

consultation and co-operation that has been achieved. For Canada, the NATO Council and the bodies reporting to it constitute an important piece of consultative machinery. Without it, the task of advancing Canadian viewpoints on specific issues would be difficult. What has been accomplished in shaping common policies among a group of sovereign governments is an additional but fundamental reason why our interest in NATO countries remains a powerful one.

At the current time, the most important topics of consultation include the pursuit of meaningful *détente*, the identification of confidence-building measures, as well as efficient and well-controlled arms limitation in the East and West. For many years now, the member countries of NATO have been holding intensive consultations to formulate the Organization's position on mutual and balanced force reductions. Close consultation will also be necessary if progress is to be achieved at the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe to be held in Madrid. Furthermore, consultations on the vital questions of the modernization of nuclear forces in Europe and control of arms, including tactical nuclear weapons, being held in the third round of talks on strategic arms limitation, are progressing rapidly.

Canada's hope, of course, is that SALT II will enter into force soon. In my letters to President Carter and President Brezhnev last June, I made clear that Canada fully supported this agreement as a valuable contribution to stability in strategic weapons. A third round of SALT can provide an opportunity not only to seek more substantial reductions in intercontinental systems but also to deal, for the first time, with the longer-range nuclear forces in the European theatre. To this end, the Alliance must encourage the Soviet Union to negotiate seriously.

All NATO members are carefully examining President Brezhnev's recent speech in East Berlin. His declared willingness to reduce Soviet conventional forces in East Germany and to pursue negotiations on confidence-building measures is to be welcomed and, indeed, applauded — as must any initiative that offers the prospect of relaxing tensions. It is in this context that President Brezhnev's proposals on theatre nuclear weapons require analysis and clarification. They appear to allow Soviet modernization while denying it to NATO forces.

Canada is not, of course, a nuclear-weapon power in its own right. But Canadian security is dependent on an Alliance that relies on a defence and deterrent strategy that combines intercontinental and theatre nuclear forces with conventional forces. Our Alliance will face crucial tests — this year and throughout its fourth decade — as it strives to meet the need for the right mixture of both nuclear and conventional force modernization on the one hand and the pursuit of agreements on balanced and effective measures of restraint on the other. If we are sufficiently skilful and careful, we should be able to enhance the credibility of our conventional and nuclear deterrent and increase the stability of our relations with the Warsaw Pact countries. In so doing we will help to ensure the success of our Alliance in deterring war and in assuring a climate of peace less open to constant challenge....