

Notes for an address by J. Alan Beesley, Q.C.,
Ambassador for Disarmament, to the
John E. Read International Law Society,
Halifax, March 8, 1983

Symposium on
"The International Law of Disarmament: What are the Options?"

The Future Development of the Law of Disarmament:
The Role of Canada

Constraints

In a speech in Toronto ten years ago, I stated that while it may be desirable and even necessary to focus attention on the possible "structure of a legal order in the disarmed world" or "the nature and structure of an international community based on world federalism" or "the elements essential to a constitution for world government", these are not the subjects which I proposed to address. As on that occasion, my comments this evening shall be directed to "the world in which we now live, and the problems with which we shall have to live for some time to come." Some entities not recognized as states are given status in international conferences and even multilateral treaties, and there has been a development of the concept of the international organization as a subject of international law and, at the other end of the scale, an increasing acceptance of individuals as proper objects of international law, and even a degree of development of international law relating to multinational enterprises. The basic fact of life is that the nation state remains, however, the fundamental unit of international society.

The Law of the Charter

The traditional principles of sovereignty and non-intervention are the foundation stones of the Charter of the United Nations. While some states may be more equal than others through the device of the Great Power veto, sovereign independent states constitute the members of international society. The charter outlaws the use of force except in self-defence or pursuant to binding decisions of the Security Council. As pointed out by many writers, the framing of the Charter intended to prevent "the scourge of war by controlling the use of force rather than by the elimination of arms." Under Article 11 the United Nations General Assembly is empowered to consider general principles governing disarmament and regulation of armaments, and make recommendations to the Security Council. Article 26 makes the Security Council responsible for formulating plans for the establishment of a system for the regulation of armaments. Article 47 provides that the Military Staff Committee would advise the Security Council on the regulation of armaments and possible disarmament. As is well know, the word "disarmament" and the concept of controlling armaments does not otherwise appear in the Charter.

The collective security system provided for by the Charter has not worked as was envisaged by its drafters. Thus Article 47 has never been utilized. Articles 43 to 47 of Chapter VII envisaged a military enforcement system which it has proven impossible thus far to implement. These articles do, however, empower the Security Council, should it so decide, to take collective action to deal with any

threat to the peace, breach of peace or act of aggression. Unfortunately, in practice the security system envisaged in the Charter, which had been regarded at the time as the major advance over the League of Nations, has not been implemented. That then is the second fact of life we must face for the immediate future.

The Nature of the Law

It may be asked in these circumstances if it is correct to use the term "the international law of disarmament". I suggest that it is not incorrect to do so if we are careful and precise in its usage. For example, it is not inappropriate to refer to the Non-proliferation Treaty as binding upon the parties. Questions arise, however, if we attempt to determine the extent to which it is a "law-making treaty", laying down peremptory norms binding on all states. On the other hand, the 1925 Geneva Protocol on Gas Warfare, while it has not been ratified by many states, is widely regarded as a law-making treaty binding on all states. In both cases there is no mechanism for implementation and enforcement, other than self-help, although in the case of the 1925 protocol a resolution was adopted at the 37th UNGA which instructs the Secretary-General to take the first steps necessary to set up an implementing mechanism. Once again, however, it is necessary to recall that except in very rare instances, international law is enforceable only by consent of the states who agree to be so bound. This is a third fact of life which will surely be with us for the foreseeable future.

