

CANADA'S POSITION ON BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENCE

**Canadian Pugwash Group Workshop
Toronto, Ontario, October 21, 2000**

Report by Walter Dorn, CPG Secretary

On October 21, 2000, the Annual Forum of the Canadian Pugwash Group was held at the University of Toronto. The participants heard presentations by:

- Mr. Robert McDougall, Director of the Non-Proliferation, Arms Control Disarmament Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT)
- Professor Ann Denholm Crosby of York University.

Mr. Robert McDougall, speaking in his personal capacity, provided an overview of the development of the US policy position and activities on missile defence. Canada's current position on ballistic missile defence (BMD), as stated in the 1994 Defence White Paper, limits activity to "research and consultation" with the United States, subject to certain conditions (e.g., as long as it is compliant with ABM, cost effective and contributes to Canadian needs). Canada seeks to guard the success in non-proliferation over last 30 years, and considers itself a stakeholder in effectiveness of ABM Treaty. While amendment is not bad per se, Canada would have to look at the impact of any specific treaty amendments. No decision has been made on possible Canadian participation in National Missile Defence (NMD), in part because no American decision has been made. Canada agrees that there is a missile proliferation threat that can be addressed in a more direct fashion and has been working actively in this regard through the Missile Technology Control Regime and other fora.

Ann Denholm Crosby outlined the dangers of NMD, including weaponization of space, violation of arms control treaties, creation of an arms race. Canada has condoned the US defence ("war-fighting") planning in NMD. She expressed concerns about NORAD's involvement and, more generally, the lack of political access and oversight over NORAD defence programs. She said Canada fears pressure from US if Canada becomes more outspoken.

Many of the points made in the subsequent discussion, including the strongly-held views of CPG members, were included in the Press Release that was developed at the Annual General Meeting of the organization.

The Press Release is provided below.

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**CANADIAN PUGWASH GROUP
PRESS RELEASE
October 21, 2000**

The Canadian government should publicly speak out against US plans to deploy a National Missile Defence system, the Canadian Pugwash Group said today. "The time to speak out is now when Canada can make a difference and before the US makes a final decision," the Canadian Pugwash Group said today.

The Group is an affiliate of Pugwash Conferences on Science for World Affairs, winner of the 1995 Nobel Peace Prize for its work on advancing nuclear disarmament.

"The Canadian people deserve to know where the political parties stand on this key issue, which affects global security", said Senator Douglas Roche, the Group's Chairman and Canada's former Ambassador for Disarmament.

At its annual forum, Canadian Pugwash members said that there is not a credible threat to the US or Canada of ballistic missiles attacking their territories. The nations sometimes called "rogue states", North Korea, Iran and Iraq, are now undergoing reform or are severely restrained and, in any case, would not use ballistic missiles fired from abroad should they wish to damage US interests.

"A driving force behind NMD is the desire for economic and political gain by a variety of members of US industry and government," said Maj. > Gen. (ret'd) Len Johnson. "It is not based on a real threat but on a 'Fortress America' mentality."

National missile defence, even in the planning stage, would:

1. damage and destroy important arms control agreements
2. re-ignite an arms race and a race in countermeasures
3. allow the US to further define security environments world-wide and apply military pressure on an unprecedented scale
4. be used to further justify the unilateral weaponization of space, a global commons
5. hurt global security by diverting funds and commitment from peacekeeping and other peaceful endeavours, including the struggle against poverty in developing countries.

The Canadian Pugwash Group feels that action by Canada is imperative. Members felt that Canada should not be a "fence-sitter" on this vital issue. By not speaking out now, Canada will lose the moral authority to speak in opposition later.

Canada should protect the work that it has done in arms control, an accomplishment that is genuinely threatened by US plans. Canada has in the past taken a bold and principled stand on arms control measures such as landmines and non-proliferation and should take strong stand on this issue.

The Group called on the government and all Canadian political parties to:

- refuse any participation in NMD
- oppose research, development and deployment of NMD
- support Canada's leadership record on disarmament
- push for an international arms control regime for ballistic missile control.

"The amount envisioned to be spent on NMD is over \$60 billion dollars", said Walter Dorn, CPG Secretary, "more than the amount the entire world spends in a year on aid for development."