

In looking at the first category Peyton Lyon (Carleton University) has noted that:

Whenever cold war tensions relax, there is an understandable tendency to place less emphasis on military alliances. This is not necessarily wise. Softer Soviet policies could be merely tactical, designed to gain an advantage by persuading the West to drop its guard, or encourage dissent in western ranks. It may require considerable effort to keep NATO intact during such periods.²⁰

No doubt a considerable degree of detente has been achieved, but "dangerous tensions will remain in the heart of Europe, still the world's most explosive continent, until all the nations in the area are convinced that none is conspiring to alter the existing borders by force." Furthermore, "if you dismantle our defence system precipitately and unilaterally, is it not conceivable that the Soviet appetite would revive?"²¹ While none of this denies the economic, political and military recovery of Western Europe, it does question the revisionist position that, because of the recovery, NATO is no longer needed. But this does not explain why Canada should contribute.

According to John Holmes (Director-General of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs) "NATO provides for the more effective defense of Canada, and by maintaining troops in Europe, Canada is entitled to some voice in the affairs of a continent that has twice drawn it into bloody sacrifice."²² This would seem to indicate both a military and a political role for the forces in Europe, and disagrees with the Eayrs' position. Harald von Riekhoff (Carleton University) agrees with Holmes, since Canada by providing "elite forces in a state of immediate combat-readiness, comparable only to that of the US forces in Germany, has appreciably assisted SACEUR...in laying the foundation for a modern conventional defence posture as part of NATO's strategy of flexible response."²³ Furthermore, unification and the \$1.5 billion re-equipment programme will ideally suit Canada for a mobile role in NATO. In terms of a military function this would seem to be considerably more than most revisionists attribute to Canadian participation.

The role in Europe is further enhanced when the concept of deterrence is considered, and to argue that a force of 5,000 men cannot contribute to deterrence is to misunderstand the underlying principles. Deterrence fails once force is employed, but force levels must be maintained to assure that deterrence is credible. Furthermore, the concept operates on the nuclear, the conventional, and the para-military level. In the case of NATO the first two demand a certain level of military preparedness. With a strategy of flexible response the conventional deterrent becomes most important, and a token force level will not supply the needed credibility. Where Eayrs does seem to be on firm ground is in arguing that the present nuclear role* adds little to the overall deterrent, but this does not mean a conventional role is not needed.

* (Especially the role of the Air Division)