

1.3 A Time of Change

The change, reform and uncertainty that characterize the beginning of the 1990s, the last decade of this millennium, furnished their own challenge to the work of the Committee. This period of flux affects both the international and the Canadian political situation, as well as Canada's security and intelligence community.

Changes in ideology and political hegemony undreamed of in recent times are under way in many parts of the world, especially in Central and Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union. Other parts of the world are also experiencing political change and upheaval, while elsewhere there is little or no reflection of this political turmoil and effervescence.

Long-held political beliefs and alliances are today in question, if not in actual mutation. Professor Jacques Levesque (University of Montreal) told the Committee during his appearance that the Warsaw Pact is coming undone militarily, in large part because of the political changes occurring within its member states. Professor Franklyn Griffiths (University of Toronto) told the Committee that Soviet-style systems are coming unravelled because they are unsustainable socially, economically and environmentally. Professor Paul Marantz (University of British Columbia) asserted that in Eastern Europe there will be a movement away from communism to new systems guided by each country's past experience. He characterized this not as the end of history, but as the rebirth of history.

It is not clear how this period of political flux will turn out. Certainly, the "end of history" is not upon us, although another historical epoch may be unfolding. It is difficult to foresee what will evolve from this period of uncertainty and unpredictability. It is certain that there will be change, although its extent is unclear. A reversion to the polarization of the Cold War is unlikely. Jeane J. Kirkpatrick said cautiously in a recent article in *Foreign Affairs*, "The Cold War is over — nearly. The post war era is finished — absolutely". The July 1990 meeting of NATO in London was more definitive on this issue. It is to be hoped that a period of rigidity and closed societies will not be replaced by ethnic, national and regional rivalry or conflict.

It is clear to the Committee that this period of unprecedented change on the international scene does not mean that some security and intelligence capacity is no longer necessary. Quite the contrary, it means that a security and intelligence capacity must be more flexible and even more capable of anticipating and understanding change than ever before.

CSIS itself is in flux and has been so particularly since 1987 when the new Director was named and the Independent Advisory Team's recommendations were accepted by the Government. Most, but not all, the recommendations made by IAT are in place. The impact of these changes has been felt throughout the Service. They will be discussed in the Report against the background of dynamic change in world affairs.