

FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Future of the Institute and *Peace & Security* Magazine

UNDER EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES, MICHAEL Bryans, the editor of *Peace & Security* has offered me this page in my capacity as representative of his publisher (the Institute) to communicate with our 9,000 readers about some vital developments.

In the Federal Budget of 25 February 1992, the Minister of Finance announced the Government's intention to "wind up" or otherwise eliminate twenty-one diverse entities financed by the Federal Government, including the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security.

The Institute's Board of Directors has stated that the Government's decision is completely unjustified in the light of the record of performance under the Institute's mandate from Parliament and is likely to result in a major loss of the Canadian taxpayers' investment. The Board and many others, inside and outside Canada, have called for the decision to be reversed. The dissolution of such a body would be especially damaging and untimely in a period when the international situation is undergoing such radical change and when the Institute, and collaborators under its programmes, have been in the forefront of shaping Canadian understanding, response and initiative.

The Government's totally unexpected decision seems in part to have been based on an image of all crown corporations as inefficient, duplicative and bureaucratic bodies. Such a view has no application whatever to our small and lean organization. It has been custom-built and honed to fill the gaps and strengthen the critical mass in Canada's national capabilities as envisaged by all parties in Parliament in 1984. Its functions of independent, imaginative and risk-taking activity cannot be filled by government. Its achievements in upgrading and concerting the efforts of universities, non-governmental organizations and others across the country could now be lost, as will the focal point and clearing-house for this work in Canada which has come to be widely known and respected around the world.

The distinguished Massachusetts Institute of Technology professor Lincoln Bloomfield, one of the non-Canadian members of the Board, believes that this decision will "give a powerful negative message to the world about Canada's role in this new era, where Canadian leadership is more essential than ever." Numerous reactions of a similar character are flowing in from other countries as the news reaches them.

The Institute's Board of Directors has received legal counsel as to its responsibilities under the law in these extraordinary circumstances. As the Government recognizes, the Institute will continue to exist, and must continue to pursue the purposes set out in

its Act, until that Act is repealed by Parliament. Moreover, the Minister of Finance is obliged under law to continue allocating funds, at the minimum rate of \$5 million annually, until the Act is repealed. It cannot be predicted with any certainty when the new law (Bill C-63) will receive final passage, although it received first reading in Parliament on 10 March.

In the meanwhile, as prudent managers, the Institute's Board, while continuing to pursue its functions under the law, must take into account the unequivocal intention of the Government to wind up the Institute and to "transfer the necessary continuing resources to the Department of External Affairs."

We are thus seeking clarification of the government's intention and discussing what will be required to discharge the Institute's existing commitments, to continue to execute its mandate while winding down in anticipation of the repeal of the Act, and to ensure the maximum conservation and use for Canada of the extremely valuable assets which have been built up in its programmes and its people.

Specifically, the Institute wishes to provide assurance of its intention to:

- honour its firm existing commitments to present holders of scholarships, fellowships, grants and contracts;
- protect the rights and interests of its employees up to the best levels of public and private sector practice;
- obtain the earliest possible indications from the Government of whether it will be possible to proceed further with pending projects and with competitions for scholarships, fellowships and grants. All applicants will be advised as soon as any information is available and they are requested *not* to contact our offices; and
- honour all its normal commercial commitments.

This magazine, of course, has earned a place of central importance and respect in both the Institute's work and in the dialogue among the communities concerned with peace and security, across Canada and abroad. The Institute's Board members and many others, are deeply conscious of the hard-earned value of this asset, and the need to do everything possible to sustain it in some acceptable way.

We hope that this is not the last issue of *Peace & Security* that you will receive, but it may be. If so, we will all be much the poorer in the future, but not less responsible for maintaining the effort to deepen knowledge and understanding of these vital questions in an era of incredible change and challenge. □

— BERNARD WOOD

To Express Your Concern ...

Because of the need for parliamentary action to implement the Government's stated intentions, and the special all-party support for the Institute from its conception, the Commons Standing Committees on External Affairs and/or National Defence would thus be the most appropriate forum in which Canadians and others could raise their interests, concerns and suggestions. The addresses are:

*Clerk and Members of the
Standing Committee on
External Affairs
180 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6
Facsimile: (613) 996-1962
and/or*

*Clerk and Members of the
Standing Committee on
National Defence
(same address as above)
Facsimile: (613) 992-7974*