

DEFENCE NOTES



Peacekeeping Developments

■ The 1987 Defence White Paper appeared to play down the role of peacekeeping in Canadian defence policy. Since then, however, there have been growing demands for peacekeeping operations. Following the deployment of Canadian troops to monitor the Iran-Iraq cease fire, both Canadian troops and police have participated in the UN Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) in Namibia. While these operations have stretched the UN Secretariat thinly, they have not apparently discouraged Secretary-General Pérez de Cuellar from embarking on another bold initiative.

On 11 October 1989 the Secretary-General submitted a recommendation to the Security Council for the establishment of a United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA). The rugged terrain and long borders in Central America pose difficult challenges to a UN observer force. ONUCA is envisaged as a small force (some 260 military personnel with civilian support) but with considerable mobility. This would be provided by cross-terrain vehicles, and helicopters. In addition, the Secretary-General proposed that ONUCA have eight fast patrol boats for use in the Gulf of Fonseca, and light speedboats for navigable rivers.

The five Central American Governments have expressed the wish that the member states of ONUCA should include West Germany, Spain and Canada. Since the Organization of American States (OAS) has cooperated

closely with the United Nations in developing ONUCA, Canadian participation seems likely.

The US Defence Budget

■ At the end of October, after several months of negotiation, the Congressional Conference Committee negotiating to settle the differences between the Senate and House versions of the 1990 military programmes bill, appeared to have reached a mutually acceptable compromise. At issue are virtually all the central strategic military programmes of the Bush administration.

On Star Wars, the conferees agreed on a budget of US \$3.5 billion – considerably less than the Senate figure of \$4.3 billion, which was close to the actual request from the Bush administration, but more than the \$2.8 billion proposed by the House. The lack of protest from the White House, particularly the absence of any threat to veto the agreement, appeared to confirm that the Bush administration, while determined to press ahead with Star Wars research, is less enthusiastic than its predecessor about early deployment, and not likely to make it the centrepiece of its strategic plans.

The future of the B-2 Stealth bomber also remains unresolved. The US Air Force has vigorously defended the B-2 against criticisms that it was inferior in range to the existing B-1B. Declassifying information previously regarded as top secret, in October the Air Force released comparative data for the B-1B and the B-2 on weapons load, fuel capacity and range which appear to confirm the advantages of the B-2. Congress, however, remains skeptical. The Conference Committee proposed to slow the pace of the B-2 programme, while indi-

vidual Congressmen continue to query the exact missions of the stealthy bomber and the cost (US \$530 million) of each aircraft.

Finally, the Committee appeared to have turned the problem of choosing between the MX missile and the Midgetman back to Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney. By not specifying the allocation of funds between the two missiles, Congress appears willing to allow Cheney to proceed with both. Such discretion may come as a surprise to the Secretary. Congress has resolutely refused to cancel the two tactical aircraft programmes which Cheney himself wants to scrap: additional F-14s and the V-22 Osprey helicopter/aircraft. Both have survived the Congressional compromise.

Soviet Military Doctrines

■ During the past year Soviet military spokesmen have de-

scribed in principle the changes in military doctrines and structures that would accompany conventional force reductions in Europe. The general concept of “defensive sufficiency” is said to entail the restructuring of Soviet armed forces in such a way that they could not be used to undertake large-scale offensive operations, but only the defence of national territory and that of allies.

In October in Ottawa, Major-General Anatoli Bolyatko told a Canadian meeting that revised manuals were now in use in Soviet military academies instructing Soviet tank officers in the primacy of defensive tactics. The force structure that would follow from these changes, however, is still not clear. Bolyatko emphasized the Soviet view that the best offensive weapon is the tank, and the best defensive weapon is the tank. In comments some months earlier to the US House Armed Services

ACQUIRING BALLISTIC MISSILES

■ In late October Bush administration officials confirmed that there is evidence of cooperation between Israel and South Africa in ballistic missile technology. On 5 July, South Africa tested the booster of a medium-range ballistic missile which, Western experts believe, could be used either to boost a satellite into orbit, or as a missile carrying a nuclear warhead.

The comments on 26 October by administration spokesmen indicated that the United States had identified the booster plume from the South African test as closely resembling that from the Israeli-built Jericho II rocket. The Israeli government reaffirmed its policy not to conclude new defence contracts with South Africa, but did not deny that ballistic missile technology might be transferred under existing contracts signed before March 1987.

The debate about Israeli-South African cooperation drew attention once again to the lengthening list of countries seeking to add ballistic missiles to their defence forces. According to recent reports from the Congressional Research Service and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), at least thirteen “non-major military powers” have acquired or are seeking to build ballistic missiles. The military value of these missiles lies primarily in their ability to deliver nuclear warheads. Most of the states involved are believed to be capable of building nuclear weapons.

In the Middle East, the Israeli Jericho II is thought to have a range of up to 1,400 km and can deliver a nuclear warhead. Egypt and Iraq have cooperated with Argentina in the development of the Condor II, which