

dispatch forces to trouble spots here and there around the world. Nor should the armed forces of this country be planned and developed with an eye to participating heavily, or as a matter of course, in every United Nations or similar action that might be launched. Future contingencies cannot all be predicted or addressed in current military equipment programmes. The best approach is to develop forces that are effective in existing high-priority commitments, and then to draw on them as seems sensible, and realistic, in terms of their particular military capabilities, whenever other demands arise.

Stresses, strains and imperfections in the defence structure and the armed forces also have to be anticipated over time. The government will sometimes have to act with available forces rather than always be able to deploy elements that are perfectly tailored to each particular demand. And it may have to reduce capabilities temporarily in some existing commitment areas -- though not below an essential minimum in the most critical areas of national interest -- as it responds positively to some especially vital new requirement that arises. Blanket coverage of all defence needs, to 100 percent of demand, is not possible in the real world for any country. Sometimes, hard decisions have to be made which give priority to certain immediate tasks over well-laid plans and careful husbanding of resources; and the armed forces have to be planned, developed and utilized with that in mind.

Even if outbreaks similar to the Persian Gulf crisis are not repeated, or are few and far between, there are nonetheless many disputes and situations in the world which may involve Canada in future military activities. Most of these will probably be in the form of peace observation or peacekeeping missions of one kind or another, although other forms of military involvement are possible such as the provision of military assistance, internal security assurance, or arms control verification activities.

Canada has an established reputation for peacekeeping, and will likely continue to receive a stream of requests, over time, for communicators, logistics personnel, helicopter units, and other combat support or supply elements. Infantry battalions or companies