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**Advancing Disarmament in the
Face of Great Power Reluctance:
The Canadian Contribution**

Marianne Hanson

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About the Author

Dr Marianne Hanson is a Senior Lecturer in International Relations and Co-Director of the Rotary Centre for International Studies at the University of Queensland, Australia. Her research focuses on the development of norms in international security, particularly the evolution of nuclear arms control and disarmament policies. Her most recent work in this field is *The Politics of Non-Proliferation and Nuclear Arms Control* (co-edited with Carl Ungerer), Allen and Unwin, forthcoming 2001. She is currently a member of the Australian Foreign Minister's National Consultative Committee on Peace and Disarmament. From August till December 2000, she was a Visiting Fellow at the Institute of International Relations, University of British Columbia.

Abstract

A broad range of states and other actors is seeking to influence the pace of nuclear disarmament and reduce the salience of nuclear weapons in international security. The reasons for this upsurge of interest in advancing disarmament are (a) the humanitarian benefits of strengthening a non-nuclear norm, and (b) the opportunities offered to small and middle-sized states to participate in negotiating forums on issues once dominated by the great powers. Importantly, the 'abolitionist upsurge' has been augmented by reports sponsored by key Western allies. These include the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, the Tokyo Forum Report, and the Canadian Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade Report, 'Canada and the Nuclear Challenge'. This latter Report's chief recommendations were that Canada work towards reducing the political legitimacy and value of nuclear weapons, in order to effect their eventual elimination, and that Canada explore ways of reducing the salience of nuclear weapons within the NATO alliance. The Report provided a clear direction for Canadian policy on nuclear weapons (given that the vast majority of its recommendations were accepted by the Canadian Government), and allowed for the further involvement of civilian and NGO

representatives into the policy debate. At the broader level, the Canadian Report, like its Australian and Japanese counterparts, serves to reinforce the notion of a more inclusive international community in debates on security policy, and strengthens the normative case against the possession and use of nuclear weapons.

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I. Introduction

A notable development in international relations in recent years is the extent to which a broad range of states is seeking to influence the role of nuclear weapons and the pace of nuclear arms control and disarmament.¹ An unprecedented degree of pressure is currently being applied

¹ The terms nuclear arms control and nuclear disarmament have traditionally been used to denote distinct and separate issues. The former has referred to conscious policies designed to restrain and balance military capabilities (ie., the acquisition, deployment and use of specific weapons), and has assumed that weapons – and the management of these weapons – are a continuing feature of international relations. The latter term implies the actual elimination of those weapons, thus involving both a process and an end state. In the 1990s, however, this distinction became more blurred as diplomacy focussed on arms control mechanisms as an integral and necessary component of moves towards reductions in, and ultimately the elimination of, nuclear weapons. This was largely a result of the shift in thinking about the place of weapons of mass destruction in international politics. While it is acknowledged therefore that for some – especially those from within the defence and military community – the distinction remains fixed, this paper adopts the view taken by many within the diplomatic and civil society arenas, namely that specific arms control measures feed naturally into a process of the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons. Unlike the Cold War years, then, when arms control was largely a bilateral issue between the two superpowers, this is no longer seen as the exclusive concern of the great powers. Rather, because of its impact on disarmament, arms control is now seen to be the legitimate concern of a broader range of states and is accordingly incorporated into multilateral forums. Efforts to contain the proliferation of nuclear weapons have also been linked to arms control and disarmament. All three components, therefore, are addressed in a loosely collective way in this paper.

to the nuclear weapon states to proceed with further reductions and to move towards the elimination of nuclear weapons, a position to which the nuclear weapon states had agreed when signing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1968. This current pressure is evident in multilateral diplomacy at a global level, where like-minded states form coalitions of interest, as well as in the reports and analyses sponsored individually by some of these states. Moreover, unlike calls for disarmament in previous decades which came largely from the Non-Aligned Movement and from strident critics of Western policy, there has evolved, since the 1990s, a significant diplomatic push from Western allies, political practitioners and policy analysts advocating rapid reductions, a devaluing of the role of nuclear weapons in security strategies, and the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons. This has occurred independently of US policy preferences, and indeed often runs counter to these preferences. Three major questions arise from the growth of this challenge: first, why has this occurred? Second, what forms does it take? And third, what effect, if any, is this having on security policy developments?

A first point to note is that this paper broadly endorses the main arguments of the push for nuclear weapons' elimination, namely, that retention of these weapons by a select group of states cannot be sustained in perpetuity, without the risk of proliferation growing. It concedes however, that if elimination occurs at all, this will be a long and difficult process, and one that will need to address the valid security concerns of the existing nuclear weapon states. The paper will have four major sections, the first two of which will provide a context for the third. First is a brief examination of why the non-nuclear norm has strengthened in recent years and why this norm is being pursued now at such a vigorous level by the non-nuclear weapon states. The second section considers the nature of the challenge to the nuclear weapon states and the forms that this has taken. It will assess the nature of the 'abolitionist upsurge' and will also provide a brief assessment of reports sponsored by key US allies, Australia and Japan, which advocate that the

nuclear weapon states make greater efforts towards arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament. The third – and major – part of this paper examines the dominant Canadian initiative to further these issues, the December 1998 Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade Report, *Canada and the Nuclear Challenge*. The concluding section considers the impact of these initiatives on the international security agenda.

II. The Push for Arms Control and Disarmament

There are two broad areas to be considered here: the first is the emergence of normative constraints that seek to prevent the use, and now even the possession, of nuclear weapons. The second is the evolution of structures in the international system which favour more inclusive, multilateral diplomatic processes than existed during the Cold War period. These place pressure on the great powers – in this case the nuclear weapon states, but especially the United States and Russia – to adopt security postures that are not seen as inimical to broader international security interests.

Ethical considerations against the use of nuclear weaponry are not by any means new² but they have been considerably strengthened in the past decade. Because nuclear weapons are targeted at civilian populations and rely overwhelmingly for their impact on the threat of a massive loss of life, the use, and by implication the threat of use, of these weapons can violate international humanitarian law which seeks to regulate the conduct of warfare.³ The very

² See Price and Tannenwald 1996; Tannenwald 1999; Hanson 2000.

³ The International Court of Justice (ICJ) 1996 advisory opinion on the legality of nuclear weapons' use, while not categorical, was important in reinforcing the non-nuclear norm. The Court concluded that the use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law. The opinion has

basis of nuclear deterrence, the foundation of security policy for nuclear weapon states and their allies, remained implicitly tied to the threat of widespread destruction of civilian areas and high loss of civilian life. Yet what was notable about the doctrine of nuclear deterrence was the scant attention paid to the humanitarian implications of such a policy. Plans for deterrence went ahead at the same time that it was clear that actually using nuclear weapons would force the crossing of a serious ethical line. The existence of this moral taboo against the use of nuclear weapons was instrumental in limiting their strategic utility.

