



November 13, 2007

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

The Honourable Maxime Bernier
Minister of Foreign Affairs

The Honourable Peter MacKay
Minister of Defence

Dear Prime Minister Harper, Minister Bernier and Minister MacKay:

The Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs is a movement of scientists (physical, life and social) dedicated to the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. The movement was created in 1957 in a small village of Pugwash, Nova Scotia, at the behest of Albert Einstein and Bertrand Russell and other key figures of the day, including many Nobel Laureates. Pugwash itself was honoured with the 1995 Nobel Peace Prize, along with its founding Secretary-General, Sir Joseph Rotblat, for work “to diminish the part played by nuclear arms in international politics and, in the longer run, to eliminate such arms.”

At our 50th anniversary commemorations in Pugwash, NS, this summer we were further honoured to receive a warm letter from you as the Prime Minister, a congratulatory motion from the House of Commons and the presence of Foreign Minister (at the time) Peter McKay when the Nobel medallion of Sir Joseph was brought to Canada to be housed in a future museum at Thinker’s Lodge in Pugwash, NS.

We remain, however, a movement that is more concerned about the future than the past. We continue to recognize the threat of nuclear proliferation (vertical, horizontal and technological). We seek progressive nuclear disarmament (see attached Toronto Star editorial “Pugwash, Feisty at 50”). We have been pleased to provide intellectual input to the Canadian government on numerous occasions, including earlier this year. In general, we have been impressed with Canada’s stalwart support for nuclear disarmament.

We now have two important concerns and initiatives to bring to your attention:

Canadian Pugwash Group

Chair: Prof. Walter Dorn (dorn@rmc.ca); *Vice Chair:* Prof. Erika Simpson; *Treasurer:* Dr. Adele Buckley; *Secretary:* Prof. Sergei Plekhanov; *Directors:* Dr. David Harries; Mr. Steven Staples; Prof. Michael Wallace

Past Chairs: Dr. Adele Buckley; The Hon. Douglas Roche, O.C.; M.Gen.(ret) Leonard Johnson; Dr. Wm. Epstein; Prof. John Polanyi C.C.

1) The Nuclear Non-Proliferation regime is under dire threat as some countries seek nuclear cooperation outside of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Any exemptions will undermine non-proliferation and make the world a more dangerous place. We urge the Canadian government to act boldly, as it has done many times in the past, to prohibit proliferators from gaining nuclear technology outside of the NPT framework.

Canada cut off its nuclear cooperation with India when the latter tested its first nuclear device in 1974. This bold example likely slowed down nuclear proliferation. Canada provided steadfast leadership in the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG, created in 1974) to make sure that universal and impartial principles were used to guide nuclear cooperation.

Earlier this year, at the 2007 NPT Preparatory Committee meeting, Canada rightly “called for the universal and full adherence and compliance with the Treaty.” Canada should do nothing to undermine this admirable position. We are greatly concerned that Canada itself is considering nuclear cooperation with India outside of the NPT. We feel this would increase the nuclear danger, setting a deplorable example to would-be proliferators and undercut disarmament efforts. Canada can still share in the Indian economic boom without sacrificing its NPT principles.

We encourage Canada to show its commitment to non-proliferation by taking a firm stand in the NSG, ensuring that any exemptions for nuclear cooperation with India or with any of the three states that remain outside the NPT be linked to specific and verifiable disarmament commitments, including ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and a freeze on the production of fissile material for weapons purposes. Civilian nuclear cooperation must not facilitate development or expansion of the nuclear arsenals of states currently outside the NPT, but must lead ultimately to their joining the NPT as non-nuclear weapon states.

(2) Nuclear disarmament is brought about in steps. The Southern hemisphere of the planet is now almost covered entirely by Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone treaties. In fact, Antarctica is entirely demilitarized. We have begun to explore ideas for a nuclear-weapon-free zone (NWFZ) in the Arctic. We examined various possibilities for a staged approach: perhaps by first declaring the land, then the surface waters and finally the Arctic Ocean nuclear-weapons free. Though some measures require a multilateral framework, others could be implemented by Canada on its own, such a NWFZ on Canadian soil in the Arctic and/or in the North West Passage.

We have developed more detailed CPG statements, attached, on these two issues in order to submit them to you for your consideration. We would like to continue our dialogue with the government and we hope that we can provide intellectual support for Canada’s explorations of these important matters. Above all, we think that concrete initiatives are needed at this time, when nuclear disarmament seems to be backsliding and the world is moving in the direction of a greater nuclear danger.

We urge the Canadian government to continue to be a bold voice for nuclear disarmament. Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Sincerely,

Walter Dorn, Ph.D.
Chair

Cc: CPG Executive; Bev Delong, Chairperson, CNANW; Foreign Affairs Committee members
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