the Camp David peace process between Israel and Egypt being the obvious exception. Yet a number of Third World regions are demonstrably unstable, as the number of wars and conflicts have shown.

3. From the foregoing we may conclude that an indispensible pre-condition for any negotiations to proceed with any hope of success in the arms control process rests on political factors -- that is, on the real nature of relationships amongst states. Exhortations to "political will", which we hear so often, are not alone enough to move us toward the peace we all hope for.

4. A fourth conclusion, I suggest, is that tangible progress in the arms control process can have a highly beneficial effect upon the international climate and thus in turn contribute towards further arms control progress.

Nuclear Arms Build-Up

It is the nuclear arms build-up that causes most concern to people today. They are understandably frightened and angered by the unthinkable seemingly made thinkable -- the prospect of massive devastation in nuclear war. Just how threatening is the situation, however? The French

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philosopher Jacques Maritain said in his Reflections on America that "at each epoch of history the world was in a hopeless state, and at each epoch of history the world muddled through; at each epoch the world was lost, and at each epoch it was saved." Jonathan Schell in his book, The Fate of the Earth, says that the threat we fear today is of a different order -- for the first time it is extinction that is threatened. He acknowledges, however that the atomic genie, once uncorked from the bottle, cannot be put back. Even if all the nuclear weapons in the world were done away with, the knowledge of how to unlock energy from matter would remain,and the potential to begin again with nuclear weapons development would exist.

Nuclear weapons exist because man knows how to build them and because they have been perceived by nations to have a role to play, to prevent, or deter, war, whether nuclear or conventional. Simply put, the thesis is that one side will not attack the other because it fears that the retaliation would be worse than the anticipated gain. The startling fact is, of course, that nuclear deterrence has worked better than might have been expected. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization - or NATO - exists as a defensive alliance, to deter war. Europe has known a longer period of peace in the era of nuclear deterrence than at any other time in this century. This is not to say, however, that anyone is satisfied with the present state of affairs. The increasing arms build-up is a highly dangerous situation. That is why we seek enhanced security at lower levels of armaments, both nuclear and conventional.

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As you know, serious negotiations are underway now to limit and reduce the level of nuclear arms. The Strategic Arms Reduction Talks - START, as they are known - between the United States and the Soviet Union are striving to achieve substantial reductions in the level of strategic arms. In the Intermediate Range Nuclear Force talks the United States seeks in the first phase not just the reduction but the elimination of a particular category of nuclear missiles from Europe. Canada supports these negotiations aimed at qualitative and quantitative reductions in nuclear arsenals designed to achieve a stable nuclear balance at lower levels. We also support and actively participate in the negotiations in Vienna for balanced reductions in conventional forces in Central Europe.

We are not, however, satisfied to leave it at that. It is essential at the same time to inhibit the development of new weapons systems that could destabilize the balance. This technological freeze in the development of new weapons systems is known as the strategy of suffocation -- first proposed by Mr. Trudeau at UNSSOD I in 1978 and elaborated by him at UNSSOD II. The main elements of the strategy are well known: a comprehensive test ban, a halt to the flight-testing of all new strategic delivery vehicles, a cessation of the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes, and a limitation and eventual reduction of military spending for new strategic weapons systems. It is in the combination of these elements in the form of verifiable agreements involving the major nuclear powers that the strategy of suffociation is understood.

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Here then we have the two complementary components of a policy of stabilization -- the suffocation strategy designed to inhibit the development of new weapons systems, and qualitative and quantitative reductions in existing nuclear arsenals. If implemented, not only would we end up with a balance at lower levels of armaments than at present, but it would be a more stable balance. The stabilization approach enunciated by the Prime Minister then is directed not only to arms control and disarmament at diminished security but, in fact, is intended to enhance security.

I would like to carry this idea of stability and instability a step further. In his speech to UNSSOD II Prime Minister Trudeau spoke of his concern at the possibility of extending the arms race into outer space. The problem of destabilizing space weapons must be tackled. The era of anti-satellite weapons is now here. It was for this reason that the Prime Minister proposed an early start on a treaty to prohibit the development, testing and deployment of all weapons for use in outer space. The matter is just beginning to be dealt with in the Committee on Disarmament, possibly the first major arms control issue of the 21st century.

