

absolutely necessary, which meant there was little difference between the two old line parties on this question.<sup>28</sup> Apparently both the Liberals and the Conservatives were of the opinion that no votes would be lost by refusing to take a positive stand, but that the anti-nuclear vote would be of significance if warheads were advocated. While domestic forces could not bring the question into its proper focus, the Cuban crisis of the fall of 1962 more than served this purpose.

The seriousness of the crisis seemed to have impressed upon the Opposition Leader the necessity of coming to grips with the need to fulfill alliance commitments. Added to the Cuban crisis was the now famous Norstad interview. During his visit to Ottawa on January 3, 1963, General Norstad made it quite clear that Canada had accepted certain commitments by acquiring the various weapons systems, and these commitments were not being fulfilled.<sup>29</sup> Under these circumstances Mr. Pearson came to the conclusion that these commitments had to be honoured, and this could only be done by accepting warheads for the systems. On January 12, 1963 in a speech to the Scarborough Liberal Association he took a strong stand to this effect:

In short, both in NATO and in continental defence, the Canadian Government has accepted defence commitments for Canada in continental and collective defense which can only be carried out by Canadian forces if nuclear warheads are available.<sup>30</sup>

The above position became the official party doctrine as outlined by "The Policies of the Liberal Party" (election platform, 1963). The platform makes the point that the present weapons systems were designed to operate with nuclear warheads, and should be equipped with them. It also stated that the party was opposed to the arrangements for the acquisition of the systems (this is highly debateable) but now it was important to honor international commitments. At the same time the platform called for an increased emphasis on conventional forces, coupled with a re-examination of NATO defence policy.

The clarification of the Liberal position should have forced the Government to adopt a more concrete stand. However, at the annual Conservative Convention no resolution was passed on the question since Mr. Diefenbaker asked to be given a free hand. When Parliament reconvened on January 23, 1963 the Prime Minister delivered an ambiguous speech and the party position remained unclear. The interpretation given by the Minister of National Defence was rejected by the Prime Minister, and the split within the party became acute, leading to the resignation of Mr. Harkness on February 4, 1963. The following day the Government went down to defeat.<sup>31</sup> During the ensuing campaign the nuclear issue was not clarified by the Conservatives, but after the election of a Liberal Government alliance commitments were fulfilled.

The various party relationships concerning the acquisition of nuclear warheads and support for NATO during this period are contained in table No. 2.