

Those negotiations are now under way, supported by a solid base of consultation in which Canada is, I can assure you, taking an influential part. Most Canadians are surely in favour of these negotiations, and wish government to work for their success.

I believe that the several propositions which I have just set out are grounded in a Canadian consensus. They are further supported by the public opinion poll conducted last year by your own Institute. Therefore I am troubled by this ongoing case study in which the foreign policy framework for an alliance negotiation seems to be largely accepted and agreed, but our national participation in a collective strategy continues to provoke vigorous dispute.

I am further troubled by the implied polarization of opinion which the debate brings about. The government, its officials and its allies are not members of a war movement against which a peace movement must contend. Nor are we blind partners within the alliance. Canadians can, I think, be proud of their contribution over the years to a reduction of East-West tensions, to the maintenance of a stable and sensible deterrence, and to a moderation of what Lord Carrington recently described as "megaphone diplomacy". In recent years there has been a distinctive Canadian activism in the field of arms control and disarmament. We have proposed multilateral policy initiatives such as the strategy of suffocation — an idea whose success, of course, depends on acceptance by others. We are active in negotiating a comprehensive ban on chemical weapons, and in advocating the prohibition of all weapons in outer space. We are exploring new techniques of verifying agreed upon arms control commitments. Throughout these initiatives we benefit from extensive consultation with Canadian experts outside government.

Clearly we have in action a difficult interplay of apocalyptic symbolism, represented by the Cruise missile itself, versus the balanced arms control and disarmament policy which those of us in government perceive ourselves as carrying out. The pragmatism of a middle power, or the realism of an alliance member, have difficulty in competing for public attention with the apocalypse — even if our programs are designed, in a spirit shared with any peace march, to avert the nuclear catastrophe which we all fear.

The choices imposed by a collective security system are no easier now than they were 50 years ago. We are not fair-weather members of the alliance, and we are a full party to its decisions and negotiations. The difficulty of promoting public trust, and public understanding of issues complex beyond symbolism, has increased considerably.

My third case study in foreign policy and the public interest is about the Third Option, that much maligned, much misunderstood declaration by Mitchell Sharp which appeared in 1972.

The case of the Third Option is particularly instructive about the risk that any government runs when it attempts to "conceptualize" foreign policy. I happen to believe that the risk is tolerable — even essential. Nonetheless the articulation of virtually and policy concept serves quite naturally to provide a focal point or a target for the various expectations and conflicting interests of the foreign policy community at large.