Role of International Law

The foregoing introductory comments may seem to cast a heavy shadow over the whole subject of the future development

of the law of disarmament. This need not necessarily be the case, however, as I will attempt to demonstrate. As pointed out by Falk many years ago, "The inability of international law to guarantee an altogether peaceful world does not imply its inability to promote a more peaceful world, or to deal adequately with the many aspects of international life having nothing directly to do with war and peace." States regularly accept voluntary constraints upon their freedom of action by entering into bilateral or multilateral treaty commitments, and few states treat such obligations lightly. Similarly, it can be shown that states tend to abide by the law on the international plane because it is in their national self-interest to do so. Breaches of the peace occur, and outbreaks of violence, as they do in the best regulated of domestic communities which have the added advantages of a judiciary with binding powers, police forces, penal systems, etc. In brief - as I and others before me have often argued - on a wide range of issues such as the environment, the Law of the Sea, air navigation, diplomatic intercourse, international labour standards, health standards and a variety of other fields, one is struck by the extensive and developing network of interlocking treaties which bind states to civilized rules of conduct founded upon their common interest. Whether or not such treaties are directly relevant to the use of force itself, they help create the climate which can lead to effective arms control measures and, eventually, disarmament. As states regulate more and more fields of activity by commonly accepted treaty rules, they narrow the range of issues likely to provoke disputes. In each case a door is closed on possible uses of force.

As I pointed out in the address previously mentioned, there are other examples which can have beneficial effects upon law as a constraint upon the use of force, not only of themselves but through their impact on the thinking of decision-makers on other matters. One such example is the treaty banning claims to sovereignty in outer space and over celestial bodies. A similar example is the Seabed Arms Control Treaty which forbids the emplacement of weapons of mass destruction on the seabed and ocean floor.

If neither of these developments appears to be world-shaking in its direct impact upon the use of force, their real significance can best be seen by a consideration of the alternatives to the approaches reflected in these instruments. Consider, for example, the implications of the landings by the USA of astronauts on the moon and the landings by the USSR of space vehicles in the absence of such prior binding agreements. The possibilities of claims and counter-claims to sovereignty and the disputes which could conceivably arise therefrom are limitless. Similarly, the Antarctic Treaty is not usually ranked as a great breakthrough in developing constraints on the use of force. It is not beyond the reach of one's imagination, however, to conceive of the use of force to establish competing claims to territory in the Antarctic in the absence of such a treaty.

Why then are we not living in a disarmed world, since it is clearly in everyone's interest to prevent war by eliminating the means to make war? The answer of course is

that international society remains at a relatively primitive state of development and we are still going through the slow and painful process of evolving into a genuine international community. The issue therefore is not whether it is in the interests of states, particularly major powers, to enter into arms control and disarmament agreements, but how to make it evident that it is in their interests to do so, and how then to ensure that they do. This lack of automaticity of the law-making process, applicable to all of international law, is particularly acute in the case of the law of disarmament. If the legislative phase is laborious and difficult - and it is - the implementation and enforcement phase is even moreso. This must be recognized as a further unpleasant fact of life for those engaged in disarmament and arms control. Nevertheless, if the resulting situation is serious - even desperate - it is not, I suggest, hopeless. Progress has been made, is being made and can and will be made.

Non-Options

If we are to make an appraisal of possible action by Canada impinging on future development of the law of disarmament, it is necessary to be as realistic as was the case in analyzing the constraints -- and the scope for constructive action -- within which Canada operates. Many questions raised about Canada's policy on arms control and disarmament and many suggestions as to possible policies resolve themselves into a single question, namely, Canada's membership in two Western alliances, NATO and NORAD.

It will be recalled that a searching examination of Canada's

defence policy and potential contribution to the maintenance of world peace was carried out by the Canadian Government in the late sixties. At the end of this study, on April 3, 1969, Prime Minister Trudeau delivered a public policy pronouncement which reads in part as follows:

"The Government has rejected any suggestion that Canada assume a non-aligned or neutral role in world affairs. Such an option would have meant the withdrawal by Canada from its present alliances and the termination of all cooperative military arrangements with other countries. We have decided in this fashion because we think it necessary and wise to continue to participate in an appropriate way in collective security arrangements with other states in the interests of Canada's national security and in defence of the values we share with our friends. ...

