

because the United States rather than the Soviet Union is the real threat to peace, or because Canada's best hope of survival in the event of war would be to remain neutral between the United States and the Soviet Union. But none of these arguments against Canadian participation in NATO and NORAD is likely to enjoy majority public support in the foreseeable future. Canadians in fact have recently elected a government more strongly committed to the alliances than the former one. Policy has to be based on the reality that Canada will almost certainly remain a close ally of the United States.

As a superpower, the United States is the dominant country in both alliances. In NATO, Canada's position as dependent junior partner is obscured by the fact that the European countries are in the same position. But in NORAD, Canada is the only junior partner and the dependency is obvious. Canada relies on the United States for defence of its territory because it simply does not have the military resources to deter attack or to protect itself in the event of attack. There is nothing demeaning in the dependency provided Canada plays its role in the alliance in fair measure relative to the collective security it enjoys with the United States in North America.

In seeking a closer association with the United States, it is important for the new Canadian government to reaffirm the commitment to NATO and to NORAD. It may also have to demonstrate this commitment by substantially increasing the defence budget which, as a proportion of national income, has been among the lowest of the NATO countries. That would reassure the United States and enable Canadians to negotiate with dignity with their American partners.

To be an ally of the United States in NATO and NORAD does not mean that Canada has to endorse every aspect of US foreign policy. In the councils of the alliances, Canadians are free to speak their minds on every strategic and political issue concerning collective security, and that certainly includes relations with the Soviet Union, the balance of nuclear and conventional forces, the testing and siting of weapons, and negotiations with the Soviet Union on arms control. Outside the North Atlantic region, Canada is free to disagree with US policy in Latin America, the Middle East, Asia and anywhere else in the world.

### New institutions

In the past, for the most part, the preferred method of managing the Canada-US relationship has been through private discussions between the executives of both governments — Quiet Diplomacy. There are numerous channels for these discreet communications: Prime Ministers speak directly to Presidents by telephone or occasionally at face-to-face meetings; ministers in Ottawa and Washington with similar responsibilities confer, and sometimes whole committees of Canadian and US ministers meet; the US Ambassador in Ottawa talks to the Canadian government, and the Canadian Ambassador in Washington makes the views of his government known to the US government; Canadian and US civil servants discuss shared problems; the International Joint Commission, with equal representation from both countries; is entrusted with boundary water issues and

directs research into cross-border pollution; the Defence Production Sharing Agreement is administered by a joint board, and so on. There are also fairly regular meetings between Members of Parliament and of Congress, but they are usually in private and seem seldom to produce any practical results.

There are various proposals to create new joint bodies to deal with trade issues, to manage the fisheries where there are often disputes over boundaries and quotas, and to try to sort out difficulties or disagreements before they become public issues or crises. No doubt Quiet Diplomacy in one form or another will continue to be the preferred way of handling the day-to-day business of the continental association. Indeed, some have blamed the bad feelings of 1981 on the fact that the rows over FIRA and NEP were allowed to escape from the back rooms into public view. However, that row signalled the arrival of Public Diplomacy — now a fact of life in the relationship.

There were a number of causes: the emergence of private businessmen as factors; the shift in the balance of power between Congress and the Administration in the post-Watergate period. But most of all it was the abandonment of the seniority system in the Congress. In the past, when congressional power was in the hands of the longest serving members, the Administration could be sure of congressional reaction. Today with power dispersed, congressional response is less predictable. As a result it is no longer enough for a foreign government to negotiate an arrangement with the State Department, they also have to lobby for congressional support for any agreement and in doing so may very well find themselves competing with lobbyists for various US domestic interests. Often the competition will spill over into public view. Furthermore, as US domestic policies came to affect Canada as much as or more than US foreign policies, our focus had to shift somewhat from White House to Capitol. There was thus more and different lobbying to be done and with the help of Canadian business, more and different players to do it.

Another reason for the shift to Public Diplomacy is to be found in the way the communications media, particularly television, have changed international relations just as they have changed domestic politics. Television can focus on an event or an issue with immense dramatic effect, transforming it almost overnight from a minor dispute into an international crisis. Having spotlighted an issue, television journalism attracts new players into the game, providing a forum, for example, for every Congressman who wishes to make clear that he is protecting the interests of his constituents in some US trade dispute with Canada. By drawing new players into a dispute, TV disperses power and the responsibility for reaching a settlement. It becomes necessary for governments to speak not just to each other in quiet conference rooms, but to address the media and public opinion and perhaps to lobby legislators and other interested parties. The diplomats may wind up dealing not with the reality of events, but with the media and public reactions to those events — which may be quite different. Public Diplomacy, therefore, may make the management of the relationship more rather than less difficult, but it is unavoidable on occasions, and has to be managed rather than merely endured and regretted.