

its repeated protestations for improved understanding and cooperation. On the other side, American rhetoric about the Soviet Union as the focus of evil in the world has given rise to doubts about the extent to which the United States has been interested in improved East-West relations. Fortunately, there have been signs in recent weeks that both have been prepared to take a more pragmatic approach to dealing with the differences between them.

Canada's Role

Since 1949, Canada has considered it would most effectively ensure its own defence by membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Since the 1971 White Paper, Canada has contributed only conventional forces in Europe. With the phasing in of the CF-18 aircraft, it will give up its nuclear role in the air defence of North America. Canada has provided facilities for operational training of both nuclear capable and conventional forces of our allies, and has recently agreed to the testing of unarmed cruise missiles in this country.

The Canadian Government believes that NATO and Warsaw Pact countries should be able to achieve undiminished security at lower levels of arms through fair, verifiable agreements. Canada has joined in the formulation of the Western position in the INF negotiations through consultations in NATO and bilaterally with the United States. It has played an active role in the MBFR talks, and will have a delegation to the Conference on Disarmament in Europe when it begins as expected next year. Canada has played an active role in the multilateral negotiating body in Geneva. In recent years, Canadian expertise has been applied in the ad hoc group of seismic experts which is developing an international seismic data exchange, a verification mechanism which will form part of the provisions of an eventual comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty. Internationally Canadian expertise in defensive measures has been applied in the negotiations on a treaty banning chemical weapons. On the subject of arms control and outer space, Canada initiated a working paper last summer and this year called for the establishment of a working group.

Canada is committed to a policy of promoting peaceful cooperation and enhanced understanding between the two super-powers. The Government believes it is important to keep open the lines of political dialogue between East and West both on a bilateral basis and in multilateral forums. Canada has been interested in expanding East-West trade, and has supported initiatives within the Western Community to ensure that economic relations with the USSR are developed methodically and based on Western political, economic and security interests. Canadians have traditionally attempted to strengthen the role of international organizations, and particularly the United Nations, in the peaceful settlement of disputes.

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