This was always the case, but realistic assessments of the utility of nuclear weapons were detached from the momentum that propelled the arms race, and moral considerations appeared to have little impact on planning for nuclear warfare. As Andrew Butfoy noted when outlining the paradox of a security policy dominated by a concept of deterrence that involved the theoretical use of what are essentially – because of their humanitarian implications – unusable weapons, Cold War nuclear policy represented a ‘parallel, abstract world divorced from day-to-day diplomacy’.⁴ The point here is that these moral and logistical constraints, inseparable even from early calculations of nuclear strategy, are becoming increasingly highlighted in current debates on arms control and disarmament.

been interpreted by some as allowing a loophole for the use of nuclear weapons, as the Court had noted that it was unable to determine whether, under extreme circumstances of self-defence, in which the survival of the state was under threat, the use of nuclear weapons would be legal or not. But this reflected an indecision over the matter rather than legal permission for such use and overwhelmingly, the International Court of Justice’s decision has been interpreted as indicating that the threat or use of these weapons would be generally contrary to international law.

⁴ Butfoy 1999, p. 166.

Related to these normative and humanitarian constraints is a recognition of the risks associated with simply maintaining the status quo, that is, of allowing the existence of present numbers of around 30,000 nuclear warheads to continue. The risks of accidental or inadvertent use, together with the possibility of nuclear materials falling into the hands of terrorist, sub-state, or other 'irrational' groups, further reinforces the norm against the possession of nuclear weapons. Added to this is the view that the continued possession of nuclear weapons by some states can act as a stimulus to other states also to acquire a nuclear capability. In other words, the dangers of further nuclear proliferation and the attendant humanitarian concerns about nuclear weapon use go beyond simple 'ban-the-bomb' concerns to incorporate broader security considerations, rejecting the thesis that 'more is better', or that more stable political relations can result from a further proliferation of nuclear weapons.⁵

A second reason for the upsurge of opinion favouring the elimination of nuclear weapons is the change in the structure of the international system from the late 1980s/early 1990s. Major arms control agreements between 1950 and the late 1980s had been a direct product of, or were at least subject to the vagaries of, the United States—Soviet Union bilateral relationship. There may have been a multilateral dimension to their finalization, but essentially,

⁵ There is little overt sympathy with the views associated with Waltz (1981, 1995) or Gaddis (1987) arguing the benefits of nuclear weapons possession and for selective proliferation as beneficial to international security. Further proliferation, whether it be by 'rogue' states or even Western allies such as Japan, South Korea or Germany, is overwhelmingly viewed as destabilizing to the international system. The vigorous affirmation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty by both nuclear and non-nuclear states in 1995 and 2000, the international state responses to the South Asian tests of 1998 and the widespread public rejection of nuclear weapons testing would all indicate a strengthening of the taboo against the use, possession, or testing of nuclear weapons.

the most significant agreements during the Cold War were largely determined by the two superpowers. Within this bilateral system, there was a general great power distrust of multilateral regimes and any proposal on arms control or disarmament during this period without the support of the two dominant players would hardly have been possible. As a result, the security concerns of many smaller states within the international system were largely eclipsed by superpower preferences. Middle sized powers, such as Australia and Canada were often frustrated in their attempts to build a more open and constructive disarmament regime, while a number of non-nuclear weapon states were angered by the inequality of arms control regimes that seemed to legitimize the *status quo* between the nuclear 'haves' and the 'have-nots'. The bilateral approach - by devaluing the views of secondary states in the system - limited the process by which multilateral security dialogue could be conducted. The United Nations' Conference on Disarmament, for example, remained an under-used mechanism for promoting global arms control and disarmament measures throughout the Cold War.

The structural changes brought about by the end of the Cold War led to heightened expectations for multilateral security agreements on nuclear arms control and disarmament. In particular, there were hopes that the inequality of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which accepted the nuclear arsenals of some countries but not others - an inequality tolerated during the Cold War - might now be addressed, and that the nuclear weapon states would fulfil their promise within that treaty to eliminate their arsenals. Moreover, states which had for much of the Cold War remained on the sidelines of the international disarmament world became aware of the opportunities that the end of bipolarity offered, and sought to play a more active part in security negotiations. In other words, it was expected that the system was going to 'open up' to an extent that was not possible earlier. This is one of the primary reasons for the vigorous diplomatic efforts in security forums in recent years, and goes some way towards explaining the

activities of states such as Australia, Japan, Canada and others.

Related to this more inclusive and participatory element in international security is the view that the present international system constitutes what Hedley Bull and others have termed an 'international society'. Central to the idea of an international society is the notion that states within the international system have an awareness of common interests and values and that these are reflected in the formulation of common rules and institutions. Maintaining order and protecting the security of states in the international system is the crucial function of such an international society. The term has come to be synonymous with the current liberal international order in which it is expected that state members will uphold codified rules and norms (nuclear non-proliferation being one of these norms) in the interests of maintaining stability and order.

Within an arms control context, Bull warned as early as the 1960s that the large powers within the international system have a special responsibility to conduct successful arms control measures and restrain their proliferation of nuclear weapons. While sceptical about the possibility of disarmament, he argued that arms control policies, if they were perpetually seen as treating the security of the great powers as prior to that of international society as a whole, threatened to exacerbate what he termed a 'revolt' against the prevailing order. He concluded that there was a danger that arms control processes supporting narrow particular interests, rather than the interests of international society as a whole, might undermine and even work against the very purposes for which international society had been designed.⁶

Yet despite the ending of the Cold War and some successful arms control agreements in the early-mid 1990s, a pervading view is that the large powers in the international system have not fulfilled their responsibility to create a security environment which reflects the interests of smaller

⁶ Bull [1987]. See also Rengger (1992).

and middle sized states in that system. Although many states have sought to become more closely involved in international security debates, the grievance is that multilateral structures continue to be dominated by great power preferences. Despite pledges to the contrary, the existing nuclear weapon states still retain their monopoly over the possession of nuclear weapons, and are not moving towards policies of elimination at a pace fast enough for the non-nuclear weapon states.

Indeed, the past few years have seen a decline in expectations that arms control and disarmament can go any further. There is a sense that the international community cannot move towards any new non-proliferation initiatives and may not even be able to implement those agreements reached in the years after the ending of the Cold War. The United States, for instance, is yet to make further cuts in its nuclear arsenal, despite statements affirming the need for such reductions. As the pre-eminent nuclear weapon states, the US sets the tone for much of the debate and has an important leadership role to play. Yet it resists all moves to diminish the role of nuclear weapons in its security strategy. It has also frustrated efforts in the Conference on Disarmament to move towards a fissile-material ban and other provisions. In late 1999, its Senate rejected US ratification of the 1996 Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, a move which is claimed to have set back global arms control and non-proliferation efforts. Most notably, it is provoking tension in Russia and China with its proposals for a Ballistic Missile Defence system. This sends the message that the US, rather than choosing to strengthen its efforts for non-proliferation – which in turn requires the example of a revised nuclear policy, serious reductions and elimination – is focussing instead on *counter*-proliferation measures, relegating non-proliferation to a lower status. In sum, the US clearly remains committed to nuclear weapons as the central feature of its foreign and defence policy, notwithstanding President's Bush's proposal for reductions. Its insistence on retaining nuclear weapons as the 'supreme guarantee' of NATO security and reasserting the 'central role'

of these weapons,⁷ despite calls for a revision of nuclear policy, only reinforces this.

