

Commission that mankind's survival raises not only "the traditional questions of peace and war, but also of how to overcome world hunger, mass misery and alarming disparities between the living conditions of rich and poor." At the same time, many do not see these problems as vital security threats to Canada.

When the evaluations of individuals are disaggregated and compared, four groupings of issues emerge. These groupings mean that people who regard one problem in a set as serious, tend also to regard the others as serious. The four categories are: military threats (ie. wars, but also to a lesser extent, terrorism); economic threats (financial and monetary instability, trade conflicts and protectionism); what might be called unconventional "deprivation-derived" threats (poverty, human rights abuses and terrorism); and what seem most appropriately termed common or "systemic" threats (global pollution, crime and disease).

These groupings describe one way in which these problems are interrelated in the public mind. It should be emphasized, however, that Canadians tend to regard them together, either as generally important or as generally not important, rather than regarding some as important and others as unimportant. (To put this in statistical terms, the ratings, given any two individual problems, were almost always positively and never negatively correlated.)

To force the question of relative seriousness, the respondents were also asked to rank three types of threat facing Canada internationally – military, economic and environmental (see Figure 3). The results were unambiguous. Economic and environmental challenges are generally rated as being more serious than military threats. Perhaps surprisingly, most Canadians, fully eight in ten (83%), rank military threats as the least serious of the three. Only a small minority, fewer than 10%, regard them as the most serious. On the other hand, most Canadians, not just a small band of environmentalists, give the highest priority to environmental issues. Slightly fewer give top rank to economic threats than to environmental ones (43% versus 51%).

When the relative importance of these three types of threat in ten years time is gauged, environmental problems emerge even more strongly. Almost two-thirds of the respondents to the survey rank these first, while fewer than one-third so ranked economic threats. Only a handful pointed to conventional military threats as being the most serious, in a decade from now. Moreover, the vast majority of Canadians believe that economic capabilities are now more important than military capabilities, in determining influence in today's international system. Both of these patterns are also evident in recent US polls.

THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT FROM POLLS OR ANY OTHER indicator that most Canadians are conscious of such familiar "Canadian" pollution problems as acid rain and toxic chemicals in the Great Lakes. It would appear as well, that they both recognize and accept the seriousness of a range of global environmental problems. Canadians appear to accept a key theme in the Brundtland Report, that "the whole notion of security

as traditionally understood – in terms of political and military threats to national sovereignty – must be expanded to include the growing impacts of environmental stress." Indeed, most probably agreed with John Fraser, a former environment minister and now Speaker of the House of Commons, when he said recently: "We are looking down the coming decades with the certain reality that if we do not change our ways we are not going to survive."

Canadians have not always ranked environmental issues so highly. By way of comparison, a 1984 poll carried out for the Department of External Affairs placed environmental protection a distant third in importance for Canada's foreign policy, behind world peace and economic growth.

Despite these changing perceptions of threat, fears of a nuclear disaster have not entirely dissipated. They no longer commonly arise, however, from the spectre of a Soviet nuclear attack. When the respondents were asked about the ways in which nuclear weapons might be used, three distinct scenarios emerged. One, the "unconventional" scenario, foresees their use by terrorists or by a non-great power involved in a regional conflict. This is regarded by most Canadians as the best (or worst) bet, with about three in four judging it likely or very likely to happen within their lifetimes. A second – the "accidental nuclear war" scenario – is the possibility of nuclear missiles being fired by mistake or as a result of a nuclear equipment failure. The third, or "super-

Figure 1: **Greatest Threat to World Peace**

	1987 %	1988 %	1989 %
Soviet actions	5	5	5
US actions	8	11	9
Arms race	27	23	21
Nuclear proliferation	29	32	40
Regional conflict	31	28	25

power" scenario, includes the Cold War possibilities – a surprise attack on Europe or the United States, and that of a regional conflict escalating into a super-power nuclear exchange. This is perceived to be the least likely chain of events, with fewer than one in three expecting it.

Consistent also with a changing definition of security, has been a growing confidence in the ability of both superpowers to deal with world problems. Whereas only about one in three expressed this level of confidence in the United States' ability in 1987, two in three now do so. And whereas only about one in four expressed considerable or great confidence in the Soviet Union in 1987, more than one in every ▽

