

Chapter 4

DEFENCE AND COLLECTIVE SECURITY

East-West relations and collective defence

East-West relations continued to deteriorate. Soviet involvement in Afghanistan; the disturbed situation in Poland; the rising pitch of superpower rhetoric; the arms build-up; the use of surrogate forces to advance strategic objectives in the developing world; and differences within NATO between American and European attitudes and approaches to East-West relations and economic issues contributed to a difficult and challenging year. Throughout, Canada remained a strong advocate of keeping open the essential political dialogue between East and West.

NATO

Spain formally joined to NATO as its sixteenth member. External Affairs Minister MacGuigan, as Honourary President of the North Atlantic Council, welcomed Spanish membership at the May 1982 meeting of NATO foreign ministers, noting that this was both a contribution to Western collective security and a step towards Spanish reintegration into the Western community.

In June the Prime Minister attended the NATO Heads of State and Government Summit Meeting in Bonn. The meeting provided an occasion to issue a broad and balanced statement of Alliance principles and purpose. Members confirmed the NATO "two-track" policy of strengthening collective defence while at the same time continuing to negotiate on the broad range of arms control. The Final Declaration also demonstrated a renewed effort to explain NATO policies on arms control and disarmament to the general public of the member nations.

Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs MacEachen invited NATO foreign ministers to a special informal meeting at Val David, Quebec, in October 1982. From this meeting, the first of its kind, there emerged a consensus to adopt a forward-looking approach on collective security and a more comprehensive approach to policy on East-West relations which would include the economic dimension.

At the Quebec special meeting and at the regular NATO ministerial meeting in December 1982, foreign ministers reaffirmed the consensus that economic relations with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe should be conducted with Western security interests in mind and without contributing to the Soviet Union's military or strategic advantage. Foreign ministers also agreed that historic NATO policies had stood the test of time and remained valid; and that, although flexibility was required to face the new Soviet leadership, Western security must be strengthened.

Canada signed an agreement with Italy in May, 1982, to allow a limited program of pilot training in Canada for members of the Italian Air Force. In February 1983, Canada signed a framework agreement with the United States concerning the use of Canadian facilities and airspace for testing and evaluation of American defence systems.

In the longer term program of replacement and renewal of defence equipment, the first McDonnell-Douglas CF-18A fighter aircraft were delivered to the Canadian Forces, and work continued on the final contract definition stage of the new Canadian patrol frigate.

Arms control and disarmament

The pursuit of verifiable arms control and disarmament agreements continued as a priority of Canada's foreign policy. During the year it remained a serious, controversial and urgent issue as talks on intermediate range nuclear forces, begun in 1981, continued and the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. resumed the crucially important talks on strategic arms limitation and reduction.

The second special session on disarmament at the United Nations (UNSSOD II), June 7 - July 9, 1982, was a specific focus of attention, together with hearings on security and disarmament in the House of Commons Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence in February 1982.

In his address to UNSSOD II, the Prime Minister reminded the conference that the real problem was to break the arms spiral and that this would never be possible as long as any country fears for its security. He supported NATO's two-track policy, and the decision to deploy Pershing II and cruise missiles by the end of 1983 to counter the Soviet deployment of SS-20 missiles, if negotiations on arms limitation are not successful. The Prime Minister also reaffirmed Canada's commitment to a comprehensive test ban treaty and proposed an early start on a treaty to prohibit development, testing and deployment of all weapons for use in outer space.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs outlined Canadian priorities in a major speech to the Committee on Disarmament, the multilateral negotiating body in Geneva, on February 1, 1983.

At UNSSOD II Canada reiterated its commitment to play an active role in resolving questions related to the seismic verification of nuclear weapons testing under the possible test ban agreement. Canada has also contributed three papers to the experts' group on the use of chemical weapons, and on March 29, 1983 assumed chairmanship of the Chemical Weapons Working Group of the Committee on Disarmament.