Russia, for its part, although it has recently ratified the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the START II treaty, and has indeed called for radical cuts to its nuclear arsenal, has also reaffirmed the central role of nuclear weapons in its military strategy. This was particularly evident in Russia's January 2000 strategic doctrine, *The Concept of National Security of the Russian Federation*, (although this position was softened in subsequent months).⁸ The doctrine reaffirmed Russia's previous commitments to nuclear deterrence and included the possible first-use of nuclear weapons. With a rapidly declining strategic nuclear force and the prospect of further reductions in its arsenal as well as in conventional forces, Russia is likely to advocate a broader, rather than diminished role for its nuclear forces.⁹

For its part, China continues to modernize its nuclear weapons capability, fuelled by the calculation that its forces are susceptible to US ballistic missile defence plans, while Britain and France – although both have engaged in reductions – remain committed to the maintenance of a minimum nuclear deterrent. All these re-affirmations of the salience of nuclear weapons in strategic doctrines have taken place at a time when many non-nuclear states and non-state

⁷ This was made clear in the Alliance's Strategic Concept in April 1999. Although NATO's 1991 New Strategic Concept made some effort to de-emphasize the role of nuclear weapons, this was seen by eliminators as insufficient and it was hoped that the 1999 review would take this further.

⁸ Sokov (2000); Sumner (2000).

⁹ See for example the recent report by Sokov (2001) which notes that 'greater reliance on nuclear weapons has become a central feature of Russian defence strategy, especially in the aftermath of the 1999 NATO bombing of Yugoslavia that vividly demonstrated Russia's limited capability to resist a highly superior conventional force'.

actors are calling for a delegitimization and downgrading of these weapons.

A perceived consequence of this continuing reliance on nuclear weapons is that the existing order, which has been largely shaped and upheld by the five established nuclear powers, may be at risk of destabilization as other states seek to acquire their own nuclear capability. It becomes harder to deny would-be proliferators the right to possess nuclear weapons when the nuclear weapon states themselves continue to affirm the centrality of such weapons in their own doctrines. This has implications for the continuation of an international order acceptable to all systemic actors, especially non-aligned and non-Western states, where compliance with the non-proliferation norm might depend on how legitimate the upholders of the prevailing norm are perceived to be. The 1998 tests by India and Pakistan and the perception that other states (Iraq, Iran, Syria and North Korea) may now also develop their own nuclear capability threatens to unravel the non-proliferation measures achieved by the international community to date.

Central to these developments are sharp criticisms of (especially) the US and Russia for their unwillingness to move towards nuclear reductions and ultimately elimination. Because of the large powers' lack of leadership on this issue, and fuelled by the structural opportunities outlined above, a number of less powerful states have recently stepped in to advance the cause of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

III. The Nature of the 'Abolitionist Upsurge'¹⁰

The second section of this paper considers the nature of the challenge to the nuclear weapon states and the forms that this has taken. It will broadly assess the nature of the 'abolitionist upsurge' and will also provide a brief assessment

¹⁰ For a summary of the arguments and proponents of the abolitionist movement, see *Strategic Survey* (1997/98).

of reports sponsored by key US allies, Australia and Japan, which advocate greater efforts towards arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament.

There are a number of points that need to be mentioned here. Importantly, the growing call for disarmament has come from a broad range of actors in the international system, in some cases from states and groupings of states (such as the New Agenda Coalition — the NAC)¹¹, in others from individuals often associated with policy and/or from non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In yet other cases, reports have emanated from analysts within respectable institutions. Overwhelmingly, these calls are not for unilateral disarmament, but rather for phased, balanced and verifiable moves towards the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons. They inevitably call for the salience of nuclear weapons to be reduced as a first step towards delegitimizing these weapons and accept that the security concerns of nuclear weapon states must be effectively addressed during any moves to zero. In general, there is agreement that while these weapons cannot be disinvented, their possession and use – and their eventual elimination – can nevertheless be managed by strong institutions and norms.

The composition of this broad movement is quite remarkable. Where once the calls for disarmament signified a divide between a radical left-wing and 'establishment' officials, this is no longer the case.¹² As Freedman has observed, the present campaign for disarmament 'feels less like a popular crusade and more like an extended discussion of policy detail.'¹³ Certainly the debate today is more informed and less ideologically driven than in the days of the

¹¹ For a history of the origin and activities of the NAC, see Ungerer (2001); for an evaluation of the NAC's success at the 2000 NPT Review Conference, see Rauf (2000) and Johnson (2000).

¹² See Baylis and O'Neill (2000) p. 2.

¹³ Freedman 2000 p. 63.

Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament during the 60s, 70s and early 80s, and includes academics, policy analysts in respectable 'think tanks', senior military and defence officials and politicians previously more associated with traditional nuclear strategy. Indeed what is remarkable is the extent to which the debate is a serious mainstream issue in international diplomacy today. At the declaratory level, there is full acceptance of the norm against testing and possession of nuclear weapons and a widespread acceptance – again at the declaratory level at least¹⁴ – of the need to move to a position of zero, something that would have been unthinkable in previous decades.

Notable reports issued in the 1990s by independent bodies included the Stimson Center Steering Committee Reports, especially its final report, *An American Legacy: Building a Nuclear Free World* (March 1997) and the report of the Committee on International Security and Arms Control of the National Academy of Sciences, *The Future of US Nuclear Weapons Policy*. Also notable was the *Statement on Nuclear Weapons by International Generals and Admirals* in 1996 and a similar *Statement by International Civilian Leaders*.¹⁵

Perhaps most substantial are the reports sponsored by individual states. The Australian government-sponsored Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons in 1996, and the Japanese government-sponsored Tokyo Forum Report released in 1999 have been adopted as useful

¹⁴ Note the commitments made at the 1995 and (especially) 2000 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conferences by the nuclear weapon states.

¹⁵ The Stimson Center report (and its earlier two reports) can be viewed at <http://www.stimson.org.legacy> The National Academy of Sciences report can be found at <http://www.nas.edu/readingroom/books/fun> Both the *Statement on Nuclear Weapons by the International Generals and Admirals* and the *Statement by International Civilian Leaders* are part of the Nuclear Elimination Project at the State of the World Forum. For the full text of these statements see <http://www.worldforum.org/initiatives>

analyses of the feasibility of nuclear elimination. These initiatives sought to avoid the sometimes belaboured progression of bilateral and multilateral talks and formal negotiations, and to produce assessments which might have a more timely and pronounced impact than did traditional security negotiations. Both reports will be considered briefly in this paper, before the Canadian contribution is assessed.

