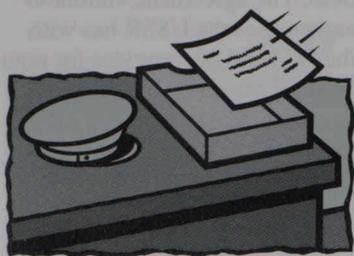


DEFENCE NOTES



Allied Burden Sharing

■ In December 1988 NATO's Defence Planning Committee unanimously approved a report on shared roles, risks and responsibilities in the alliance. Unlike the annual report to Congress submitted by the US secretary of defense, the NATO report took a broader approach to burden sharing, emphasizing contributions to "wider security responsibilities, interests and concerns" as well as contributions to the common defence of the NATO members.

In the context of wider security concerns, the report made reference to support for UN peacekeeping and foreign aid, as well as to "out-of-area" activities such as sending naval forces to the Persian Gulf. In peacekeeping, the contributions of Canada, Denmark, Norway and Italy were particularly noted. "Adequate funding" of UN activities was also recognized as "a further dimension of the overall effort in support of peace." When foreign aid is considered as a percentage of GNP, within the alliance Canada ranks behind Norway, the Netherlands, Denmark and Belgium.

In assessing contributions to the common defence of the NATO members, the report also departed from previous approaches by seeking to keep a balance between the traditional NATO emphasis on defence budgets and manpower, and other factors which help determine the defence burden. These include the social and economic costs borne by West Germany as a consequence of the large numbers of troops deployed there, and the damage caused by armoured exercises and low-level flying; the economic and political costs of conscription; and the problems associated with family separation

for those countries which base forces outside their national territory.

Of particular interest to Canada, the report recognized that Norway, Canada and the United States contribute to the collective effort through the surveillance and defence of their northern approaches. It was recognized that Canada is a significant contributor to the common and joint-funded activities of NATO (such as the NATO E-3A early warning aircraft and headquarters costs) from which it can expect to derive little or no direct economic benefit. The contribution of Canada, Turkey and Spain through the provision of training facilities was also noted.

Canada's Report Card

■ On the basic indicators of money and people Canada's contribution to NATO continues to draw fire from its allies. Canada has less than one percent of its work-force employed in military activities, trailed only by Luxembourg among NATO military establishments.

Using the preferred NATO indicator of defence expenditures as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) – defence expenditures per capita provides a more favorable indicator for Canada – Canada also trails all NATO countries except Luxembourg. In 1988, for example, the report indicates that Canada's defence expenditures were 2.08 percent of GDP, compared with 2.87 percent for Belgium, 2.98 percent for West Germany, 4.48 percent for Britain, and 6.07 percent for the United States. The 1987 NATO Ministerial Guidance policy requires members under the median spending level of around three percent to improve their performance. Canada, Denmark, Italy, Luxembourg and Spain are below

2.5 percent, and are singled out in the report.

The Canadian position is improved by reference to two other indicators: over the past ten years, Canada is one of a small NATO group which has approximated the NATO guideline to pursue real defence expenditure increases of about three percent per annum; and over the past five years Canada has spent an average of more than twenty percent of the defence budget on capital equipment. Only Britain and the United States have achieved significantly higher levels over the same period.

Shift in Spending Priorities

■ Overshadowing the perennial issue of Canada's military contri-

bution, however, is a broader trend in military expenditures: as a percentage of GDP, the leading NATO countries, including the US, have started to spend less on defence. Britain and Germany peaked in 1984, and have dropped steadily since then. The US, under the impact of the Reagan military build-up, peaked in 1986, and has dropped since. Curiously, Canada's defence expenditures as a percentage of GDP peaked in the 1984 – the last year of the Trudeau government – and declined slowly through the first Mulroney government. Although it is likely that defence expenditures will continue to increase in real dollars while economies expand, it is evident that large

CONVENTIONAL FORCES IN EUROPE: FACTS AND MORE FACTS

■ In November 1988 Secretary of State for External Affairs Joe Clark and then Minister of National Defence Perrin Beatty, released "a collective statistical assessment" by the member countries of NATO on the European force balance. Entitled "Conventional Forces in Europe: The Facts," the document was presented as a contribution to the initiation of new East-West talks on conventional forces in Europe. The force statistics are based on the area to be covered in the new talks – from the Atlantic to the Urals – and include Spanish and French forces not previously included in NATO force figures.

The figures released show overwhelming Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO) superiority in key military forces, including main battle tanks, artillery, combat aircraft and military personnel. In main battle tanks, the WTO advantage was estimated to be over three-to-one (51,500 to 16,424); in artillery the advantage was also put at three-to-one (43,400 to 14,458); and in combat aircraft the WTO advantage was judged to be more than two-to-one (8,250 to 3,977). Where overall military personnel was concerned, the study estimated WTO strength at 3.1 million compared with 2.2 million for NATO.

In the accompanying comment on these figures, Clark and Beatty declared that the force imbalance "gives the East a capability for surprise attack and large-scale offensive action." Pointing to the urgent need for new negotiations on conventional forces, the study was described as a "contribution to military transparency" and an invitation to the WTO "similarly to provide figures for their forces."

The WTO countries apparently took up their invitation. On 30 January 1989 *Pravda* published, under the authority of the WTO defence ministers, a very different version of the force balance. Describing the NATO figures as "tendentious data based on a selective approach," the *Pravda* data showed the WTO a two-to-one advantage in tanks, a slight advantage in artillery, and rough parity in combat aircraft. Overall, *Pravda* gave NATO a slight advantage in the total number of military