

was the Soviet deployment of the modern SS-20 missile system that prompted Helmut Schmidt, then Chancellor of West Germany, to urge a NATO response, which would assure the viability of NATO's deterrence and defence at a comparable level. In addition, the build-up of Soviet air defences has required improvements in NATO systems in order to ensure that the deterrent strategy of the West remains credible. By preventing an imbalance of forces, modernization programmes are an important factor in making reasonable arms control negotiations possible. To take but one example, it is hard to imagine that the Soviet Union would have agreed in principle to the elimination of SS-20 missiles from Europe without NATO's new INF deployments. (This leads one to wonder why the Soviet Missiles were put there in the first place, at a time when NATO had no comparable missile systems.)

Unilateral gestures are not sufficient. The nuclear arms control negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union are vital to achieving balanced reductions. Negotiated agreements that are equitable, balanced and verifiable are necessary to assure both sides that their security is not imperilled. The essential criterion is strategic stability. In this process, negotiators must be mindful of the relationship between nuclear and conventional forces; the West could not afford to see the nuclear deterrent forces negotiated down to a level where the conventional imbalance made war more likely. That is why conventional force reductions that take account of the asymmetries in favour of the Soviet Union are so important to strategic stability.

Western nations are, of course, seeking to improve their conventional posture, but this is a costly and lengthy process. One must bear in mind important demographic factors, such as the declining birthrate in the Federal Republic of Germany, and public expectations of certain levels of social welfare and economic development. There is intense competition for finite resources. It may be tempting to suggest that the elimination of nuclear weapons would be worth the extra sacrifice, but would the social costs be affordable in the foreseeable future?

FOR CANADA'S PART . . .

What of Canada's experience in North America. Canada, situated between the two great nuclear powers, would be profoundly affected by Soviet aggression against this continent. Soviet nuclear weapons, carried by missiles or aircraft, even if directed solely at targets in the United States, would pass over Canada and, given the proximity of those targets,

pose a clear risk of destruction for us also. Canada cannot stand aloof from the threat to North America. If nuclear attack is to be prevented by the convincing threat of nuclear retaliation, then the earliest warning possible is essential; Canada is making an important contribution through our partnership with the United States in NORAD.

Canada cooperates with alliance partners who are nuclear powers or who bear the risks and responsibilities of nuclear weapons based, for sound military reasons, on their soil. While there are no nuclear weapons based in Canada, the country does its part to ensure that the deterrent remains credible at all levels. For example, Canadian ports are open to the nuclear-capable ships of our allies. Another example of Canadian cooperation is the testing of unarmed US cruise missiles over Canadian territory. In these ways, Canadian security is strengthened by ensuring that the nuclear deterrent forces of our allies, upon which we rely, are effective.

Whether or not the Soviet Union has designs on the territory of Western nations, without the NATO nuclear deterrent the Soviet Union would be able to use its military preponderance to pursue political goals and thus threaten the freedom of Western nations through intimidation. Under these circumstances, could the nations of the West be assured that their fundamental social, economic and political values would remain unimpaired?

Some allege that a sort of parallelism exists between the Soviet Union and the United States on the grounds that they are both superpowers with a common superpower morality. This leads to the question whether the relationship between the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact members is any different from the Western Europe/Canada/United States relationship. Are the NATO partners at a disadvantage because of the American military preponderance in the Alliance? In fact, there is a great difference between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. The history of friendship, trust, and shared democratic values between the United States, its European partners and Canada, regrettably, are lacking between the Soviet Union and the nations of Eastern Europe. Once again we are reminded of Pope John Paul's words about peace involving mutual respect, confidence, and collaboration.

THE WAY AHEAD

How then does one square the hopes for a world one day free of nuclear weapons with continued reliance, for the foreseeable future, on nuclear de-