The Canberra Commission Report

In 1995, the Australian Labor government-sponsored Canberra Commission had aimed to assess the threat and the utility of nuclear weapons in a global context. Its 1996 Report¹⁶ sought to address the fears of critics of nuclear elimination by producing a phased program of disarmament during which the security interests of the nuclear weapon states were taken into account and accommodated within a credible and 'mainstream' framework.¹⁷ The Commission brought together a group of 17 independent specialists on the strategic, political, military and legal aspects of nuclear weapons. Included were academics, former prime ministers, ambassadors and civilian and military leaders. Two of the most important Commissioners had been closely involved with the US military: General Lee Butler was former Commander-in-Chief of the US Strategic Air Command, and Robert McNamara a former US Secretary for Defence. Following a series of meetings over a ten-month period, the Commissioners' Report concluded that assertions of nuclear weapons' utility were no longer viable and that an important window of opportunity existed for their elimination.

The Report's fundamental message, contained in part one, *The Nuclear Weapon Debate*, was that maintaining

¹⁶ The text of the *Report of the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons* is available at <http://www.dfat.gov.au/cc/cchome.html>

¹⁷ For assessments of the Canberra Commission's Report and its impact, see Hanson and Ungerer (1998), and Hanson and Ungerer (1999).

nuclear arsenals serves no useful purpose. Moreover, it claimed that unless significant steps were taken to reduce the numbers and eventually eliminate them, the international community could expect to see the further and unwanted spread of these weapons to other states as well as the risk of accidental or terrorist use. The Report noted that in today's world - where security threats were more likely to come in the form of ethnic conflict, state disintegration, humanitarian disasters, environmental degradation or economic crisis - nuclear weapons were at best irrelevant and at worst, because of their destructive capacities and the danger of 'irrational' use, a threat to the very continuance of life. The Report argued that nuclear weapons were useless in the battlefield, being likely to kill as many 'friendly' as enemy forces. They were not useful as deterrents against conventional attack, or attack by biological or chemical weapons; neither were they useful in responding to such attacks. The only utility that might remain for these weapons is that they are perceived as necessary for deterring a nuclear attack by another state. The Report noted, however, that this sole utility implies the continued existence of nuclear weapons and that any such utility would disappear if nuclear weapons were eliminated.

In its second part, *Steps to Eliminate Nuclear Weapons*, the Report therefore recommended a series of phased steps.¹⁸ These steps included taking nuclear forces off alert, removing warheads from delivery vehicles, ending the deployment of all non-strategic weapons, ending nuclear testing, increasing reductions in US and Russian arsenals, and embarking on a no-first-use policy. This second section also outlined a number of reinforcing steps needed, including action to prevent horizontal proliferation, the further development of effective monitoring and verification regimes, and a ban on the production of fissile material for explosive purposes.

Although the Canberra Commission's Report was not actively supported by the new conservative government that

¹⁸ In addition to these two parts, the Report also included two extensive annexes, on *Verification* and on *Legal Arrangements*.

swept the Labor government from power, the Report nevertheless continued to play an important role in the wider arms control and disarmament debates. Indeed, it was an important precedent for the establishment of the Tokyo Forum some two years later.

The Tokyo Forum Report

The Tokyo Forum on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament was a direct response to the South Asian tests of May 1998 and the attendant danger of further unravelling of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.¹⁹ The Forum, (originally titled the Conference on Urgent Actions for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament) was jointly sponsored by the Hiroshima Peace Institute, the Japan Institute of International Affairs, and the Japanese Government. Its Report, *Facing Nuclear Dangers: An Action Plan for the 21st Century*, was released on 25 July 1999 after thirteen months of discussion between leading arms control analysts.²⁰

In the immediate aftermath of the South Asian tests, Japan's then Prime Minister, Ryutaro Hashimoto, proposed the idea of a Forum to bring together leading experts on nuclear disarmament, including representatives from India and Pakistan. The idea was to produce a report on the urgent measures needed to repair the non-proliferation regime and to promote disarmament in light of the changed conditions in international security. The initiative was pursued by his Foreign Minister (and later Prime Minister) Keizo Obuchi. Earlier, and well before the South Asian tests, Ryukichi Imai, an appointed member of the Forum and previously a Canberra Commissioner, had called on the Japanese government to establish a Japanese version of the 1996 Canberra

¹⁹ For a more detailed analysis of the Tokyo Forum's origins, activities and Report, see Hanson 2001.

²⁰ The full text of the Report is available at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/un/disarmament/forum/tokyo9907/index.html>

Commission²¹ given the new Australian government's reluctance to promote that Report. India's and Pakistan's actions provided the impetus necessary for Japan to take up where the Canberra Commission had left off.

There was another reason behind the Japanese launching of the Forum. Immediately prior to the Government's announcement, Japan had been offered but had rejected a place as a member of the NAC — the eight-nation 'middle power' initiative on nuclear weapons elimination established in June 1998. The Japanese government, together with several others which had been invited to join the NAC, had considered the idea before rejecting it as too controversial an issue, with the potential to disrupt its delicate alliance relationship. Yet Japan was caught in a difficult position: it was unable, because of sensitivities towards its chief alliance partner, the US, to support a high-profile initiative on nuclear disarmament such as that advocated by the NAC. It nevertheless wished to do something in line with domestic expectations and to differentiate itself from its G8 partners. Its own unique place in nuclear history demanded no less. The Forum was, therefore, an alternative to the NAC, one that appeared more palatable to the nuclear weapon states while also assuaging domestic opinion calling for a strong and constructive Japanese stand. The preferred method of the Tokyo Forum was seen as an initiative that would maintain good relations with the nuclear weapon states — especially the US — but which would also represent a concerted effort on the part of a middle-sized, non-nuclear state to inject more urgency into the non-proliferation and disarmament debates.

The Forum's Report included an introductory section highlighting the changed circumstances of the international system at the end of the 1990s. Titled 'The New Nuclear Dangers', it went straight to the core of many strategic problems threatening the non-proliferation regime at the end

²¹ See Sigesawa 1999.

of the 1990s.²² Worldwide developments were surveyed, with particular attention paid to the deteriorating relationship between the US and Russia. This section elaborated a useful context for the problem of arms control and disarmament faced by the international community as the twentieth century drew to a close.

The remainder of the Report was given over to an examination of ways in which the decline of the international security climate could be met. The Report's second section, 'Mending Strategic Relations to Reduce Nuclear Dangers', discussed ways in which the political and strategic relations between the major powers, as well as those between states in the South Asian, Middle Eastern and North-east Asian regions, might be addressed if proliferation is to be halted. Part three of the Forum's Report, 'Stopping and Reversing Nuclear Proliferation' listed concrete measures which could be taken immediately to promote non-proliferation, including tightening controls on fissile materials and strengthening nuclear export controls. The fourth section, 'Achieving Nuclear Disarmament', advocated a period of phased reductions to bring arsenals one step short of zero, a proposal designed to overcome the 'competing theologies' of those favouring nuclear deterrence and those calling for a time bound frame for elimination. The fifth and final part of the Report listed seventeen 'Key Recommendations' taken from various sections of the Report, which in its entirety contains many more than these seventeen recommendations.

Both the Canberra Commission's and Tokyo Forum's Reports attempted to do essentially the same thing: advance the cause of nuclear arms control and disarmament. This was fundamentally the same motivation for the establishment of the Canadian government report on nuclear

²² It noted, for example, that issues such as enlargement of NATO, the UN's Special Commission on Iraq, missile defences and Kosovo had all contributed to deteriorating relations between key states.

weapons, to which this paper now turns. This effort needs to be seen both in the context of the previous two reports, but also within the broader Canadian history of involvement in nuclear security issues.

