

ing members of NATO. But this reaffirmation of the continued need for nuclear weapons in Europe contrasts with a new-found uncertainty about reductions in conventional weapons. After fifteen years of negotiating mutual and balanced force reductions in Europe, the NATO allies have no clear view of what reductions they actually want. What minimum force levels would meet the security requirements of the allies while de-escalating the confrontation between the two military blocs?

Since these kinds of questions are now at the centre of conventional and nuclear arms negotiations, it is not difficult to see some of the reasons why the defence community would like to brake the arms control momentum. "Trust but verify" is proving to be a more difficult slogan than President Reagan imagined. Intrusive verification was only a *sine qua non* as long as the Soviets resisted it. When arms control begins to bite into valued military forces, it becomes a threatening force which may be best diverted into protracted negotiations.

ARMS CONTROLLERS HAVE THE opposite set of inhibitions. The verification provisions of the treaty on intermediate-range forces are less than sweeping, but they are nevertheless impressive. For the first time, Soviet and US inspectors will examine weapons sites and storage areas. They will have certain rights to mandatory inspections, and there are limited but precedent-setting provisions for the perimeter monitoring of weapons factories wherein inspectors literally watch over everything that goes through the plant gate. But the Intermediate-range Treaty is only the appetizer before the main course, which is strategic arms reductions. For optimistic arms controllers the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty has set the precedent, and what is required now is further elaboration of the means for co-operative on-site verification.

This hopeful view of the INF-START process is painfully off-set by the growing realization that the START reductions are a very limited beginning indeed. Two kinds of weapons are so far ex-

cluded from the agreed ceilings of 1,600 launchers and 6,000 warheads. The first includes the traditional gravity bomb and short-range attack missile carried by strategic bombers. The US is in the process of developing a new version of the short-range attack missile, which, when combined with the advanced technology bomber, undoubtedly will play a significant part in a modernized arsenal. The second excluded weapon is the sea-launched cruise missile, which, if the superpowers cannot agree on its limitation and verification, promises to become an increasing threat to all future efforts at arms control.

When these two categories of weapons are added to the 6,000 ceiling, it is reasonable to suppose that both sides will emerge from a START treaty with about 8,000 warheads, suggesting that the actual reductions will not exceed thirty percent of the present arsenals.

Even these reductions would be welcome were it not for the omission from the negotiations of any effort to control modernization. In fact, as critics of the proposals have noted, every weapons system currently under development will be permitted under the new treaty as currently envisaged, with the possible exception of mobile missiles. The United States continues to press for a ban on these – somewhat contradictorily since it is busy developing its own. For the United States, this means that the Trident D-5, the rail-mobile MX, and the advanced cruise missile will proceed, while testing will continue on new weapons such as earth-penetrating warheads, special effects nuclear warheads, and other so-called third-generation nuclear devices. The Soviets will be free to develop in much the same way.

THE CONSEQUENCE OF THIS permissive approach is that the respective sides are, in effect, making their nuclear arsenals more efficient. Older weapons with slower re-entry speeds, such as the early Minuteman, will be retired, and replaced by faster, more accurate, and deadlier launchers and warheads. The

nuclear arsenals are intended to become leaner and meaner. START will permit and even accelerate the on-going search for usable nuclear weapons. Like the protein-rich power breakfasts offered by fashionable hotels to diet conscious guests, START offers a programme to shed excess fat, build muscle, and eat with pleasure all at the same time.

In these circumstances it is not surprising that some arms controllers wonder if these kinds of reductions should be pursued at all. Like the defence experts, they might wonder if the present situation does not offer greater stability and certainty, and less sleight of hand as far as the public is concerned. In any event, it is clear from the START experience that reductions alone are not the answer. Rather, reductions must be designed to achieve some larger political goal. But has anybody enunciated a larger goal? It may come as no surprise to realize that General Secretary Gorbachev has done so.

In his disarmament programme of 15 January 1986, Gorbachev said that his goal was to eliminate all nuclear weapons by the year 2000, after which they would be declared illegal by international treaty. Gorbachev went further and identified a timetable: he described three overlapping phases. In the first phase, from 1986 to 1992, the superpowers would stop all kinds of nuclear explosions, reduce delivery vehicles by fifty percent, retain no more than 6,000 warheads, and eliminate all medium-range missiles in the European zone. Additionally, they would renounce the development, testing, and deployment of "space strike weapons" – the Soviet phrase for Star Wars. In the second phase, from 1990 to 1995, other nuclear states would join in a freeze on nuclear weapons and stop all nuclear weapon tests. In the third phase, from 1995 to 2000, the superpowers and all other nuclear powers would totally eliminate their nuclear arsenals.

This grandiose plan can easily be dismissed as propaganda, except it must be conceded that Gorbachev is batting surprisingly well in the early season: the

medium-range missiles have been eliminated, and the formula for strategic arms reductions is in place. Immediate success, of course, is not the relevant point: in general terms, Gorbachev has offered a yardstick by which we might measure the value of arms control proposals – he wants to abolish nuclear weapons within a finite time period.

On the Western side there is no such vision. The allies do not want to abolish nuclear weapons, but are agreeable to reductions – leading where? That question remains to be answered. At the unofficial level, the Soviets appear to be offering some unsolicited assistance. The Committee of Soviet Scientists for Peace has concluded that mutual security based on "minimal deterrence" could be achieved with a force of 600 nuclear warheads on single-warhead, mobile missiles. All other nuclear weapons, they argue, should be abolished. Since the NATO governments do not wish to abolish nuclear weapons, such an analysis may be more conducive to Western thinking. Nor do we need to argue about the Soviet numbers. Minimal deterrence based on 1,000 or even 3,000 warheads would be an interesting challenge, particularly when compared with the 8,000 which we are likely to get from the START negotiations.

WHO IS TO DO THE HOMEWORK and develop some of these basic proposals for minimal deterrence? There is no point in leaving everything to US leadership. Canada has long reiterated its commitment to six disarmament principles, one of which is radical reductions in nuclear forces and the enhancement of strategic stability. But what do we mean by "radical reductions," and what radically lower levels would be compatible with "strategic stability"?

Unable or unwilling to answer these questions, Canadian arms control policy is looking increasingly dog-eared. Defining these objectives would contribute to a much needed discussion within the Western alliance. Now that would have been a speech for the Prime Minister to have given this summer to the United Nations Special Session on Disarmament. □