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I - Public Forum, Concordia University

Professor Michel Fortmann, a member of the Consultative Group, in order to stimulate the thinking of the audience and of the Canadian government, raised seven areas in which there may remain problems, even after the signing of the INF Agreement. (1) The INF Treaty will do away with only one class of weapons, the ones which remain shall need to be considered as they are dangerous also; (2) need for NATO to modernize remaining nuclear forces; (3) United Kingdom or French nuclear forces may well assume greater importance; (4) need to deal with question of level of conventional forces; (5) question of modernization of chemical weapons, and stocks; (6) would departure of strategic weapons be a good thing; does the West really want its main deterrent force concentrated on eight TRIDENT submarines? (7) Arms control questions are not at the heart of East-West relations, political attitudes are. It may be that there is a need to wait five years or more to see if (a) Gorbachev starts the bureaucratic struggle; and (b) if USSR relations have, in fact, changed for the better.

One member of the audience pointed out that the acquired nuclear-powered submarines discredited Canada while another observed that the DND White Paper and the Ambassador for Disarmament spoke with different voices. The importance of peace was discussed and public awareness was stressed as was concern about alleged Canadian Security Intelligence Service infiltration into peace groups at the same time that Ambassador Roche was speaking of a new period of cooperation and dialogue. A suggestion was made that a Young People's UN General Assembly ought to be formed as was one which advocated the establishment of an Arms Trade Register. Another participant declared most military alliances were becoming obsolete, that war ought to be abolished and that the Arctic ought to be demilitarized. Support was heard for the results of the Disarmament and Development Conference and of Canada's positive role. Remarking on the fact that the tour participants and the panelists were all male, one questioner wondered whether the lack of women in arms reduction talks indicated a lack of progress.