"Canada is a partner in two collective defence arrangements, which though distinct, are complementary. These are the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the North American Air Defence Command. For 20 years NATO has contributed to the maintenance of world peace through its stabilizing influence in Europe. NATO continues to contribute to peace by reducing the likelihood of a major conflict breaking out in Europe, where, because the vital interests of the two major powers are involved, any outbreak of hostilities could easily escalate into a war of world proportions. At the same time, it is the declared aim of NATO to foster improvements in East-West relations. ...

"We intend, as well, to continue to cooperate effectively with the United States in the defence of North America. We shall, accordingly, seek early occasions for detailed discussions with the United States Government of the whole range of problems involved in our mutual cooperation in defence matters on this continent. To the extent that it is feasible, we shall endeavour to have those activities within Canada which are essential to North American defence performed by Canadian forces.

"In summary, Canada will continue to be a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and to cooperate closely with the United States within NORAD and in other ways in defensive arrangements."

There has been no change of policy under either government concerning this further fact of life for Canadians since the date of that statement, and I do not therefore propose to examine the implications of possible options based on Canada's non-membership in NATO or NORAD.

Canada's Security Policy

Presumably no one here will deny the virtually symbiotic relationship between arms control, disarmament and security. It is necessary therefore to turn our attention, if only briefly, to Canada's security policy. This policy was expressed recently by Canada's then Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Mark MacGuigan, to the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence on February 25, 1982. Dr. MacGuigan pointed out that Canada's security policy has three complementary thrusts.

"They are (1) deterrence of war through the collective security arrangements of NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization) and NORAD (the North American Aerospace Defence Command); (2) active cooperation in efforts to achieve equitable and verifiable arms control and disarmament agreements; (3) support for peaceful settlement of disputes and the collective effort to resolve the underlying economic and social causes of international tensions." This long-standing security policy of Canada is, I suggest, a further fact of life for Canadians seeking to develop realistic and attainable arms control and disarmament proposals.

Deterrence

The reference to deterrence is an important one, the more so in light of the attention now being focussed in Canada and in other NATO countries on the whole concept of deterrence. In the statement just quoted, Dr. MacGuigan went on to underline that "Canada recognizes the need for collective efforts to deter aggression against the North American and European regions of the North Atlantic alliance. It supports and contributes to this defence effort. We are members of an alliance which relies on a deterrent strategy in which nuclear weapons play an important part. This is unavoidable in the world as we know it. ... The NATO strategy of flexible response and forward defence depends on our being ready and able to respond to aggression at whatever level is necessary to counter it. The nuclear weapons of the United States and other NATO allies make an essential contribution to the security of Canada and of the alliance as a whole."

I am aware that this very policy, this further "fact of life" for Canadians is being questioned by some in Canada, and it may be worthwhile therefore to explain the policy a little further. In the White Paper "Foreign Policy for Canadians -- United Nations" the question is dealt with as follows:

"At the present time and in the foreseeable future, the ultimate preventative of war between the super-powers is the mutual balance of nuclear deterrence -- that is, the existence in both the United States and the Soviet Union of a credible capability to inflict unacceptable retaliatory damage in a nuclear exchange. However, a sharply-accelerated pace in the competitive evolution of strategic nuclear weapons could upset the existing balance, which constitutes a credible deterrent, and make it less stable. Potentially destabilizing developments in the strategic arms race are capable of presenting grave risks for international security in the 1970s. This adds urgency to the search for successful nuclear arms control measures.

"Canadian policy should, therefore, seek to contribute, commensurate with the nation's resources and capabilities, to the maintenance of a stable balance of mutual deterrence, on which Canadian and international security currently rests, and, more specifically, to the reduction through negotiated arms-control measures of the risks of nuclear conflict. In pursuing these objectives, competing

but parallel exigencies of Canadian political, commercial and defence interests which are associated with the fundamentals of peace and security must be carefully calculated in the process of decision."

