

Is PEACE STILL AT WAR WITH SECURITY?

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■ WAS IN AUSTRALIA LAST AUGUST WHEN MY APPOINTMENT to head CIIPS was announced by Mr. Clark. It was striking to see the quizzical reaction of a diverse sample of Australians to the Institute's double-barrelled (forgive me) mandate. After nearly five years this odd coupling has become familiar to interested Canadians, but its comfort level is still low and, for many, its plausibility still in doubt. Perceptions, of course, are realities and if enough people insist on identifying themselves as part of a "peace" community or a "security" community and insist on seeing the other as a hostile camp, then they will be at odds.

For most people – voters, citizens and taxpayers – the roots of the dispute rapidly become arcane. Ordinary people ask themselves why, if a Reagan and a Gorbachev can start finding some common ground, the two domestic constituencies concerned with the same problem are still at each other's throats.

Practically no one denies any longer the reality or the historic significance of the new moderated rhetoric, a concrete if modest disarmament agreement on Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces, and serious prospects of reductions of strategic and conventional forces. Optimism is bolstered by the recognition of the economic constraints on both East and West. But there is still a long way to go, with differing interpretations of how much real progress has been achieved and how much trust can yet be afforded.

It is precisely in these diagnoses and prescriptions that basic disagreements arise. There are people whose roles and professional responsibilities require them to approach international security issues with a predominant concern to protect against worst-case possibilities, to ensure first, and foremost that any attack against the physical security of the state and its people is deterred or repelled. Others come at the problem from the opposite end: they look in every circumstance for the best-case possibilities of defusing hostility and diminishing confrontation.

As survey after survey of public opinion testifies, most Canadians share both sets of instincts about the current state of East-West confrontation. They are still persuaded of the need for strong defences and a posture of negotiating from strength, but they are impressed, too, by the tone and content in the Gorbachev campaign to de-escalate the Cold War, and they are ready to support vigorous Western initiatives towards the same end – even ones that involve prudent risktaking. Canada's decision-makers, too, are wrestling with the same instincts and judgments on East-West relations in their own work.

WHAT ARE REASONABLE OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTATIONS for advancing a productive discussion of "peace" and "security"? If the adherents of the two main rallying points are battling with each other, both sides will get a hearing from the interested public and from decision-makers, but their excesses will reduce the possibilities for creative democratic dialogue. On the other hand, if there are forums and habits for the civil exchange of views, there will still be wide areas of disagreement, but there may also be a better crystallization of a range of serious options for consideration by the public and policy-makers. In the process, the best analysts and ad-

vocates of both communities are likely to have more impact on the ultimate policy result than they would operating from splendid isolation.

A climate of improved East-West relations and serious prospects for arms control should increase the possibilities for such a constructive dialogue – although the present changing situation also throws up destabilizing new challenges. The forums are also better developed than ever; CIIPS is one and there are others. Thoughtful people in both communities have learned about the other's thought-patterns and language, and engaged in both technical and policy discussions. In addition, both sides of the debate now see it as useful and necessary to talk about new approaches to security – "common" or "mutual" security, and wider concepts of security. These approaches may help carry us toward a broader base of shared objectives.

MUCH CREATIVE WORK REMAINS TO BE DONE TO CONFRONT the wider set of challenges to security as the end of the 20th century approaches. The deep-rooted Canadian traditions of multilateral cooperation and functional participation are pathbreaking examples of the kind of order-building and maintenance which the age of global interdependence demands. So are Canada's leading efforts to combat Third World poverty and promote the respect of human rights around the world.

Canada has direct stakes in three of the world's dynamic ocean regions and many links and responsibilities elsewhere. Our territorial and maritime surveillance and defence will remain a huge challenge, our collective defence responsibilities taxing, and a plethora of new peacekeeping, conflict resolution and institution-building demands will call on all our diplomatic and military capabilities. Without diluting the concept of security, or underrating the role of military force which will be near its core for a long time to come, the new imperative is to create less competitive security relationships and to defuse underlying causes of international hostility.

In many of these other challenges to peace and security one quickly finds that the depth of polarization and mutual mistrust among interested Canadians is at least as great as it is on East-West relations. In regional conflicts such as the Middle East, Central America or Cyprus, Canadians seeking ways to help resolve conflict and reduce confrontation discover that some of their most even-handed efforts are greeted with suspicion or hostility by those with special sympathies to one party or another.

Some conflicts will be more amenable to Canadian assistance, some less, but there are few where Canada has no interest or stake, especially when serving on the UN Security Council. In general, Canada's claim to impartiality is one of the strongest in the world. In war, however, truth is the first casualty and anyone who seeks to get between combatants can expect some blows – deserved or not. These are sobering reminders that conflict is a serious business; the motivations of all who take an interest in a conflict will come under scrutiny and sometimes under fire.

"Peace" and "security" need not be at war and there are now many opportunities for advancing both goals on converging paths. We should never expect, however, that there will not be "conflict" about conflict. □