

Despite this, two years later President Clinton flatly renounced any intention to honor that commitment. In Presidential Decision Directive #60, parts of which were revealed to the media, he approved a policy which declared that nuclear weapons would remain the cornerstone of U.S. security indefinitely. A senior Pentagon official reaffirmed that statement recently by stating that nuclear weapons are an essential element of major power status and "that would never change."

Then, of course, there is U.S. determination to proceed with a national missile defense (NMD) system despite the fact that it will violate the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. As the indispensable partner in the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), Canada obviously has a major stake in the outcome of this misguided effort.

These policies and programs are an open affront to all of the nations which consented to the indefinite extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty at U.S. urging and it openly confronts other nations with the need to create their own nuclear weapons.

### **Standing aloof**

Turning from dangerous confrontational military measures, consider another form of confrontation. This is American unwillingness to enter into or support constructive cooperative measures within the community of nations. As the world's superpower we stand aloof from the community. Such growing isolation is pernicious and endangers our long term interests economically, politically and militarily. Several specific examples follow, one of which is of special concern to Canada.

The starkest example of growing isolation is epitomized in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. Negotiations on this major effort to develop international law began in 1958 with strong U.S. participation and leadership. This process took 24 years to come to fruition in the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention and it reflected virtually every U.S. demand except for the Article XI provisions concerning seabed mining. For this reason, the industrialized states led by the U.S. refused to ratify the convention.

Twelve more years of negotiations followed while the U.S. insisted on changes in Article XI which led finally to U.S. signature and the convention coming into force in 1994.

Six years later the U.S. still has not ratified it. In short, we are isolating America from the development of a body of international law which covers 70% of the earth's surface and protects freedom of navigation, fisheries, the oceanic environment and the wealth of the global seabed. Worse, we are doing this even though the provisions of the Convention have been shaped through strong U.S. leadership to protect all of America's political, economic and security interests. It is difficult to conceive of a more foolish, shortsighted failure to advance the rule of law in the world order, nor one more certain to generate unnecessary confrontations with other nations in the future.