IV. Canadian Efforts to Advance Disarmament: The Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade Report

Canada has for decades been explicitly involved in international efforts to limit the proliferation of nuclear weapons.²³ It has also been a self-avowed 'middle power' in international relations, one that seeks to pursue multilateral approaches to global problems.²⁴ Canada's Ambassador to the 2000 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference reminded audiences that for more than half a century, 'successive Canadian governments have sought the complete elimination of nuclear weapons through the steadfast implementation of unilateral, bilateral and multilateral measures.'²⁵ Examples of this activism include Canada's convening of a UN gathering to condemn the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction after the Gulf War, its formulation of draft proposals in numerous arms control

²³ For an overview of Canada's involvement in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament from the advent of the atomic age to the ending of the Cold War, see Legault and Fortmann (1992).

²⁴ See Cooper, Higgot and Nossal (1993), Cooper (1997), Nossal (1997).

²⁵ Westdal (2000). Canada's policy objective is listed as 'the non-proliferation, reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons'. See DFATT webpage www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/arms/nuclear2-e.asp. As a matter of policy, Prime Minister Chretien had clearly committed the Liberal Government in the 1997 election campaign to 'work vigorously for the elimination of nuclear...weapons' (cited in Barthos 1998).

forums, and its chairing of the Missile Technology Control Regime in 2001. Within this context of a bipartisan and long-standing commitment to such goals, the appearance of a Parliamentary Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade (SCFAIT) report entitled *Canada and the Nuclear Challenge: Reducing the Political Value of Nuclear Weapons for the Twenty First Century* would not seem an especially unusual development. Yet the production of this Report was nevertheless notable for a number of reasons, and it serves to add further weight to the increasing pressure being put on nuclear weapon states to advance arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament. This is so despite the fact that the Report was intended, first and foremost, as a mechanism for consolidating and guiding Canadian policy on this issue.

Origins of the SCFAIT Report

In October 1996, the then Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy had requested the SCFAIT, via a letter to its Chair, William Graham, to carry out a review of Canada's nuclear non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament policy. The Minister requested that the Committee focus on key developments and disarmament initiatives which had occurred in recent years, including the Project Ploughshares report, 'Canada and the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons', the Canberra Commission Report (which had been released two months earlier), and the International Court of Justice advisory opinion on the threat and use of nuclear weapons. Axworthy had also specifically asked that the Committee's study should reflect Canada's alliance commitments, including its membership in NATO.²⁶ The prime purpose of the study was to identify policies that the Canadian Government could adopt to help prevent the further proliferation of nuclear weapons.

²⁶ *Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation: Advancing Canadian Objectives*, Canadian Government Statement April 1999. Preface.

While the Committee was not compelled to conduct such a study, its Chair noted that as the Committee's key function was to make recommendations for Government policy, such a ministerial request carried considerable weight.²⁷ The study duly commenced in February 1998, and the SCFAIT tabled its Report in December of that year, after having received some 200 written submissions, and having conducted numerous public hearings with expert witnesses, academics, politicians (including in the United States), NGO representatives and members of the public. William Graham made the point that, as legislators examining policy areas in which they were not necessarily familiar, it was important for Committee members to hear expert testimony as well as to conduct hearings with NGOs in order to gain both familiarity with the technicalities of the topic and a sense of public opinion on nuclear issues.²⁸

It is notable that the idea for (if not the actual product of) the SCFAIT study appeared well before the more famous Canadian initiative on landmines, the 'Ottawa process' of 1997 and 1998. As such, it should not be seen as an attempt to capitalize on the momentum brought about by the landmines success, or as a follow-on to this kind of new and very public diplomacy.²⁹ Rather, it would appear that like his political counterparts in Australia, the Foreign Minister was attuned to the emerging body of literature and opinion which was now challenging conventional thinking on the role of nuclear weapons in international security. Indeed, as with the Canberra Commission, at the time that this initiative was launched, there still was considerable optimism about the future of arms control and disarmament and little

²⁷ W. Graham 1999, p.692.

²⁸ Ibid. Graham noted that the study 'generated more public and media interest than any we have done in the five years that I have been a member of the Committee.' p.692.

²⁹ A number of observers painted the SCFAIT nuclear study as just such a follow-on. See for example Thompson (1998), Miller (1998).

indication that these would become as mired in difficulties as they came to be in the late 1990s. It seems reasonable to assess the venture as a timely contribution to an important and emerging debate in international security, one that was prompted not by any disruption to security regimes, but which seemed a natural response to a growing international view. Within months of the study opening of course, the nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan injected a new urgency into the project, serving to highlight concerns about nuclear proliferation.

'Canada and the Nuclear Challenge': Key Elements³⁰

The Canadian Report sets out fifteen recommendations outlining steps that Canada can take to help reduce the political value of nuclear weapons and thereby advance non-proliferation and disarmament. The most important of these recommendations are addressed here. The Report's opening section presents its aim of 'ensuring that its recommendations were practical and focussed on advancing the agenda of nuclear safety and progressive disarmament in both the short and long term'.

In its first - and arguably most important - recommendation, the Committee urged that 'Canada work consistently to reduce the political legitimacy and value of nuclear weapons in order to contribute to the goal of their progressive reduction and eventual elimination'. As the Report noted, 'to maintain the perception that nuclear weapons are highly valuable would erode the effectiveness of the [Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty] by increasing the probability that nations would desire these weapons, thus challenging the security of all states, nuclear and non-nuclear alike.' The Report's overarching message was that nuclear weapons need to be devalued and their political

³⁰ The full Report can be accessed at <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/nucchallenge/menu-e.htm> For commentary on the Report, see William Graham (1999), Thomas Graham (1999), An Overview of 'Canada and the Nuclear Challenge' (1999), and Mutimer (2000).

salience reduced. The SCFAIT Chair, when commenting on this recommendation, noted that reducing the political significance of nuclear weapons was the surest way to break the link between the status and position of nuclear weapon states and that the viability of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty would be in jeopardy unless this could be achieved.³¹

In its second recommendation, the Committee urged that Canada make explicit the 'links between Canada's nuclear non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament policy and all other aspects of its international relations', thereby reaffirming the urgency and centrality of this issue in the broader context of international affairs. Importantly, this recommendation also called for a process of 'ongoing consensus by keeping the Canadian public and parliamentarians informed of developments in this area, in particular by means of annual preparatory meetings...of the type held with NGOs and representatives of civil society'.

The Report's other recommendations largely echoed the calls made by other studies, such as the de-alerting of nuclear weapons, the need for continuing bilateral talks between the US and Russia to advance the laggardly START process, as well as the need to involve the smaller nuclear weapon states in reductions. There were, however, some important new areas covered by the Canadian Report.³² These included the call for moves to strengthen early warning of missile launches among the nuclear weapon states; the need to enhance and promote transparency arrangements between the nuclear weapon states; the need to create regionally-specific programs for arms control and confidence-building; the creation of a nuclear arms register; support for the International Atomic Energy Agency's new Model Protocol; urging the Canadian Government to support the NAC; and - of perhaps greatest significance - the

³¹ Thomas Graham (1999) p.658.

