

FOREIGN POLICY FOR CANADIANS

Canadian foreign policy has not been static since the Second World War. It has been adjusting to a changing world and to Canada's changing needs. But an empirical process of adjustment cannot be continued indefinitely. A time comes when policy must be comprehensively examined and renewed.

These papers present, in essence, the results of the special review of foreign policy carried out by the Government. They show the main contours of Canada's external policies and suggest how they are being reshaped to meet the challenges and opportunities offered by a rapidly-changing world. In some cases the papers present policy decisions taken by the Government such as that to increase the proportion of national income to be spent on international development assistance and that to develop closer relations with the nations of the Pacific and to play a larger part in the Inter-American System, in others they offer ideas for public discussion.

The General Paper

The pursuit of Canada's aims and interests in their external dimension provides the major theme of the general paper. These aims and interests must be seen in terms of the realities Canada faces in the contemporary world. Foremost among these is the preponderant power and influence of the United States. The dilemma of Canada's relationship with the United States, with the advantages and difficulties it presents, underlies much of the discussion throughout the general paper and is returned to frequently in the sector papers. A forecast of prospective power relationships and conflicts in the seventies, set out in Chapter IV, suggest that the United States will continue to hold a dominant position among Western nations and that the relative stability of the last 20 years is likely to continue, since the United States and the Soviet Union both seem convinced of the need to avoid nuclear war. Within the terms of this general statement, the paper outlines the dynamic changes that are taking place in the power relationships within the two blocs, between them, and the potentially disruptive effect of the emergence of China as a major power. The continuing effect of conflicts such as those in the Middle East and Indochina is discussed, as is the development of a sense of unity and identity among Latin American nations and among many of the nations in the Pacific basin.

The rapid changes in today's world, the complexity of relationships and the kaleidoscopic context in which foreign policy aims are pursued necessitated a thorough examination of fundamental assumptions and the systematic consideration of policy in a comprehensive conceptual framework. This framework