If arms control and disarmament agreements are to be effective they must be subject to verification. Each party must be able to satisfy itself that the terms of the agreement are being honoured if the agreement is to mean anything. The road to ruin is paved with too many good intentions. Woodrow Wilson said in Paris in January 1919:

"Settlements may be temporary, but the action of the nations in the interest of peace and justice must be permanent. We can set up permanent processes. We may not be able to set up permanent decisions." Until human nature and world order are such that states are prepared to proceed on the basis of trust alone, there must be provision for verifying compliance with arms control and disarmament agreements. To take one example, the 1925 Geneva Protocol bans the use of chemical weapons in war but does not provide for verification. Consequently, the United Nations has been seriously hampered in its attempts to investigate reports of alleged use of chemical weapons in Afghanistan and Southeast Asia.

Canada has placed special emphasis on the verification aspects of arms control and disarmament negotiations. There is evidence of a growing appreciation among nations of the importance of verification provisions in arms control and disarmament negotiations. To make real progress in this area, however, we must break down the walls of secrecy and mistrust. There are, for example, states particularly in Eastern Europe that are unwilling even to make their overall defence budgets public, despite a United Nations plea for such openness as a first step toward reductions in military expenditures. Some states have only slowly come round to acceptance of the need in certain circumstances for on-site verification of compliance. It is difficult for us in the West to understand such secrecy of this kind if a state has nothing to conceal. In this regard, Prime Minister Trudeau mentioned the apparently more positive approach to verification procedures contained in the remarks

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of Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko at UNSSOD II. Mr Gromyko announced his country's preparedness to accept a measure of on-site inspection of a nuclear facilities by the International Atomic Energy Agency and, separately, some on-site inspections as part of the verification provisions of a proposed comprehensive ban on chemical weapons. These are steps in the right direction, for it is only by the willingness of all states to make sometimes hard decisions in favour of arms control and disarmament that we stand any chance of concluding effective agreements.

Canada can play a significant role in the encouragement of meaningful verification provisions and indeed has long been active in this field. During the course of UNSSOD II, then Secretary of State for External Affairs, Dr. MacGuigan, announced a number of new initiatives that underlined the Goverment's commitment to the pursuit of verifiable agreements to limit and reduce forces. These initiatives are directly related to two specific Canadian priorities: to promote the realization of a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty; and to assist in the preparation of a chemical weapons convention. Part of the international verification provisions of a comprehensive test ban treaty will be an International Seismic Data Exchange. This is an area in which we have some expertise and Canada has been playing a central role for the past six years in the development of the Exchange. Some countries are already exchanging seismic data on a provisional basis. In several months, Canada will be able to join these countries and, therefore, to be a full member of the Exchange from the

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outset of its formal establishment. We are encouraged that the Committee on Disarmament this year set up a working group on a comprehensive test ban. Canada is playing an active role in the work of that group. Also, Canada will now be able to provide a technical expert to participate for longer periods in the work of the Committee on Disarmament to conclude a treaty banning chemical weapons.

Dr. MacGuigan told the 25th anniversary meeting of the Pugwash Movement in July that, within the Government's growing research and public information program on disarmament, special emphasis will be put on research projects related to verification by Canadian universities, institutes and individuals. He added that the Government will also institutionalize the expanding Canadian role in verification issues. This is designed to utilize effectively the expertise in several government departments and in the private sector in the negotiations of agreements on nuclear, chemical and conventional weapons systems. This expertise encompasses such diverse areas as seismology, nuclear safeguards, remote sensing, toxicology, protective measures against chemical weapons, and communications satellites.

