

policy? The military alliance is the outward and visible sign of our inward and very material ecstasy.

No doubt the political implications of the situation as stated by Mr. Pearson do not engender equanimity in government circles. Withdrawal from continental defence planning and production would require a good deal of political footwork and even more hard economic planning. But that in itself is not an argument for not pulling out into the open the real reasons (and results) of our military alignment. If the purpose of the present policy review is *really* to consider all the implications of our present alignment then it will have to examine and publicize a very wide range of our domestic policies that are directly affected. In many cases, from foreign investment to immigration, the real meaning of our policies is not only determined by our military alignment but is also almost totally unknown to the public. I propose to mention one area in which the alignment influence is direct and, at the same time, largely obscured from view.

Most Canadians feel that our immigration policy should reflect our basic liberalism. They believe that, not unlike the United States, Canada has been an asylum for millions of people from the British Isles and Europe. They believe, too, that it is a mark both of our independence and our liberalism that we instruct our immigration officials not to enforce foreign laws or to snoop into the political beliefs or military obligations of intending immigrants. Had we acted otherwise a good many of Sir Clifford Sifton's "men in sheepskin coats" would have been sent back to fight in the imperial armies of Russia and Austria-Hungary. Thus, when young American war-protestors began to seek asylum in Canada and many of them experienced difficulty in being admitted there was considerable public concern and the Department of Immigration instructed its border officials to adhere to the regulations by not asking questions about military status. At the same time, however, the Department made a quiet reservation. There was a difference between draft-resisters and deserters. Thus it continues to, in effect, enforce American law by rejecting deserters from the American army. And it does so as policy, although most Canadians undoubtedly assume that if an American refuses to fight in Vietnam and deserts when he is ordered overseas, he will not on that account be denied entry to Canada.

When, in the spring of 1967, I asked the Department on what grounds it pursued this policy I was told, at first, that it was an obligation arising from our NATO commitment. When I objected that the commitment was nowhere spelled out I was informed that it stemmed from the NATO Visiting Forces Act. When I argued further that this did not apply to deserters the

point was conceded and I received an official letter* which cleared up the point. I will quote from the letter because it is the only way of illustrating fully the point I am developing:

It is quite true that the NATO Visiting Forces Act is applicable only to foreign military personnel actually on service in Canada, and that consequently a foreign soldier who comes to Canada after deserting somewhere else is not subject to its provisions. I am sure you will agree, however, that neither Canada nor any other member of NATO would be acting in the spirit of the North Atlantic Treaty if it granted immunity within its borders to deserters from the military forces of other members of the Alliance.

Well, I agree that the admission of American deserters to Canada is contrary to the spirit of NATO. That is just the point. Moreover, the further reasoning behind the Departmental position is equally unnerving:

The doctrine of 'asylum' is not recognized in the Canadian Immigration Act, or in any other Canadian statute to the best of my knowledge. In any event, common usage suggests that it really has no application to citizens of friendly countries, particularly those having democratic forms of government similar in principle to our own. The connotation surely is that a person seeking 'asylum' aims to escape from political persecution by a regime having totally different standards from ours. A deserter from the American Forces, or from those of most other NATO members, is certainly not in danger of political persecution, though he may well be faced with prosecution.

I don't think I need to specify those parts of the above passage that should cause deep concern to Canadian liberal opinion, or to underline the relationship of the policy to our military alignment. The letter goes on to suggest very clearly that the avoidance of service in Vietnam is a legitimate concern of our immigration officers, since, to avoid military responsibilities is tantamount to total irresponsibility:

Personal qualities are of major significance in reaching a decision on this point, and motivation is one of the qualities to be taken into account. A person who comes here because he believes it to be a good country to live in, and one that offers him better opportunities, is more likely—other things being equal—to make the transition successfully than is a man whose chief motive is to avoid responsibilities in his own country. Accordingly, there have to be rather special circumstances before we accept an applicant seeking to escape

*Department of Manpower and Immigration, Office of Director and Assistant Deputy Minister (Immigration); File No. 555-38; July 31, 1967.