

effective, if it ceased to be an ally of the United States?" several nonaligned representatives could not conceive of Canada's doing anything so rash. Almost half thought that Canada would gain in influence, at least within the UN. The majority was evenly split between those who speculated that ceasing to be a US ally would cost Canada in influence, and those who considered that it would make no difference.

A majority recommended, in effect, that Canada adopt their countries' posture, but there were interesting exceptions. A nonaligned African ambassador, for example, said: "To be selfish, I hope Canada stays close to the US. It can do more to help us there." Several Soviet bloc respondents were also convinced that Canada served the common cause, as well as its own, by staying in NATO.

Except for membership in NATO, Swedish and Norwegian policies are very close, and both countries are often considered similar to Canada. Resentment of military blocs would seem to be the principal reason why Sweden was regarded more warmly than Canada and Norway by the nonaligned majority in the UN. Other responses, however, demonstrated that popularity and influence were not the same thing, and Canada was judged to be at least as influential as Sweden. Many would applaud if Canada severed its alliance ties, but it might well become less effective, even in the strictly UN context.

### **Is influence changing?**

What in fact is happening to Canada's UN influence? Almost four-fifths responded that it was remaining "about the same"; one sixth indicated an increase, half as many a decline.

Comments from long-time members of the Secretariat and other UN observers were often more critical. Almost

all concurred that Canada was less influential now than in the early years. Considering the dramatic change in UN membership, a drop in Canadian influence was cause for neither surprise nor dismay. More serious was the complaint from about half this group, that Canada had become less committed, and was trying less. Others contested the point vigorously. Canada's support does appear to have declined in some issue areas, such as peacekeeping. It has increased in others, however, most notably in international development and human rights. And support remains very serious in disarmament.

Canada continues to field a strong and active mission to the UN, led as a rule by an outstanding Ambassador. We heard almost as many tributes to William Barton, Canada's representative in the mid-seventies, as to Lester Pearson. Many in the UN thought that quietness was carried to the time of our interviews; we also heard praise of his commitment and skill, however, and it should be recalled that our respondents attached little value to speechmaking as a factor of influence in the UN.

The speeches of Pelletier's successor, Stephen Lewis, may prove to be the exception. His extraordinary eloquence, and his willingness to defend the UN, will certainly win admiration, and may compensate for the time spent away from the UN corridors where Pearson and Barton made their great impact.

Secretary of State for External Affairs Joe Clark has warmly reaffirmed Canada's traditional support for the UN. Prime Minister Mulroney, however, has emphasized that the first plank in Canada's foreign policy is now friendship with the United States, and this at a time when Washington has never been more hostile to the UN. The two objectives are not totally irreconcilable, but Canada's UN diplomacy appears to be in for a testing period. □