Deterrence and Disarmament

The relationship between deterrence and disarmament was dealt with by Dr. MacGuigan in his statement previously referred to in which he emphasized that Canada's support for the maintenance of forces sufficient to deter aggression and defend the NATO area is entirely consistent with Canada's commitment to a vigorous arms control and disarmament policy. He pointed out that the two policies are more than consistent; they complement and support one another, and together constitute a single coherent policy serving the same goal of enhancing security and preserving peace. Mr. MacGuigan emphasized also that only on a basis of undiminished security can nations be expected to accept limitations on the numbers and quality of their weapons. Surely this thesis is a fact of life for all states and all peoples. It was this concept of "mutual security" that was later emphasized by the Prime Minister at UNSSOD II and further developed by the Deputy Prime Minister at the Geneva Committee on Disarmament in a policy statement last month, a development I shall now address.

Present and Future Action

A significant diplomatic initiative was taken by Canada last month. Canada's Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs went to Geneva

to deliver an important policy statement in the Committee on Disarmament after first meeting with the USA and USSR negotiators on intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) and strategic nuclear arms (START). His statement is, I suggest, worthy of careful consideration. It was more than a policy declaration. It constituted a part of the very negotiating process now under way in Geneva, in particular the negotiations on intermediate-range nuclear forces. As part of that negotiating approach, Mr. MacEachen had arranged to see both the USA and the USSR INF and START negotiators prior to making his policy statement. Thus his statement not only reflected the results of the discussions with the negotiators for the two super powers and enunciated the Canadian position on the issues discussed, but was directed to bringing Canada's influence to bear in those very negotiations. While all this may seem fairly self-evident to anyone who has read the statement, I am making this explanation, and for the second time, having recently done so in Moncton, because of the importance of this action by Canada, and because these demarches were not, in my view, adequately reported by the representatives of the media present in Geneva.

It will be noted that the Canadian Government made a public reaffirmation of NATO solidarity and of continuing commitment to the NATO two-track decision. Such statements were shortly afterwards made by U.S. Vice-President Bush, as well as by the Foreign Minister of the Federal German Republic. Rarely does such a group of high level statesmen

address the Committee on Disarmament. It is evident that these policy statements constitute an important part of the negotiating process, even on those issues discussed bilaterally outside the Committee on Disarmament.

By the same token, the meetings these statesmen have held with the negotiators on both sides, beginning with those held by Mr. MacEachen, are an important element in the negotiating process. Thus it is by such means possible -- and perhaps essential -- that Canada's voice be heard on questions of most vital concern to Canadians. My message to you is that it is being heard -- by both sides.

Mutual Security

Turning now to the substance of the policy statement and its implications for future Canadian action, it is important to note that it was entitled "Mutual Security: Negotiations in 1983". The whole thrust of the statement is that "an increase in mutual security is the only sound basis for effective arms control and disarmament." The message was very clearly addressed to both super powers. The Minister quoted Prime Minister Trudeau's statement at the Second United Nations Special Session on Disarmament, stressing that security in today's world cannot be achieved on a purely national basis; attempts by one side to make gains at the expense of the security of the other ultimately will not work. Action produces reaction and in the end neither side achieves a long-term gain:

Mr. MacEachen applied these principles in very specific terms to the bilateral intermediate-range nuclear forces negotiations. He pointed out that such negotiations

can succeed only if both parties accept as their fundamental objective increased mutual security rather than unilateral advantage. He went on to explain that it was only as a result of the December 1979 "two-track" decision by NATO, taken in response to the Soviet build-up of intermediate-range missiles targeted on Western Europe, that the INF negotiations were begun at all. It will be recalled that the NATO governments proposed negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States to limit land-based intermediate-range missile systems on both sides. At the same time, as part of the same decisions, the NATO Alliance agreed to deploy Pershing II missiles and ground-launched cruise missiles beginning in late 1983 if such negotiations were unsuccessful. Mr. MacEachen reminded the Committee on Disarmament that while initially the Soviet Union was critical of the NATO decision and reluctant to engage in negotiations, eventually, in the autumn of 1980 the Soviet Union agreed to preliminary discussions, and a year later, in November 1981, formal negotiations began.

