

friends to settle regional disputes and to accept UN supervision of such settlements is striking. The North is of course another matter, given the fact that Soviet (and US) territory is involved, and the obvious difficulties of monitoring submarine movements. Nevertheless, opportunities now exist to take advantage of a pause in the military competition of the superpowers, and perhaps to begin to reverse it. Canada has a natural vocation to take the lead in the one area where we have a dominant interest, the North. The White Paper has perceived this interest and rightly emphasizes it. But the perception assumes that the major threat to Canadian security will remain military confrontation between East and West, justifying investments in military hardware designed primarily for use in conventional warfare. While this assumption is common to Canada's allies as well, none shares Canada's unique strategic situation and therefore incentive to seek new ways of interpreting "security" in the future.

As we look ahead to the twenty-first century, we can be reasonably certain that the main division in the global community will be between a relatively prosperous and stable North and a relatively poor and turbulent South, and that this division will grow, both in numbers of people and in per capita incomes. A major challenge will be finding ways to reorganize the nation-state system in order to mitigate this disparity, both within and between states, so that it will not result in endemic civil conflict, mass refugee movements, and increasing damage to the natural environment. How, for example, can global energy resources be shared in ways which allow ten or more billion people to enjoy basic living standards without, at the same time, contaminating the atmosphere and the oceans beyond repair? How can nuclear technology be controlled so as to prevent its use for explosive purposes by states or groups in desperate circumstances? How are

disarmament agreements to be verified? These are the kinds of questions that will more and more influence the allocation of resources to traditional means of defence and security. Armed forces will not and should not disappear, but they will be called upon to perform different tasks, of which UN peacekeeping may be a significant precursor.

If these are some of the main challenges to global security in the future, defence policies will have to change. It is too soon to claim that Soviet defence policies are in fact changing, but the signs are positive. The NATO allies are waiting for things to happen. If they wait too long the temptation to invest in new technology will push them in directions which will be difficult to reverse. The new European fighter, the stealth bomber and the search for anti-ballistic missile defences are current examples. Canadian choices should not be made independently of our allies. But we can begin to redefine these choices by pressing for recognition of our unique situation, and by taking a lead in the alliance on the need to move faster towards a new relationship with the adversary of old, and a new readiness to give priority to the global challenges which threaten the human future.

Geoffrey Pearson is the executive director of the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security.

The views expressed in this paper are the sole responsibility of the author, and should not be taken to represent the views of the Institute and its Board.

Published by the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security. Additional copies are available from the Institute: Constitution Square, 360 Albert Street, Suite 900, Ottawa, Ontario, K1R 7X7.

*Le présent exposé est également publié en français.  
ISBN: 0-662-16569-1*