

justified. Alone amongst the major publications identified here, it lists all its sources, including Congressional Hearings and more than 200 requests under the Freedom of Information Act. The Databook, the first volume of which is on U.S. Nuclear Forces and Capabilities (a Soviet volume is to come), has become an indispensable reference manual, although it does not seek to make annual missile counts comparable to those of the Military Balance.

Why not rely simply on Government statements about nuclear deployments? In the Canadian case, as with other allies of the United States, the answer is that our main insights into the nuclear debate lie in Washington, not Ottawa. The Canadian Government, as a member of NATO, is more or less obliged to accept the figures generated through the NATO process. The independent intelligence capabilities of the smaller allies, Canada included, are extremely limited. In respect of nuclear weapons holdings, therefore, NATO figures are effectively the official American figures.

But these figures too are open to debate, particularly in the United States, where information from competing agencies often finds its way into the public record. By analysing and comparing the various sources it is possible to understand the areas of uncertainty and controversy in the debate about the capabilities and tendencies of strategic weapons systems.

### III Basic Factors in the Strategic Force Balance

An effective analysis of the comparative value of strategic nuclear weapons systems involves consideration of a number of variables. These include the following:

- the number of missiles and warheads deployed by both sides
- the yield of the warhead
- the accuracy of the warhead