

that, at any rate, it recurred frequently in the other booklets. The point was also made that there were dangers in committing the Government in advance through policy papers to specific approaches and objectives. These arguments had to be discounted in view of the Government's goal of broader participation in the foreign policy process, and particularly the importance of Canadian-United States relations in the daily life of every Canadian. Accordingly, the gaps in the Foreign Policy Papers were ordered to be filled.

The document itself was drafted by the officials concerned and prepared in its final form by the Minister with the benefit of the advice and assistance of his Cabinet colleagues and departmental officials. It did not, however, receive full, formal Cabinet approval before release and was issued as a statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs. This is regrettable since it cannot be considered a statement of Government policy and could be disowned by Mr. Sharp's successor in that portfolio. On the other hand, we know that it is a carefully-considered statement by the Minister and specialists within the Department.

Another aspect of the publication of this article deserves special mention. That the Government has issued a carefully considered statement on an important subject for public consideration is cause for satisfaction. More impressive still is the fact that it has invited uninhibited comment on it in an official publication. There can be few precedents in any country for such a situation, and it augurs well for the practice of democracy in the area of Canadian foreign policy. However, in order for the process to be successful, both sides — officialdom and outside analysts — must be as forthright as possible in presenting the facts and their viewpoints; otherwise the exercise could easily become a sham.

#### Limited objectives

The objectives of Mr. Sharp's article are disappointingly limited. It examines the nature of the Canadian-United States relation, and then outlines three possible "options" or policy orientations for Canada in the immediate future. Apparently in an attempt to avoid any suggestion of a policy commitment, or even an official view of particular issues, the language is cautious to the point of evasiveness. For instance, while "Option Three" evidently finds favour with the author or authors, that preference is never stated specifically. The article has much of the tone, and even the content, of a speculative intel-

lectual exercise, and, as such, makes rather a frustrating reading for persons accustomed to drawing firm conclusions from hard facts.

Another consequence of the abstract nature of the article is that it discusses neither specific policy issues nor possible strategies for dealing with them. And there is a dyadic relation that cannot be examined without entering into specifics: it is surely the Canadian-United States one. To this criticism the answer can be given that general policy orientation must first be established, and that specific policy positions and strategies will flow from them.

But how is one to choose among three options if one does not know their implications in practical terms, which are the real concern of Canadians? Canadian like Mr. Sharp and his advisers, may lean in principle towards Option Three which calls for greater independence towards the United States; but they want to know the price tag on that option. And serious students of Canadian-American diplomacy will want to know, before making their choice, precisely how each option is to be implemented, how Americans are likely to react, and how it is proposed to deal with that reaction. Clearly the choice of a general policy option cannot be dealt with satisfactorily in isolation from these and similar considerations.

#### "Special relationship"

What of the options that have been outlined? The first is essentially the *status quo* "with a minimum of policy adjustments". It is described as "dealing with each problem as it arises and seeking to maintain something of a 'special relationship'". It comes as something of a surprise that the Government of Pierre Trudeau, that great conceptualizer, apparently has been — nay, still is — guilty of such "special relationship" or, in fact, special treatment on occasion. Speeches made by Mr. Sharp and his predecessors in the External Affairs portfolio over the years created the impression that Canada had a more coherent policy toward the United States. And we were told that the expression "special relationship" had been dropped from the vocabulary of both American and Canadian officials.

Option Two calls for Canada to deliberately toward closer integration with the United States", and possibly towards political union. A serious choice? Certainly one that belongs in the gamut of possible scenarios, but not to be considered

*Choice of option should not be treated in isolation from U.S. reaction*