Much of what I have said thus far about verification has applied to nuclear weapons or weapons of mass destruction such as chemical warfare agents. The concept, however, applies equally to the whole spectrum of arms control and disarmament. For example, problems of verification have figured large in the failure of the Vienna talks on force reduction in Central Europe thus far, after more than eight years of negotiation. The Soviet Union insists that

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the total number of Warsaw Pact forces in the area is almost 150,000 less than the number which has been confirmed by allied information. Unless both sides can agree on the numerical base from which reductions must be made, clearly it is virtually impossible to verify what is left after reductions, even if such reductions can be monitored. Also, the Eastern side has been very reluctant to accept what we would regard as adequate verification measures.

Having reviewed the main aspects of efforts to halt and reverse the arms race, I would like to turn briefly to another top Canadian priority. It is the evolution of an effective non-proliferation regime based on the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Canada has exercised stringent safeguards requirements with prospective nuclear partners, but we can only proceed so far on our own in exerting national influence to prevent a spread of nuclear weapons. The Non-Proliferation Treaty, now signed by 115 states, was a significant step forward. We would like however, to go further in the context of the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency. Canada is prepared to seek international consensus on the development of principles which would result in a more universal and effective approach to non-proliferation.

Are governments responding adequately to the universal desire for a more secure world at a lower level of armament? There is good evidence that all countries are interested in negotiating seriously for arms control and disarmament. The negotiations in Geneva on nuclear weapons are being undertaken in a determined and businesslike way. The United States' position on intermediate range

nuclear forces has been worked out in consultation with allies, including Canada. While the military superpowers negotiate reductions in strategic arms, the SALT II agreement is being largely implemented by both sides. At the Vienna talks on mutual balanced conventional force reductions, a draft treaty tabled by the West in July makes substantial concessions to the Eastern side. There should then be no doubt as to the sincerity and single-minded determination of the West to negotiate significant and verifiable arms control and disarmament agreements. Canada has played an important role in promoting progress in these negotiations. Our expertise adds weight to our counsel.

Principles of Arms Control

It follows from the foregoing that the first and most important principle in any arms control agreement, is that the conditions must be right for negotiations to proceed. By this, I do not mean that the parties involved in the negotiations should be on friendly terms (obviously they are not, otherwise they would not have opposing armies) but what it does mean is that the parties involved should have sufficient confidence that the outcome of those negotiations should enhance their own national security, and are therefore in their own self-interest.

There are a number of corollaries. The first is that of maintaining and enhancing security. Another is the principle of equality, meaning equal application of the terms of agreement and equally-shared obligations under it. Ideally, an agreement should not give any side an advantage, and arrangements under it should be reciprocal.

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The current debate between the Soviet Union and the U.S. over reductions of nuclear weapons to Europe is over whether or not the various proposals would not give one side or the other an advantage.

A second principle of arms control relates to verification, the most complex and the least understood of all elements in the arms control process, but also the most essential. The paradox of verification is that history and common sense suggest that it is advisable to shield the true nature of one's military strength from one's opponent. The concept of verification proposes that on the basis of mutual agreement and reciprocity, each party to the agreement should be prepared to show openly its own military capacity. Verification is common to all effective arms control agreements. The Partial Test Ban Treaty is monitored by mutual agreement. SALT I is verified by "national technical means"; that is by satellite. One of the greatest technical difficulties, however, in negotiating the range of items on today's arms control agenda is reaching agreement on verification measures.

Some countries favour the opposite, or the declaratory approach. This approach relies on the good will of parties concerned, and on moral commitment, as opposed to enforceability. In history, an example would be the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928 which outlawed war as an instrument of national policy. Since this treaty was not enforceable, it did not last long and indeed. bearing in mind what happened in the late 1930's, historians have not been kind to it. A more contemporary example is the proposal that there be a treaty on the non-first-use of nuclear weapons. The difficulty is that such a treaty need

only be broken once for the results to be disastrous; another difficulty is that such a treaty would not come to grips with the real problem -- that is the existence of nuclear weapons.

Institutional Mechanisms

So far, we have considered the international background to arms control negotiations, and some of the principles involved. How these negotiations are actually conducted is very often a function of where they take place.

The question is whether negotiations should be held in public, or in private; whether they should involve only the principals in a given arms control problem, or whether the negotiations should be democratic, and involve the world community as a whole. Here too there are no easy answers.

