



Europe were among the first victims of chemical weapons use during World War I. However I am not an expert on chemical weapons nor on the intricacies of the negotiations aimed at a comprehensive, verifiable ban on such weapons. Faced with the diverse expertise which you represent, it would be presumptuous for me to offer advice or evaluative comment on any particular details of that negotiation. What I would prefer to do is to locate the chemical weapons negotiation in the broader arms control and disarmament context at its present juncture. From this I will attempt to sketch out, with a tentativeness befitting my profession, some inferences about the significance of the CW negotiation, some of which may have implications for the manner in which that negotiation might best proceed.

From the perspective of those with an interest in arms control, your meeting occurs at a more than usually auspicious moment. I refer of course to the recent announcement by the USA and USSR of their agreement in principle to ban intermediate-range nuclear missiles globally, as well as their agreement to enter into negotiations relating to nuclear tests. It has already become almost trite to observe the historic significance of the intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) agreement as the first which would eliminate an entire class of nuclear weapons and which would for the first time call for reductions in nuclear arsenals, rather than merely limit the build-up of such arsenals. It is similarly being widely observed that since the INF agreement would effect only a proportionally small reduction in the nuclear arsenals of the two countries, and would not touch their central strategic arsenals, the significance of the agreement is primarily political rather than military.

Such observations are no doubt true. However the political significance of the recently announced agreements relating both to INF and nuclear tests should not, in the Canadian view, be construed in any narrow sense. We ought to recall that for most of the past decade the prospects for new arms control agreements were bleak in the extreme, with the nadir occurring in late 1983 and early 1984 when all East-West arms con-

trol negotiations and talks were for a period suspended. Since that time, and sometimes with painful slowness, not only have all previously existing channels for East-West discussion and negotiation been reactivated, they are visibly being used to good effect. I would note, for example, that the old, sterile debate about capabilities versus intent may now be behind us. There now seems broad acceptance that both matter and that each ought to be addressed not through simple, declaratory approaches but by concrete, verifiable measures, if mutual confidence is to be sustained.



*Rear Admiral (retired) Robert H. Falls, President of the Canadian Centre for Arms Control and Disarmament, addresses the Chemical Weapons Convention in Ottawa.*

Arms control has traditionally largely confined itself to the issue of military capability, leaving the question of intent to largely declaratory political gestures. Herein lies the great significance of the agreement in Stockholm in 1986 on specific measures, subject to agreed verification procedures, designed to increase mutual assurance about the benign military intent of parties to the agreement. The notably efficient and effective way in which challenge inspections of conventional military exercises were recently conducted on the territories of the USSR and of the German Democratic Republic respectively is a most welcome development. So, too, are recent formulations by official spokesmen of the USSR which speak in terms of a 'sufficiency' of military force. More than at any time in recent years, parties on all sides of the East-West divide seem to accept that security is a matter of mutuality. Neither side can feel secure unless both do.

Another important development of recent years, I think, has been a growing awareness on all sides of a significant interrelationship among various kinds of arms control measures. To some considerable extent, this may be a positive by-product of the intense INF debate and related controversies of the past few years. Already, the pending INF agreement has triggered vigorous discussion about the most desirable combination of conventional and nuclear military forces which ought to be retained in order to preserve and strengthen stability in the European theatre, a debate which will predictably continue for some time. This increased awareness of the interrelationship between conventional and nuclear forces, particularly at the theatre level, has doubtless been one of the factors which has given impetus to the efforts to formulate a mandate for negotiations among members of the two major alliances, within the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) framework, on conventional force levels in Europe. At the strategic level, the USA and USSR have recognized, in their own agreed negotiating mandate, the importance of giving attention to the balance between offensive and defensive forces. If we are successful, over the coming period, in moving towards significantly reduced reliance on nuclear weapons, those interrelationships among different kinds of force deployments, and related arms control measures, will acquire yet greater importance.

Given the centrality of the strategic nuclear arsenals of the USA and the USSR to the global configuration of military force, it is natural that international attention should have focused on the bilateral negotiations between those two powers. However, it has long been Canada's view that we are entering a period in which multilateral arms control agreements will be increasingly significant and necessary. We must recognize this and so must the superpowers. Of course several such agreements already exist, among which the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Outer Space Treaty are among the most important. Foreseeable areas of potential new negotiations towards multilateral agreements, in addition to the chemical weapons negotiations, include conventional forces (particularly in Europe),