

Baltic, North, Norwegian and Greenland seas and the spread of confidence-building measures to these areas.”¹⁷³ However, Gorbachev began by proposing that “all countries concerned should embark on talks on the limitation and scaling down of military activity in the North as a whole, in both the eastern and the western hemispheres”¹⁷⁴, and described the European-oriented approach as a possible “initial step to the spread of confidence-building measures to the entire Arctic, to northern areas in both hemispheres.”¹⁷⁵ Finally, he openly invited Arctic arms control initiatives from the Western side, in declaring that “We are ready to discuss any counter proposals and ideas.”¹⁷⁶

Still, one must avoid excessive optimism about the likelihood of measures such as a partial demilitarization of the Polar Basin, submarine and aerial stand-off zones, and ASW-free zones, being accepted, especially by the United States. No progress in any kind of naval arms control is likely to occur during the lifetime of the current Administration in Washington. However, it is just possible that the next US Administration, perhaps less closely identified with the views of the US Navy, may be somewhat amenable to approaches of this type. As for the Soviets, the West should at least be testing the seriousness of their various proposals for naval arms control, some of long standing, by responding with counter-proposals of its own and not simply assuming that any kind of naval arms control whatsoever is necessarily disadvantageous to the West.

Finally, this paper has not yet answered one specific question posed at the very beginning. How can the increased emphasis on military activities in the Arctic reflected in the Canadian Government’s recent White Paper on defence, particularly the planned acquisition of nuclear-powered submarines partly for Arctic duties, be reconciled with that same government’s expressed commitment to seek to limit the “excessive militarization” of the region? On the

173. “Gorbachev—International Affairs,” Soviet Embassy, Ottawa, *Press Release*, 6 October 1987, p. 8.

174. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

175. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

176. *Ibid.*, p. 10.