

A third approach could be described as "Canada first." According to this Canada should concentrate on defending its own territory and should withdraw from NATO and use its forces at home, particularly in the North where the principal threat to our sovereignty comes not from the Soviet Union, but from the United States, since it is the latter which is contesting Canadian sovereignty in the area. According to this approach, the government should push for distinctive Canadian policies on arms control rather than echoing those of NATO, and should give greater emphasis to peacekeeping activities. This view is supported by the New Democratic Party (NDP).

All three positions have certain features in common. First of all, nobody is suggesting unilateral disarmament for Canada. On the contrary, all three propose to maintain defence spending at its current level if not to increase it. It is also agreed that Canada must play some part in the defence of North America, either through NORAD or in some other way. Finally, everyone accepts Canada's continued participation in UN peacekeeping forces.

Mr. Pearson then spoke of three key issues, which concern the public, but about which Canadians do not agree. First, there is no agreement on how to deal with what is probably the greatest threat of all to Canadian security, nuclear war. Many believe that the only solution to this is to support the NATO policy of deterrence. Others, while accepting that view, think it would be better if Canadian forces were used less for active deterrence and undertook more passive but equally important activities such as surveillance and warning of attack. Many who see nuclear war as a threat, think it is more likely to come about through the escalation of a Third World conflict, than because of any surprise attack in Europe by the Soviet Union. In this case, Canada would be well advised to give priority to mediating in regional conflicts, preventing the proliferation of nuclear and chemical weapons and taking part in UN peacekeeping activities. Mr. Pearson maintained, however, that such a policy would not justify abandoning our commitments to the defence of Europe, since Canadian leaders must always provide for the worst case scenario, which would be war in Europe.

The second key issue where there is disagreement among Canadians, is the extent to which sovereignty should be a factor in security planning. It is essential to decide whether the Soviet Union is still believed to be the greatest threat to Canadian