³² See Mutimer (2000) for a cross-comparison of the Canadian report with previous studies.

recommendation that Canada 'argue forcefully within NATO that the present re-examination of the Alliance's Strategic Concept should include its nuclear component'. It was this last recommendation which had the greatest potential to challenge prevailing doctrinal thinking about nuclear weapons. It was however, the logical follow-on to the first recommendation, that of reducing the political legitimacy and value of nuclear weapons. Though not directly advocated by the Report (it was initially included but later deleted), the call to re-examine nuclear policy within NATO implied the need to consider a 'No-First-Use' policy, something called for by numerous advocates of further arms control and disarmament.³³

The Nature of the Canadian Initiative

In an important respect, the Canadian initiative differed from the Canberra Commission which preceded it and the Tokyo Forum which followed it. Unlike these studies, which were essentially cases of governments sponsoring and funding independent research by specialists, the SCFAIT Report and the Government's response to it was very much a product of *legislators*, assisted by expert testimony and public input. More than other reports, this was one which was 'owned' by its sponsoring state, in this case the parliament and Government of Canada. Indeed the Committee's chair noted that while there already existed an important body of recent work (eg., the Stimson and Canberra Commission Reports, as well as the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on nuclear weapons), there had been, until then, a 'distinct lack of input from legislators'.³⁴ Moreover, even though in Canada such committees are generally more limited in their role and influence than is the case, for instance, in the US, a point which might indicate less significance for the Report,

³³ See for instance Mason (1999a), Butfoy (2001) and the statement made by numerous NGOs in the *Toronto Star* (1998).

³⁴ W. Graham (1999) p.691.

Canadian Governments are obliged to respond to Committee Reports and recommendations. This requirement must be met within 150 days, and although a Government is at liberty to accept or reject any of the recommendations, it puts an onus of justification and explanation of its reaction firmly on to the Government of the day.

Moreover, the fact that this was not a Government report, but rather a *Parliamentary* report, indicated the presence and authority of a broad consensus of opinion on this issue. As a product of representatives drawn from across the political spectrum, it was a largely bipartisan product that enjoyed advantages that the Canberra Commission – convened by a particular Government – for instance, did not. (In the latter case, an incoming conservative Government keen to distance itself from its predecessor, showed little taste for promoting that report.) The SCFAIT Report was supported by four out of the five political parties in the House of Commons, and while the fifth dissented from the broad conclusions of the report, questioning the need for elimination, it also asked for balanced and verifiable arms limitations and reductions.³⁵

The Government's response, when it was delivered in April 1999, was overwhelmingly in favour of most of the SCFAIT recommendations.³⁶ The Defence Minister claimed that, in responding to the SCFAIT Report, 'the government has adopted a balanced approach — one that furthers Canada's international disarmament and non-proliferation

³⁵ The final text of the Report had been softened to accommodate the Reform party, but this was in the end still unacceptable to that grouping (Trickey 1998). The *Dissenting Opinion* can be viewed at <http://www.parl.gc.ca/InfoComDoc/36/1/FAIT/Studies/Reports/faitrp07/17-reform-e.htm>. For analysis of the dissenting vote, see Bellavance (1998).

³⁶ The full text of the Government's response can be viewed at <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/nucchallenge/ANNEXB-e.htm>. The accompanying Government statement can be viewed at <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/nucchallenge/POLICY-e.htm>

goals while upholding its security and Alliance commitments as a member of NATO.³⁷ The Government reasserted the importance of the central tenet of the Report, namely that Canada would work to reduce the political value and salience of nuclear weapons and continue to resist any movement to validate them as acceptable currency in international politics. Four other areas were singled out for special mention: a reaffirmation that Canada's primary objectives were to promote and support adherence to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons; a pledge to work with like-minded states to enhance the disarmament and non-proliferation regime; the recommendation to hold an annual meeting with NGOs and involve the Canadian public further in such discussions; and the need to work actively to halt proliferation in India and Pakistan, as well as to urge the nuclear weapon states to pursue disarmament 'sooner rather than later'.³⁸

Reactions to the SCFAIT Report

Reactions to the Report at the domestic level, where they existed, were for the most part cautiously favourable.³⁹ NGO responses welcomed the Report as 'a note of sanity',⁴⁰ as 'representing the public's view',⁴¹ and indeed many of these groups had appeared before the SCFAIT during its investigations.⁴² Not surprisingly, some within the NGO

³⁷ Government of Canada (1999)

³⁸ Government of Canada (1999)

³⁹ One notable critique came from the Editorial column of the *Ottawa Citizen* (1998), which called the Report 'a monument to wishful thinking'.

⁴⁰ Birkett (1998). This particular commentary cited a poll taken in February 1998 which showed 92% of Canadians in favour of elimination and of Canada taking a leading role in negotiations towards this goal

⁴¹ See Young (1998).

⁴² See Babych (1998), Thompson (1998).

community, while generally welcoming the Report, argued that it did not go far enough, especially in terms of pressing NATO for a 'No-First-Use' policy.⁴³ But on the whole, the Report reflected the kind of activist posturing advocated by proponents of disarmament.

Reactions from certain US commentators were, also unsurprisingly, more critical, both during the conduct of the study and after the Report's release. Peggy Mason, a former Canadian Disarmament Ambassador noted that 'the pressure, the level of rhetoric, the diplomatic arm-twisting that took place when our friends and allies found out about this was extraordinary.'⁴⁴ A few examples will suffice: Frank Gaffney, a former US Deputy Assistant Secretary for Defence and founder of the Center for Security Policy, accused the SCFAIT of falling under the spell of the 'loony left-wing disarmament agenda'.⁴⁵ Defending his commissioning of the Report, Axworthy rejected the label 'anti-American' applied to him by a 'cabal of Canadian conservatives and 'old-think' US Defence experts'.⁴⁶

There were also fears within Canada that taking a stance on nuclear issues likely to alienate American strategic thinking might reduce the influence Canada is able to wield over NATO policy.⁴⁷ Moreover, the debate revealed long-standing concerns about the level of military commitment Canada is prepared to make towards conventional forces in

⁴³ See Robinson (1999a), Robinson (1999b), Roche (1999). This last article unfavourably compared the recommendation urging support of the NAC with Canada's voting record in the UN, which until then had not voted in favour of the NAC Resolution.

⁴⁴ Mason, Discussion Notes (1999b).

⁴⁵ Cited in Trickey (1999).

⁴⁶ See *National Post* (1998), Trickey (1998b).

⁴⁷ See Bland (1998).

Europe and elsewhere.⁴⁸ The argument here is that any reduction of nuclear weapons will need to be accompanied by a firm commitment to preserving international security through the maintenance of non-nuclear forces. This view is a valid point, one which is accepted by many proponents of nuclear elimination who contend that conventional forces are appropriate for deterring, or responding to, any threat of use of weapons of mass destruction. Certainly Canada's recent history of downgrading its military capability and commitment to NATO is a substantial issue that has the potential to weaken its calls for nuclear disarmament, and it is an issue that will need to be addressed as the debate on elimination inevitably grows.

