

fort and at least \$2 billion were wasted in preparing for it. Yet, independent analysis in 1959 would have shown — as it did to some unofficial analysts who were not listened to — that this mission made as little sense then as it did 13 years later.

Attention remained focused exclusively on Canada's role in the defence of Central Europe, with somewhat indecisive experiments at shifting our attention northwards to support the defence of the NATO northern flank in Norway. Meanwhile, in the Arctic, a variety of defence tasks still awaits our attention. John Gellner points out the need for "Arctic surveillance . . . [and] the asserting of sovereignty in territorial waters and of control over the economic zone that extends 200 miles out to sea". Nonetheless, our NATO role remains focused on the central front in Europe and on keeping open the transatlantic lanes along which troop reinforcements and supplies from Canada would supposedly be transported.

Pearson was the first NATO foreign minister to visit the Soviet Union after the death of Stalin. In his discussions with Khrushchov, at which I was present, his perception of the consequences of nuclear weapons for Canada's security was confirmed. Khrushchov agreed with Pearson that "no one wanted war in the nuclear age" but stressed that, in the event of world war, "the results would be infinitely worse than the last" and that "this time Canada would not be geographically secure".

If these words are to be taken seriously, as I believe they should be, then NATO should stop developing nuclear-weapon systems mainly on the basis of purely military considerations in disregard of the intolerably high risks of nuclear escalation. Considering the profound consequences of lowering the threshold between nuclear and conventional weapons, it is to be hoped that Prime Minister Trudeau's opposition to the neutron bomb will prevail against the military strategists, who are reported as favouring this "valuable addition to the Western European arsenal". He stated that nuclear weapons should be retained as a deterrent — for strategic purposes only.

Suez

From a political standpoint, the disastrous effects of unilateral action by the NATO allies on the cohesion of the alliance was exposed by the Suez crisis. Pearson writes: "By 1956, in fact, I was losing hope that NATO would evolve beyond an alliance for defence; and even there I was begin-

ning to have doubts about its future." These doubts were triggered by the disarray among the principal allies after each took different positions on Nasser's decision to nationalize the Canal. Before the British and the French decided to join Israel in military action against Egypt, Pearson had tried to impress upon the British the desirability of having the whole Suez question considered in the NATO Council. After all, the strategic importance of Suez to NATO's southern flank had always been self-evident. Nasser, moreover, had appealed openly to the Soviet Union for help for the Aswan project after being turned down by the Western allies.

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's "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 question-

*Withdrawal
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from Aswan
High Dam
shortsighted*