

In sum, the message of the international cultural relations case study is that culture adds a welcome and essential component to Canada's foreign policy. There are significant areas of congruence between our national purposes and the goals of the cultural community. But there must also be recognition that the work of government on behalf of culture must take into account more than the individual preferences and ambitions which the cultural community will promote.

Let me offer another example of foreign policy and the public interest by way of illustration. Few issues have so stirred the Canadian public in recent years as the prospect of testing the guidance system of unarmed Cruise missiles in Canadian territory. It is a question which throws out, in its wake, the fear of nuclear war, the spectre of individuals pitted against governments, the nature of leadership in competing alliances, with reminders of our own geopolitical situation, and of the inherent uneasiness with which Canadians approach matters of national security.

Is there a dangerous distance here between the national interest and the public interest? I dare to think not. First because successive Canadian governments, and your own First Study Conference, have seen no alternative for the defence of Canada other than within a collective security system. In so far as a government can be confident of acting on the basis of public consensus, I believe that to be a proposition endorsed by most Canadians.

Equally, I believe there is a broad acceptance of the fact, demonstrated in two world wars, that Canada's security is intimately bound up with the security and stability of Europe. This is by no means merely an intellectual matter. Our primordial ties with Britain and with France have been broadened by the emigration of peoples from all parts of Europe. They too look back to their roots with affection and apprehension. Thus there is a strong emotional, as well as a strategic, political and economic commitment to the fate of Europe.

That commitment is embodied, in the postwar world, in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Successive Canadian governments have enjoyed a reassuring degree of trust and support for our founding membership in NATO, and for our continued obligations within its political and military structure. Indeed, our NATO commitments have on occasion been more vigorously reviewed by government itself than they have by any significant sector of public opinion.

Underlying our NATO commitment is an assessment of the probable source of threats to peace. Again, most Canadians share a concern at the rapid build-up of nuclear arms by the Soviet Union, and at Soviet deployment of intermediate-range missiles which menace the stability and security of our European allies — allies who, it is important to recall, were the first to seek means to balancing an intolerable threat to their security and to their political integrity.

It is also important to recall that the means of dealing with that threat were not restricted to the crude counter-threat of military force. The possible deployment of NATO intermediate-range missiles has for over three years been coupled with a very clear offer to the Soviet Union to negotiate a stable balance of forces at the lowest possible level.