Impact of the Report

In terms of the direct results of the Report, it is possible to point to two particular consequences. The first is that, as it was designed to do, *Canada and the Nuclear Challenge* unambiguously gives direction to Canadian policy on nuclear weapons. Given that the Government's response was overwhelmingly in favour of most of the recommendations, especially the key recommendation on the need to deligitimize nuclear weapons, the Report serves to consolidate previous policy on nuclear weapons, as well as to provide a clear direction for future policy. At the same time that the Government was delivering its response to the Report, Axworthy was working with other members of the 'NATO 5' grouping urging a review of NATO's nuclear policy at the Alliance's fiftieth anniversary meeting in Washington. In the event, this was an unsuccessful attempt, with the US Secretary of State claiming instead a reaffirmation of prevailing NATO doctrines.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, NATO has

⁴⁸ See for example Clark (1999) and Blanchfield (1999).

⁴⁹ As noted in footnote 7, NATO's 1999 Strategic Concept continued to assert the 'essential role' of nuclear weapons, a development seen as a setback in attempts to downgrade the salience of nuclear weaponry. See Mutimer 2000 for a

indicated that its Strategic Concept will be kept under review, indicating some further scope for adjustment in the future and lending hope to Canadian and other efforts to reduce the salience of nuclear weapons in international politics.

A second direct result of the SCFAIT Report is that it led naturally to the further involvement of NGOs and civil society elements in the formulation of Canadian foreign policy. By supporting greater consultation and civilian input during the course of the study, and by explicitly listing this issue as a key recommendation, the Report flagged a more inclusive policy-making process.⁵⁰ This is significant given that, as noted earlier, calls for a re-examination of the nuclear issue are now emanating from respected analysts, academics and practitioners from mainstream elements of society.

discussion of this issue. Quite clearly, the nuclear guarantee provided to NATO's European members will be important in any future considerations of nuclear policy also. While certain states - the NATO 5 - within that organization remain committed to such a downgrading, for some European allies the nuclear guarantee is seen as the most tangible commitment of the US to European security. It was thus a matter of Alliance disunity, as well as US intransigence, that prevented any rethink of this issue.

⁵⁰ The workshops, conferences and meetings initiated by the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development were a response to this during the SCFAIT hearings (Canadian Foreign Policy and Nuclear Weapons, 1998). In its Government Statement of April 1999, the government noted that 'Parliament's conduct of this study enabled Canadians to contribute to an important policy debate' *Nuclear Disarmament and Non-proliferation* (1999). What has been called the 'democratization' of foreign policy (Cameron 1998) is important here and has implications for the strengthening of a normative trend. At a direct level, the Canadian government can point to the Report as public support of its non-nuclear policies.

At a broader level, it becomes difficult to draw direct links between the Report and continuing debates in arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation forums. It should be remembered that quite unlike the Canberra Commission or Tokyo Forum, the study was not intended primarily as an international statement establishing benchmarks and for guiding disarmament processes (and indeed it is less well-known internationally than these studies), but rather was intended first and foremost as a guide to domestic policy. Notwithstanding this, it is fair to assume that some impact will have occurred at the broader international level also, in terms of conveying a clear elimination message to the nuclear weapon states. At the most tangible level, it is the recommendation calling for re-examination of NATO nuclear policy that is likely to have the most direct practical consequence, involving Canada's alliance partners.

Despite the above however, it is also clear that getting further 'results' from the Report will depend on the inclination of Axworthy's successor. Ultimately, the extent to which an individual Prime Minister or Foreign Minister is keen to identify with and pursue such reports in international forums will have an affect on their long-term impact. The cases of the Canberra Commission and Tokyo Forum were illustrative in this regard. Already, Minister Manley has shown a distaste for pursuing activism in Canadian foreign and security politics likely to inflame US opinion, and his appointment is perceived as an opportunity for strengthening close ties with Washington. It is likely that the involvement of civil society in policy formulation will continue - this is largely a function of the bureaucratic offices anyway - but a vigorous and independent stance on global policy issues consonant with Axworthy's individual style is not, so far, apparent.⁵¹

⁵¹ See for example the report in the Ottawa Citizen (Trickey 2000) shortly after Manley's appointment. On the controversial issue of Canadian acquiescence with missile defence plans, see Pugliese (2001).

Notwithstanding this, specific developments in diplomatic forums during 2000 have shifted the debate forwards, indicating that the nuclear weapon states are indeed now much more aware of the countervailing pressures from non-nuclear states to hasten the pace of arms control and disarmament. Perhaps the most notable of these developments was the 'unequivocal commitment' to disarmament made by the nuclear weapon states at the 2000 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, a meeting in which Canadian diplomatic efforts were prominent.⁵² This statement was clearly in response to the growing sense of frustration among non-nuclear states, a concern which had threatened to derail the Conference's proceedings. Also in 2000 was the highly unusual vote in the UN's General Assembly overwhelmingly supporting the NAC's call for elimination. Although this resolution had been watered down from its earlier versions, it was still remarkable that it drew support from the nuclear weapon states. In 1998 and 1999, the US had employed considerable pressure on its NATO allies to vote against the resolution; that so many NATO partners chose to abstain, in these years, was a telling indication of concerns about the role of nuclear weapons. The fact that by 2000, almost all NATO states⁵³ - the US included - this time voted in favour of the NAC, was remarkable. Certainly these represent declaratory commitments only, and there is still much concern among non-nuclear states that these commitments need to be translated into actual reductions and a devaluing of nuclear weapons. Nevertheless, even at the declaratory level, such commitments are significant, and serve to indicate a greater awareness now of the need for nuclear states to justify and explain their policies to the broader international

⁵² See Rauf (2000), Johnson (2000).

⁵³ The exception was France, which for technical reasons had abstained.

community. There are also clear signs that the US and (especially) Russia will go ahead with substantial reductions in the next few years, well below the present START II levels. Even if this is done for self-serving reasons, it is a move welcomed by the abolitionist school as a positive (if still insufficient) contribution to the idea of elimination. While one cannot make a direct causal connection between the Canadian Report and these developments, it is nevertheless fair to say that the Report added weight to the pervasive and growing feeling among many states and their publics that nuclear weapons must be delegitimized as instruments of security, a message which the nuclear weapon states are finding hard to ignore.

V. Conclusion

This paper opened with the observation that since the 1990s, a significant diplomatic push from Western allies, political practitioners and policy analysts advocating further arms control measures and disarmament has occurred *outside* the traditional arena of great power negotiations. It was noted that this new activism grew out of a sense of frustration with an arms control and disarmament agenda which had remained captive to Cold War thinking and structures. The impasses in arms control negotiations, the re-affirmation of the centrality of nuclear weapons in the strategic doctrines of the nuclear weapon states and US plans to move ahead with the introduction of missile defence, regardless of the damage it might do to arms control or perceptions of maintaining strategic stability, all run contrary to the rhetoric of strengthening the non-proliferation regime. These issues lend weight to the call for a re-examination of the role of nuclear weapons in international society. This call has been fuelled both by the need for a more 'inclusive' international society, and a growing norm against nuclear weapons. How have the reports considered here reflected and advanced these issues?

