

The clearest statements regarding Liberal party policy vis-à-vis the future of NATO have come from Mr. Hellyer and Mr. Martin. In appearing before the Defence Committee during the unification hearings the Defence Minister said "the Canadian government still believes that this organization has performed and is continuing to perform a most useful function....We believe that we should continue to adhere to the alliance and to do what we can to keep it strong." This is substantially the position taken by the External Affairs Minister in his testimony before the Senate External Affairs Committee in March 1967. The Minister stressed the benefits that NATO provides: i) It has "deterred possible Soviet military or political penetration of Western Europe." ii) In all probability Soviet and East European leaders look upon NATO "as a stabilizing force in Europe." iii) The alliance has also helped Western Europe to recover and gain its confidence. iv) It has also "provided an effective framework for consultation and, if necessary, for action." Here the Minister was referring primarily in terms of providing a framework so that a mutual disengagement in Europe would be possible.<sup>55</sup>

After the Hellyer and Martin statements, the Walter Gordon and Dalton Camp position was discussed in public. This made it necessary for Mr. Martin, in speaking at the Director's Luncheon of the Canadian National Exhibition to reiterate the Government's stand on NATO. But, at the same time the Minister made it quite clear that the ultimate objective is to maintain peace until a political settlement in Europe makes NATO unnecessary. However, no deadline can be placed on when such a settlement can be obtained. This does not mean that Canada cannot broaden the base of its foreign policy activities - i.e., by emphasising peacekeeping. But as long as no settlement is possible then NATO must remain in existence.<sup>56</sup> It should be noted, that is not the same as saying that the Canadian contribution to the alliance will remain constant.

In effect the latest Conservative statements are quite close to the Liberal position. Mr. Diefenbaker, in his last statement on NATO as Party Leader, mentioned he was willing to support the Minister's position while making it quite clear that "NATO must be maintained."<sup>57</sup> Even though Dalton Camp's position is far removed from the official government position, as well as the rest of the Conservative party, a careful reading of his speech indicates that he realizes we have to rely on alliance systems for the present. In his case, it was the future Canadian policy he was concerned with in advocating "disarmament, non-proliferation and the development of a special role in foreign aid and assistance" as basic pillars of foreign policy.<sup>58</sup> However, neither Mr. Stanfield, who feels Canada "should participate on some basis in joint defence," nor Mr. Roblin, who advocates review for NATO, are willing to go as far as the Camp proposals.<sup>59</sup> The Stanfield-Roblin position was accepted at the leadership conference where NATO was supported despite some indecisiveness on the part of the policy group. But what seems clear is that the party is willing to support NATO for the present while searching for possible alternatives to the present role.

The search for an alternative role is also the concern of the NDP as expressed at their July (1967) Convention. While the party is explicit about the obsolescent of the present role (the other parties