~~I wonder if~~ there is a more classic example of the direct application of the principle of mutual security, as outlined by Canada's Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs. As was pointed out by Mr. MacEachen, there is some encouragement to be derived from the fact that the Soviet Union has clearly recognized that NATO governments have a legitimate concern about the number of SS-20's aimed at their European member states, and that a reduction is necessary, as evidenced by a recent Soviet proposal concerning possible reductions of such weapons.

As stated by the Secretary of State for External Affairs in Geneva, "This in itself is progress. However, it is not yet clear that both sides have accepted that mutual security must be the basis of the negotiations. That is why 1983 is crucial."

Winnable Nuclear War

At this stage, I wish to discuss another important policy pronouncement contained in the Geneva statement, again one clearly addressed to all parties, with clear implications for future Canadian policy.

After outlining the principles underlying effective arms control and disarmament negotiations, and emphasizing mutual security as the only acceptable basis for arms control and disarmament, Mr. MacEachen made the following statement:

"An attempt by any power to develop a policy which assumes that nuclear war can be winnable contributes to mutual insecurity."

He went on to describe this statement as a home truth, albeit directly relevant to the current situation. It is surprising, perhaps, that this statement was not reported by the media in light of the fears expressed in many quarters about some of the rhetoric directed to the other part of the arms control and disarmament equation, namely the necessity for sufficient arms to provide an effective deterrent.

Examples of statements by both sides questioning the long-standing concept of mutual deterrence, which, in turn, is founded on the certainty of "mutually assured destruction"

are readily available. Canada does not accept such an approach, and will resist it. This, I suggest, is an encouraging fact of life.

Arms Control and Disarmament Objectives

Canada's longstanding active pursuit of arms control and disarmament has never consisted of mere policy pronouncements. Canada has actively proposed and is today pressing forward negotiations on a series of concrete proposals on fundamental arms control and disarmament problems. In the time available I can do little more than list some of them, but I shall at least try to do so, in order to give some indication of the scope, variety and intensity of Canada's present and future efforts.

Chemical Weapons

Canada has taken a very active role in the United Nations in supporting resolutions, calling for concrete action, as distinct from merely hortatory resolutions. These efforts, together with those of others, led to the establishment of a group of experts to investigate reports of use of chemical weapons and have now led to agreement to set up the beginning of a verification and enforcement mechanism. Canada is also pressing for the establishment of a working group on chemical weapons in the Disarmament Committee in Geneva, and it is possible that a Canadian will be chosen to chair that group.

Conventional Forces

Conventional forces account for 80% of global military expenditures. This figure alone indicates the importance of the third element in Canada's basic security policy -- support for peaceful settlement of disputes and

attempts to resolve the underlying economic and social causes of international tensions. Canada is therefore actively participating in the negotiations in Vienna aimed at mutual

and balanced reductions in the conventional forces of NATO and the Warsaw Pact in Central Europe. We have also supported within the United Nations a series of efforts directed to limiting the transfer of conventional weapons, reducing military budgets and providing greater openness concerning military budgets. The lack of any breakthrough on any of these issues has not lessened our sense of commitment nor diminished our efforts to achieve concrete results.

Verification

It has been a long-standing Canadian position since the outset of disarmament negotiations after the Second World War that verification mechanisms are not only the key to the implementation of arms control and disarmament agreements, but in some cases a virtual precondition to their conclusion. It is encouraging that both super powers are now directing their attention to various aspects of the problems of verification which go to the heart of every arms control and disarmament problem. Canada will continue to pursue most vigorously its efforts to push forward verification studies through the use of experts, technological means, including satellites and seismic data exchange, and on-site inspections.