We have a natural instinct and preference for "open covenants openly arrived at", as Woodrow Wilson called them. There are also a great number of countries who have an understandable desire to be involved in the arms control process. As a result, proceedings at the United Nations, and in other "open" arms control fora, such as the Committee on Disarmament, are lively and intense. But these discussions have a fundamental drawback: because they are public they tned to be more in the nature of debate than of negotiation, and many statements are made calculated for political effect, as opposed to being part of a process of give-and-take.

Should we therefore focus our hopes only on those negotiations that are private? In the nuclear age all countries have a stake in survival, and their voices should be heard. In addition it is useful -- indeed necessary -- that those involved in private negotiations be invited to an accounting.

Perhaps what we should seek is a combination of public and private negotiations. Here the Non-Proliferation Treaty comes to mind. The treaty represents a complex bargain between nuclear weapon states (the USA, UK and USSR) and non-nuclear weapon states (most of the rest) whereby the former are committed to pursue in good faith negotiations aimed at qualitative and quantitative reductions in their nuclear arsenals in return for a commitment on the part of the latter not to acquire a nuclear military capability of their own. There are a number of countries who do not adhere to the NPT, for example China and France, both nuclear weapons states, and a number of important Third World countries such as India, Pakistan, Brazil and Argentina.

Negotiations amongst nuclear weapons states are carried out mainly in private, although the "horizontal" aspects of non-proliferation (that is the spread of nuclear weapons to countries not yet possessing them) is by-and-large negotiated in public. In this instance, public and private negotiations support each other.

Canadian Approaches

Many people were disappointed about the outcome of the Second United Nations Session on Disarmament which was held this summer. Yet, in some respects the outcome

of the Second Special Session, which reaffirmed the commitment of the international community to the arms control process, was the best that could be expected under present circumstances.

Prime Minister Trudeau spoke at the Second Special Session, and also at the First Special Session. His presence at the United Nations was a reflection of the concern of Canada on these critical matters.

Succeeding Canadian governments have reaffirmed our deep concern and involvement in arms control. In many respects this is the consequence of Canadian experience; Canada has a strong European thrust to its foreign policy, and European security ranks high on the Canadian agenda. Canada has had, since the Second World War, a nuclear dimension to its foreign policy, both in terms of the NATO Alliance and in terms of preventing further proliferation, horizontal or vertical. The Indian nuclear explosion of 1974

prompted Canada to construct a vigorous non-proliferation policy. We believe, however, that prevention of the further proliferation of nuclear weapons can most effectively be achieved through the process of negotiations, no matter how long, no matter how difficult.

The Future

A SALT II negotiator, John Newhouse, wrote a book entitled "Cold Dawn" which described in detail the pattern of negotiations which led, finally, to success. He argued that as important as the SALT Treaty was, in restricting the future development and deployment of nuclear

weapons systems, equally important was the process itself. Through the process of negotiating SALT I, each side learned to appreciate the concerns of the other: it was the beginning of a strategic dialogue which despite the occasional interruptions, continues to this day.

This dialogue is by no means perfect, and many are unhappy about the direction it has taken, but it continues nonetheless. The combination of this dialogue, and its expansion to encompass other areas of the world -- the growth of dialogue -- may well be our best hope for the future.

There is no other way to arms control and disarmament than by painstaking and arduous negotiation. The Canadian Government is determined to pursue that route in untiring fashion. I am convinced that in this way we can put in place the building blocks of effective arms control and disarmament agreements which will bring about the more secure world we so fervently desire.

At the beginning of this talk, I hoped that I would provoke more questions than supply answers. I have put before you hints about what the questions might be. The answers I have discussed are neither easy nor necessarily the best. Nevertheless, it may well be that our best hope for making progress on international security matters -- for this is, in essence, what arms control is all about -- rests on our ability for intelligent debate on finding the right solutions.

How can individuals contribute to the disarmament process is a question which is often raised. The former Secretary-General of the United Nations Kurt Waldheim underlined that the public "must be actively interested in current negotiations if they are to produce results". The activities which you have undertaken in your schools and conferences such as this are the means by which you can and do contribute to this process.