

At the same time, Western collective security arrangements give the participants major opportunities to influence the collective development of a whole range of security measures, including arms control. In an address to the Empire Club of Toronto on 15 January 1987, Minister of National Defence Perrin Beatty pointed out that it is because of its preparedness to share the burden in the North Atlantic Alliance that Canada became part of the Helsinki process, and thereby participated in the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe and contributed to its success. Our role in NATO ensures that Canada actively participates in the CSCE process, takes part in the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) Talks in Europe, and is a partner in NATO consultations on nuclear arms control.

DETERRENCE AND THE NUCLEAR CONTRIBUTION

To understand why we rely, in the final analysis, on nuclear weapons to prevent intimidation or the actual outbreak of war, it is essential to understand the basis of the West's deterrent strategy. The West seeks, through the maintenance of credible forces, to convince a potential aggressor that attack, or the threat of attack, at any level, would not be worth the costs; the risks involved in initiating or conducting war would be greater than any conceivable gains. To be effective, those deterrent forces must be credible. This is ensured by deploying forces that are adequate, modern and survivable. At the same time, it is not necessary to match the potential aggressor weapon for weapon; the defender must demonstrate the capability and determination to use those forces, in a timely and flexible fashion, should deterrence fail. A credible deterrence requires, *inter alia*, a strong, diverse and flexible military posture.

Nuclear weapons serve a fundamental political purpose. The members of NATO consider that the use of nuclear weapons in their defence would represent a basic qualitative change from conventional warfare. Thus, the possession of nuclear arms as part of NATO's deterrent forces, and the evident intent to use them as necessary should deterrence fail, conveys a political signal: the West is determined to take whatever measures are necessary to maintain the integrity of its territory. NATO would seek to end enemy aggression at the lowest possible level of violence. It is a fundamental principle of NATO that political control over the use of nuclear weapons must always be maintained.

So long as the security of NATO countries is threatened by an Eastern conventional force advantage, and the Soviet Union relies on nuclear weapons to back up that threat, NATO must continue to rely on nuclear deterrence. NATO, as a defensive alliance, has always been pledged to the no-first-use of *force*. If, however, the East were to attack, NATO must reserve the right to use nuclear weapons first. Again, the purpose of the nuclear first-use option is to make clear to the aggressor that attack, or the threat of attack, at any level, would not be worth the inherent risks of escalation.

NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), General Bernard Rogers, has elaborated on the flaws in the 'no-first-use' of nuclear weapons policy:

The military reality that, even with adequate conventional capabilities NATO could never be *certain* of defeating a conventional attack without escalation argues persuasively against discarding Flexible Response in favour of a 'no-first-use' policy with regard to nuclear weapons. Furthermore, a 'no-first-use' policy would forfeit a tactical advantage of NATO's defences, inasmuch as the very possibility of a NATO resort to nuclear weapons serves to restrain the tactical massing of Warsaw Pact conventional forces preparatory to an attack. A 'no-first-use' policy would also be perceived as a weakening of the American commitment to European security, implying a 'decoupling' of the fate of Western Europe from the US strategic nuclear umbrella.

In an even broader sense, the most serious flaw of a 'no-first-use' policy is that it would eliminate the uncertainty regarding the employment of nuclear weapons which is fundamental to NATO's deterrent strategy. Flexible Response prevents a potential aggressor from predicting, with confidence, NATO's specific response to aggression. Leaving open the possibility of a NATO nuclear response would cause a potential aggressor to deliberate whether the risks of attack could ever be outweighed by any potential gains. Removing this uncertainty by declaring a 'no-first-use' policy would seriously weaken the NATO deterrent.⁴

Increases in the conventional capabilities of the West can, however, raise the nuclear threshold, while fully reserving the nuclear option and without