Canadian Priorities for Committee on Disarmament

This is an appropriate stage at which to turn to the second part of the policy statement made by the Secretary of State for External Affairs in Geneva on February 1, namely, Canada's priorities in the arms control work of the Geneva Committee on Disarmament. It is worth noting that the statement was made in the full knowledge that with respect to some of these priority issues, Canada's proposals present difficulties for one or both of the Great Powers. Thus, while recognizing the facts of life concerning the limits upon Canada's ability to influence events, we have not hesitated to press vigorously for action and sought support for such action from others where we are convinced that it is needed.

Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban

Mr. MacEachen emphasized that the pursuit of a comprehensive nuclear test ban is a fundamental -- perhaps the fundamental -- nuclear issue before the Committee on Disarmament. He urged that the new working group begin to discharge its mandate on that subject as a matter of urgency in 1983. He argued for a step-by-step approach that could ensure that the key elements of a treaty are in place even before the final political commitment to a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty on the part of the nuclear weapons states. You may be certain that we will continue to press for concrete results.

Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Mr. MacEachen then emphasized the importance Canada has always attached to the prevention of the further spread of nuclear weapons. He pointed out that the non-proliferation treaty emphasized the non-discriminatory transfer of peaceful nuclear technology but provides also for the de-escalation of the arms race by nuclear weapons states. He reminded the Committee that while more nuclear weapons states have adhered to the non-proliferation treaty, such voluntary renunciation has not been matched by corresponding action by the nuclear weapons states. He suggested that those of us with nuclear technology and those without must seek to persuade the nuclear weapons states to live up to their bargain to which they are committed by the non-proliferation treaty.

Chemical Weapons

Mr. MacEachen/^{then}cited

chemical weapons as an area in which the time is ripe for progress towards a treaty on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on the distribution of existing stock. He referred to the allocation of funds to enable Canadian technical experts to participate in the studies of the working group to be established and made clear that Canada considers this a priority issue for 1983.

Outer Space

Mr. MacEachen then turned to the sensitive question of weapons for use in outer space. He urged the Committee to begin as soon as possible its essential task of defining the legal and other issues necessary to build upon the outer space legal regime and made clear Canada's intention to participate actively in this work. He concluded by urging the establishment of a working group on this subject.

Theoretical Options

Many of you are undoubtedly familiar with the Polaris Papers No. 1 issued by the Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies entitled "Arms Limitation and the United Nations" edited by R. B. Byers and Stanley C. M. Ing. The report groups the participants into three broad and not always mutually exclusive categories referred to as the "disarmers", the "moderate arms controllers" and the "skeptical arms controllers". Some of the participants are here tonight, and it would be interesting to know their reaction to this type of classification. Without reiterating the information in the report to the point of plagarism, it is interesting to note some of their findings on basic approaches to arms limitation. For example, on national security, the disarmers are reported as supporting some military preparedness plus disarmament, while the moderate arms controllers support military preparedness plus arms control, while the skeptical arms controllers support military preparedness first and then arms control.

On the question of deterrence as the basis of national security, the disarmers are said to reject deterrence as the cause of the arms race, while the moderate arms controllers accept deterrence on the basis of mutually assured destruction plus conventional weapons but are concerned about limited nuclear options, while the skeptical arms controllers accept not only the deterrence of mutually assured destruction but limited nuclear options plus conventional arms.

On new weapons technologies, the disarmers are reported as finding them highly destabilizing and the real cause of the arms race, while the moderate arms controllers consider them destabilizing if they have a first-strike capability use, whereas the skeptical arms controllers consider only that they may be possibly destabilizing.

Interestingly, in a footnote, the editors speculate as to what would have been the spectrum of views on cruise missile testing by Canada, which was reportedly "not a public issue at the time of the conference". The editors conclude that if it had been discussed, the disarmers would have argued against testing and pointed out that the Canadian Government's position is contrary to the principles of the strategy of suffocation, while the skeptical arms controllers would have supported testing on the grounds of NATO's 1979 two-track decision and pointed out that the strategy was never meant to be implemented unilaterally. Ironically, the editors conclude that "the moderate arms controllers could have taken either position".