Inclusivity

These initiatives share the distinction of being key examples of innovative approaches to a serious global issue, seeking creative ways to challenge *status quo* thinking on nuclear weapons and provide new directions for both domestic and international security discussions. At a basic level, they have broadened the number of voices heard in this debate. In many ways, this new type of statecraft reflects the shifting patterns of agency and legitimacy in post-Cold War international politics where norms specifying behaviour are emanating not from the large powers but from a variety of other sources.⁵⁴ In terms of Bull's investigation of the nature of international society referred to earlier in this paper, this trend would indicate a shift towards what he labelled the 'solidarist' strand of international society, reflecting a wider range of actors pursuing normative agendas; it implies a different level of, and arena for, rule-making in global politics. This trend is evident in other areas of international relations too (including over the landmines issue and the establishment of an International Criminal Court).

We must not, of course, overstate the ability of such initiatives to influence the *substantive* behaviour of the nuclear powers, at least in the short or even medium terms. Their ultimate success will depend on the extent to which particular states (and individuals) can sustain the political will necessary to challenge traditional assumptions and habits. It will also depend on the extent to which they can balance these issues with alliance loyalties and the interdependence of political and economic relations. Nevertheless, recent developments suggest that old habits and old agendas in arms control and disarmament are under increasing scrutiny and are now less entrenched than they were even as little as five years ago.⁵⁵ In other words, even

⁵⁴ See Ungerer (2001) and Booth (1998).

⁵⁵ See Ungerer (2001) and Ungerer and Hanson (2001).

the nuclear weapon states are operating in, and having to justify their behaviour within, the world of the non-nuclear norm, even if actual doctrine and practice are not yet changing.

These new, more inclusive processes of international statecraft have become important in the 1990s and into the new century. This is so regardless of the fact that the impact of such initiatives remains relatively low at present. If such initiatives only serve the purpose of reminding nuclear weapon states that smaller states and non-state actors within the international community seek to have a say in security dialogues, they will have achieved something. Such initiatives will in likelihood grow in significance in coming years and seek to apply further pressure on the nuclear weapon states who remain, for the moment at least, the key-decision makers of security policy.

There remains of course the question of whether states like Canada, Japan and Australia are not ill-placed to suggest the elimination of nuclear weapons, given that they enjoy the benefit of military protection by the United States and are part of a Western alliance system dependent on nuclear deterrence. This is a fair point and it cannot be dismissed lightly. Indeed it was instrumental in the Japanese Government's reluctance to associate too closely with the Tokyo Forum Report and the new Australian Government distancing itself from the Canberra Commission's work. Nevertheless, and even in recognition of the fact that nuclear arms have been reduced substantially since the ending of the Cold War - especially in the European theatre - there exists an irrefutable view that as alliance partners, individual states do indeed have a right to question strategic postures. This so especially when the political structures that gave rise to these postures have changed, when 'new' threats to security do not seem to warrant the retention of - paradoxically - more nuclear weapons in 2000 than existed in 1968 when the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty was negotiated, and when the dangers of further nuclear proliferation by states rejecting the continuing inequality of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty are apparent.

On the specific issue of whether Canada can and should have a say in this issue, the Chair of the Standing Committee was quick to note that,

We believe that all states have a critical role on this debate, and further, that Canada's role is in some sense unique...while Canada participated in the development of the atomic bomb and accepted nuclear weapons for its military forces during the Cold War, we also gained a unique voice on these issues as the first country capable of developing nuclear weapons to refuse to do so, as the first to divest itself of such weapons and as a leader in the extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and anti-personnel landmine campaign.⁵⁶

Strengthening the 'Moral Dimension' of Nuclear Policy

In addition to assisting processes of inclusivity in security debates, these reports have also been useful in focussing attention on the shortcomings of current arms control and disarmament negotiations and adding a layer of strength to the evolving normative constraints against the use and possession of nuclear weapons. Responding to the Canadian Report, General Lee Butler, former Commander in Chief, US Strategic Air Command, suggested that Canada's most important contribution to international security had not been in the forces it has brought to bear, but it was rather 'in the *moral dimension* that it has had its greatest impact.'⁵⁷

⁵⁶ William Graham (1999) p. 695.

⁵⁷ Cited in W. Graham (1999), p. 693 (emphasis added). Indeed there have been calls, usually by NGOs, to replicate the successful Canadian landmines process for nuclear weapons. It is unlikely, however, that such a process can be easily transposed onto the nuclear issue, although it is worth noting that at an informal level, we are in any case seeing a *de facto* delegitimizing and stigmatization of nuclear weapons. The vast majority of states have rejected their possession and use,

It is nevertheless fair to ask what is the real value of exercises such as the Canberra Commission, the Tokyo Forum and the Canadian Report. It would be easy to dismiss these as collections of platitudes that can have no serious impact. The more cynical observer may argue that, despite their moral weight, these are ultimately doomed to ineffectiveness until such time as the nuclear weapon states, and especially the US and Russia, agree that strategic stability can be maintained and are willing to take substantial steps towards reductions and revise the role of nuclear weapons. Canada's Ambassador Westdal reminded SCFAIT members that we do not yet live in a world where the existing laws and norms about nuclear weapons are determining actual practice.⁵⁰ Certainly, it will be the actions of specific states, rather than gatherings such as the Canberra Commission, the Tokyo Forum or the Canadian Parliamentary Committee, that will determine the course of arms control and nuclear elimination. Despite this however, more inclusive and innovative ways of addressing security concerns can help the assessment of security threats and the formulation of ideas to reduce them. There is value in such projects in that they help to keep issues of arms control and disarmament firmly on the international agenda in a very visible way.

There is also a growing sense that if indeed it is presently unrealistic to expect elimination, then a gradual normative process of attrition may at least see the salience of nuclear weapons reduced. This may be the best that can be hoped for in a world where strategic mindsets remain averse to the notion of elimination, no matter how little actual utility (and much inherent danger) a nuclear arsenal may

and it is increasingly the case that 'holdouts', in this case the five Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty-recognized weapon states and the two self-declared states, India and Pakistan, are facing pressure from others - grown largely out of humanitarian concerns - to conform to a growing non-nuclear norm.

⁵⁰ Statement by Ambassador Chris Westdal to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Ottawa, 2 March 2000.

hold. There is a strengthening view that by gradually delegitimizing nuclear weapons as instruments of security, by weaving a web of normative constraints around nuclear weapons and reducing their centrality in strategic doctrines (even if this is resisted at the moment by the nuclear weapon states), we reinforce the norm of non-use, and perhaps ultimately, of non-possession. In sum, there is now a clear opinion in favour of international norms designed to reduce the nuclear threat and marginalize, or reduce nuclear weapons completely. The strength of this norm is due in no small part to the initiatives outlined in this paper.

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