

Preface

During the Parliamentary Committee hearings which preceded the final reading of the Bill establishing the Institute, witnesses agreed that one of the most useful tasks which such an organization could perform would be to sponsor sound academic research on matters related to peace and security. Such research would provide information and ideas on the basis of which those interested could develop informed opinions as to the best ways of reducing international tension. It was hoped that such research would not be confined to technical or to strictly military matters but would cast a wider net covering some of the underlying causes of conflict and international instability. It was also suggested that it should focus on matters of particular relevance and interest to Canada.

This paper, the first in our series of Occasional Papers, meets these requirements.

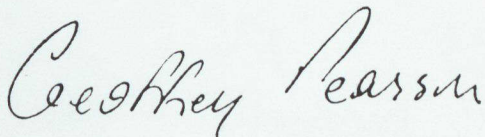
The author is a Canadian scholar who has specialized in Soviet foreign policy. His subject is the political crisis in Central America and the extent to which this has been exacerbated by the intrusion of the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union. The area is one in which Canadians have a long-standing interest and where many Canadian non-governmental organizations play an active role.

Recent developments have only served to increase international concern regarding the situation in Central America. We believe therefore that a serious study of the East/West dimensions of the conflict is indeed timely and will help to explain the connections between local conditions and global tensions.

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