Since the issue of unilateralism runs through the argumentation on a number of policy options such as declarations of non first use, a nuclear moratorium, etc., it may be of interest that the editors report that on unilateralism, the disarmers consider that unilateral initiatives are desirable, while the moderate arms controllers were skeptical of unilateral initiatives and the skeptical arms controllers were opposed to unilateral initiatives.

The Legal Effects of Unilateralism

One point of a legal nature worth bearing in mind on the issue of unilateralism is that not all unilateral acts would necessarily have the same effects or lack of effects legally. An interesting comparison might be made between the law of disarmament and certain other fields, such as outer space or the law of the sea. It is possible that some unilateral arms control or disarmament acts might have constitutive legal effects, while others would not. For example, if Canada made a nuclear free zone declaration, it is conceivable that this could have certain legal implications, particularly if Canada's action were accepted by other states, through state practice or by means of a multilateral treaty, in much the same way that the status of neutrality of certain states has become accepted by the international community. Perhaps also the rejection of such a status by other states might be analagous to rejection of claims in the law of the sea. On the other hand, Canada's unilateral renunciation of nuclear weapons in 1945 presumably had no legal effects, at least outside Canada, until it was implemented by Canada's adherence to the non-proliferation treaty. It might be interesting to hear views on the legal, as distinct from political, effect of unilateral action in the field of arms control and disarmament.

Some of those present this evening may wish to express views on the extent to which Canada should act unilaterally on particular issues (such as various types of freeze proposals, referenda, non-first use, non-aggression pacts,

confidence building measures, and various elements of the strategy of suffocation). I shall listen with interest.

Attainability of Priority Objectives

The Geneva policy statement I have referred to indicates very clearly that in the view of the Canadian Government, 1983 is a crucial year for both bilateral and multilateral arms control and disarmament negotiations. It makes equally clear the views of the Canadian Government as to the priority areas for action in 1983 -- and, as a consequence, for some time to come, since few if any of the Canadian objectives can be attained in the space of a single year. The time it takes to negotiate arms control and disarmament agreements even in the best conditions is, of course, one of the most significant facts of life for those engaged in negotiating on such issues.

It will be noted, moreover, that in attempting to determine which important subjects needing urgent attention should be given priority over others, difficult choices were entailed, the more so because it is already evident that Canada's priorities are not necessarily those of the Soviet bloc or the non-aligned "group of 21", who have somewhat different perceptions from the West and from each other. Thus another fact of life is that it is not possible to do everything at once, and our priorities, such as the strategy of suffocation, may not be those of others.

What then is being done about the host of other issues which engage the attention of governments, parliamentarians, the general public, the media, the non-governmental organization

as well as individual scholars, experts and statesmen?

The "strategy of suffocation" presented by Prime Minister Trudeau at UNSSOD I and developed at UNSSOD II includes, for example, the cessation of testing of weapons delivery systems and the cessation of production and transfer of weapons grade nuclear materials. While it has been pointed out that the strategy of suffocation will not be implemented by Canada unilaterally, it is necessary also to emphasize that it will not be abandoned or placed on the back burner. The real problem is how much can be achieved with respect to such objectives if they are not actively supported by the Great Powers, quite apart from the necessity of support from other countries of both the industrialized and developed worlds. The answer is not a very encouraging one but it reflects the basic fact of life for negotiators. Canada must keep up the pressure by every available means and attempt gradually to expand support for such objectives. It is a lengthy and difficult process, not unlike that which occurred in the Law of the Sea negotiations. Those charged with the task must bring to it commitment and creativity, coupled with patience and perseverance. It goes without saying that since you are all directly affected by the results, you must participate in the process of developing imaginative, realistic proposals and using every legitimate means to seek support for them.