

According to Pearson, London refused on the grounds that India had a key role in the dispute and was known to oppose military pacts. Canada was not privy to Anglo-French military plans and the ultimate employment of force without consultation strained the alliance; the United States publicly dissociated itself from Britain and France at the United Nations. The allies were only extricated from their embarrassment by Pearson's diplomatic skill. His initiative to establish a United Nations peacekeeping force permitted the peaceful withdrawal of the Anglo-French forces.

The United States Government had, in the meantime, begun "to think of Egypt as a threat to the Dulles policy of containment of Soviet Russia, rather than as a people struggling to be free of British imperialism", while Nasser was irritated by Dulles' "passion for surrounding the Communist bloc with a ring of mini-NATOs". Matters came to a head over the Aswan High Dam, the core of Nasser's great design for accelerating the economic development of his country. The withdrawal of British and American support for the project displayed a remarkable short-sightedness in evaluating the relative powers of rampant nationalism and dormant Communism in the Middle East.

The strains on NATO imposed by the Suez crisis led, in March 1956, to an appeal to Pearson to join a Committee of Three, composed of himself, Lange of Norway and Martino of Italy. The Committee's terms of reference were to "advise the Council on the ways and means to improve and extend NATO co-operation into non-military fields and to develop greater unity within the Atlantic Community". The committee was dubbed "the Three Wise Men". Since I was a member of his staff, Pearson referred to me as "the little wise guy".

The committee drafted a questionnaire and invited member governments and their representatives to discuss their replies individually. Representative questions were: "What do we really mean by 'political consultation'? What is (*sic*) the extent and purpose; should it be carried on through the permanent members of the Council or through Ministers? Is it merely an exchange of information, or to co-ordinate foreign policies and seek agreement on a common policy? Should consultation extend to problems outside the NATO area? How can European integration be brought about so that it will strengthen rather than weaken the Atlantic ties?"

Dulles pledged full support and co-operation, naming Senator Walter George, a much-respected octogenarian, as the American contact with the committee. Pearson records, however, that it was easier to ask the questions than to secure convincing answers from the allies, especially Dulles: "He assured me that, in respect of consultation, the United States 'would be willing to go as far as any country with comparable responsibilities' . . . even further". The responsibilities of the U.S., the leader of the alliance, were clearly not comparable to those of the lesser NATO partners. This Delphic reply hardly advanced matters.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the committee's original draft report was largely the work of the Canadian delegation, especially of Pearson himself. Still in pursuit of the Holy Grail of Article 2, we were left much to our own devices to draw up the ground-rules for trying to ensure the better cohesion of the coalition through regular consultation on political and economic policy.

In addition to suggesting ground-rules for political

consultation, especially in advance of policy commitments affecting other members of the alliance, the Council adopted certain proposals of a procedural character. The Secretary-General of NATO was to become the permanent chairman of the Council and to assume responsibility for the organization of its agenda. Political counsellors of the permanent mission were to meet weekly, before Council meetings, to prepare the ground for consultation.

On the question of economic consultation, we ran into strong opposition from the European members. They were against duplication of existing machinery or any weakening of the conception of the European Community that was now gaining acceptance.

Thus Canada became what Trudeau has referred to as the "bed-mate" of the United States "elephant", to share for better or for worse the pressures of continentalism. As far as our European partners were concerned, they were officially committed under the Treaty of Rome to the pursuit of unity. We have had to use our military contribution to NATO as a bargaining chip to retain some kind of consultative status in relation to the OEEC.

Historic fact

The growing militarization of NATO is a historic fact. Escott Reid, in an essay in honour of Pearson, cites "Chip" Bohlen, one of the greatest American diplomats of the postwar era, in support of this truth. Bohlen traced NATO's militarization through several developments: the Korean War, the rearmament of Western Germany, the inclusion of Greece, Turkey and Western Germany in the alliance, and the creation of an integrated NATO military structure under an American Supreme Commander. Reid concludes that the result was "the metamorphosis of the North Atlantic Alliance into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization . . . With these developments, the chances of the North Atlantic Alliance providing a starting-point for economic and political unification of the North Atlantic community became remote."

Indeed it did. Unfortunately, NATO also became afflicted with a form of "tunnel vision" in its strategic planning. There was first of all the focus on the rearmament of West Germany and its inclusion in the alliance. Perhaps the association of NATO with the reconciliation between those old enemies, France and Germany, was justified. The rearmament of West Germany, however, also provided the fulcrum by means of which military leverage could be exerted against Soviet power in Europe, using the counter-vailing military power of the United States.

There was no doubt about the reaction of the Soviet leaders to this historic development. During his Soviet visit in October 1955, Pearson asked Khrushchev to clarify the Soviet attitude to the German problem. "His reply," Pearson writes, "could not have been more categorical: 'so long as the Paris agreements exist and Germany remains in NATO we shall do everything possible to prevent the reunification of Germany.'" My personal recollection of this conversation is that Khrushchev spent more time on NATO and the consequences of its admission of West Germany than on any other question. He insisted that the combination of the industrial-technological power of the United States and the military traditions and the prowess of the Germans constituted an unacceptable threat to the security of the Soviet Union.