

US all the way

ment be likely to pull back from its enthusiastic pursuit of closer relations with the United States, but he and his successors will be unlikely to repeat these unprecedented initiatives for many years to come. Depending on the degree of failure, Canadian retrenchment could range from a return to the status quo ante to a period of severe tension. At best there would be a normal, arms-length interstate relationship, but at worst there would be bitterness, resentment and hostility. In any event, the level of interdependence between Canada and the United States would require a continued close interconnection, but it would not be based on the logic of the Mulroney gamble. For the

United States, failure of the gamble would mark a lost opportunity to strengthen its alliance relationships, and make a significant move in the direction of freer trade at a time of rising worldwide protectionist pressures. It could also mark a worsening of relations with its closest ally and most important trading partner.

The results of the Mulroney gamble will be known within the year. Win or lose, Brian Mulroney has set Canadian-American relations on a new course. The difficulties in the path of success are formidable, but the gamble is a bold one. Whatever happens, Canada's relations with the United States will never again be the same. □

An attempt at control *With the help of Star Wars*

President Reagan and nuclear arms

by K.J. Merklinger

On January 7 and 8, 1985, the representatives of the US and USSR met for the first time in thirteen months to discuss nuclear arms control matters in Geneva. Formal negotiations began two months later in March. The final result of these negotiations is not expected to be reached easily or quickly and is thought by some to be many years away. The January talks were described as procedural and philosophical, but they were also long and arduous (14 ½ hours). It was decided in the end that there should be three separate and parallel but closely related sets of discussions dealing with strategic nuclear weapons, intermediate-range nuclear weapons and space weapons. The term "space weapons" is imprecise but usually refers to anti-ballistic missile weapons which can be launched from earth or from space with interception occurring in space. A joint statement released January 8 said that the objective of the renewed negotiations would be to "work out effective agreements aimed at preventing an arms race in space and terminating it on Earth." US Secretary of State Shultz said that he and the Soviets had agreed to a "radical reduction" in nuclear weapons and not just a capping off of increases as had occurred in SALT I and II.

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What is remarkable about the January agreement on the structure of the talks, officially called the Negotiations on Nuclear and Space Arms? The Soviet Union dropped its demand that the US abandon its Star Wars research project as an expression of good faith even before the negotiations had begun and, also, its previous insistence that new US intermediate-range missiles be pulled out of Europe before it would resume negotiations. The US, for its part, had to agree to discuss space weapons and to the linkage of talks on this subject with those on the reduction of strategic and intermediate-range nuclear weapons. Mr. Shultz said that the separate meetings would be closely linked in a way the US did not prefer; thus a deadlock over space weapons could derail a very desirable agreement to reduce offensive weapons. But the US clearly wanted the talks to proceed and this was the best formula they could get.

January: talks begin

Under a preferred US scenario, Mr. Shultz would have liked the first part of the negotiations to deal with proposed deep cuts in offensive nuclear forces, especially the hundreds of Soviet large and accurate land-based missiles; the second, to turn to defensive systems existing or required to protect retaliatory forces; and finally, discussion of the possibilities for space-based defence of populations. The reasons for this strategy are obvious: progress in the first subject area would not then depend on two and three; two would not depend on three and each subject area could proceed in parallel or in sequence, whichever seemed most logical and practicable.