

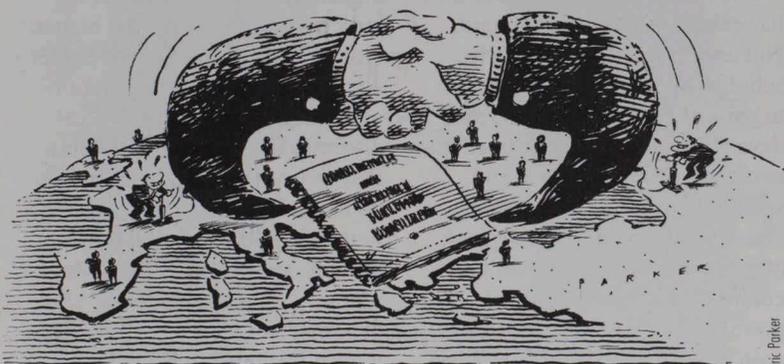
For Canada, the CDE was very much a NATO arms control exercise in coalition diplomacy. This meant, of course, that Canada would not deviate from Western unity in support of Eastern proposals; it also meant that Canada should not expose or exacerbate intra-alliance differences, particularly between the United States and Western Europe.

These two pillars of Canadian security policy have differed over non-proliferation strategies, theatre and strategic arms limitation and reduction talks, and strategic defences. Where these issues have cut across the thorny matter of the American nuclear guarantee of the defence of European members of NATO, Canada has tended to avoid taking sides. This is because Canada, as John Holmes has observed, is the odd man out in the Alliance, being neither European nor American but both. Historically, Canada has taken the view that nuclear arms and arms control issues which relate directly to European security are for the NATO European powers most closely involved to weigh and decide upon. Yet Canada is also a North American nation indebted to the United States for guidance on strategic matters, and sensitive to the responsibility shouldered by the US as keeper of the Western deterrent.

Intra-alliance debates over European arms control issues have thus occasioned a deferential, if conscientious, silence on Canada's part, which has masked domestic tensions between continental and Atlantic orientations in Canadian arms control policy. Yet, the Stockholm Conference was of a different order, as regards military strategy and arms control, from negotiations concerning the reduction of theatre-nuclear and conventional forces. A successful CSBM regime for Europe could only augment Alliance security; its failure, or the failure of the Warsaw Pact to comply with its terms, would not put West European security fundamentally at risk. As a consequence, neither internal agonizing nor deferential silence were discernable

attributes of Canadian diplomacy at Stockholm.

On the assumption that both West and East shared fears about the possibility of war breaking out in Europe through surprise attack or miscalculation (an assumption which would remain constant in Canadian thinking about arms control in Europe down to the present day) Canada, in the late 1950s and early 1960s, urged its allies to take a serious look at the possibility of an East-West agreement on the reciprocal establish-



ment of ground observation posts. Yet, in the prevailing atmosphere of distrust over Eastern intentions, and fears that Alliance military planning and preparedness would be compromised, Canada did not pursue this initiative. It was an idea whose time had not then come, and was not to come until the 1970s when the Alliance undertook studies of confidence-building measures in the context of the CSCE and Vienna Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) negotiations.

THE CSBMS WHICH WERE FINALLY agreed upon in the 1975 Helsinki accord involved the prior notification of large-scale military manoeuvres in Europe. Notification was non-obligatory, however, and this accord aroused justifiable fears in the West that the Soviet Union was not living up to the spirit of the Helsinki provisions. As far as the West and Canada were concerned, this compliance gap had to be closed through the Stockholm agreement, and it was. The principle, which Canada helped to frame, that CSBMs should be politically binding and verifiable as well as militarily significant and applicable to all of Europe, was accepted by the Soviet Union.

Canada was an important but not a major actor at Stockholm. As in most areas of arms control, the accord which was agreed upon in the CDE will not impinge in any substantive way upon Canada's military activities in Europe; these activities are normally well below the minimum threshold of 13,000 troops required for notification and observation. The Stockholm provisions should, however, have an impact upon NATO as well as Warsaw Pact multinational military manoeuvres. As a consequence,

the CDE accord should represent a step toward the fulfillment of another aim which has been a constant in Canadian thinking about arms control and security in Europe.

CANADA HAS SEEN ARMS CONTROL not strictly as an alternative to NATO defences but as a means to help achieve a greater measure of co-ordination and forward planning in Alliance military preparations. Ottawa must continue to identify arms control in Europe not just as a political palliative for thorny Alliance hardware decisions, but as a counterweight to NATO's penchant for quick-fix hardware solutions to the myriad problems of the defence of Western Europe. It is to be hoped that both West and East will come to see a militarily-significant CSBM regime for Europe as an alternative to a costly and (in the case of the West) politically unpalatable conventional re-armament programme, with its reliance on potentially destabilizing emerging "deep-strike" technologies. In a Europe without arms control, the West may well see such re-armament as necessary in order to offset the significant nu-

merical edge which the Warsaw Pact holds in the conventional field.

CSBMs will not diminish Warsaw Pact conventional capabilities; that is not the aim of these arms control measures. They are not steps toward disarmament, and should not be seen as such. They are, rather, instruments of a more stable balance of power. If complied with and if extended through a renewed mandate for the CDE, the Stockholm provisions should begin to redress an asymmetry in the European balance of power. They should diminish the strategic edge which the Warsaw Pact holds in the field of war readiness through its capability for secrecy and deception.

Confidence-building measures in essence provide a means of communication between adversaries, with respect to their military establishments. They are designed to reduce the risk rather than the instruments of war, through the reciprocal exchange of military intelligence. As such, "confidence" is a matter of knowledge and predictability rather than trust, which has little place in the lexicon of international strategy. An apparent Eastern acceptance at Stockholm of this essentially Western conception of CSBMs must be seen as the single most important achievement of the CDE exercise. For this, NATO cohesion was as much responsible as the sudden and fortuitous interest of Gorbachev's Russia in *glasnost*. □

Further Reading

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Allen Lynch. "The CDE Agreement - Achievement and Prospects," *Arms Control Today*, November 1986.

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