

both in and out of arm-chairs to argue that a higher priority among Canadian defence options ought to be given to peace-keeping under United Nations auspices; a small but not unimportant body of opinion styling itself "positive neutralist" has indeed urged that Canada renounce its old-fashioned military alliances the better to be able to participate in the tasks of para-military police action among that increasingly large number of nations which regard such alliances with suspicion. The present Government has declined to go so far. But it evidently looks with favour upon the idea that Canada might become peace-keeper to the nations, an international policeman on a regular beat. Such an idea is not unworthy, but those who urge it as a policy do well to reflect that in the eyes of those who live in the precinct Canada is not especially well equipped for the job. Gandhi wore a loin-cloth, not a grey flannel suit; his complexion was brown, not white; and it remains at least an open question whether the doctrines of the Mahatma have any relevance in a world in which governments continue to jostle and fight for power. A recent statement of the positive neutralist position argues that while "there still is, and there will be for a long time yet, a contest between East and West, between Communist and Western values", that contest will from now on "be decided not by cold war but by which values win, or lose, the support of the new and uncommitted nations". This is a plausible case, easily argued; but it cannot yet be asserted, as its author asserts it, as a fact of life. Would that it were.

Defending the Continent

Reflections of a very different order are induced by turning to the preparations made or contemplated by successive Canadian Governments to help defend the continent from nuclear attack by the U.S.S.R. Soon after August 1949, when the Soviet Union successfully detonated an atomic bomb, it became evident that its government satisfied all too well the designation of "enemy": it was malevolently disposed towards the West and possessed, henceforward, the means to express its ill-will in a devastating surprise attack. In August 1951, negotiations between Canada and the United States were consummated in an agreement under which the American Government undertook to pay two-thirds of the costs of construction, equipment and maintenance of a chain of radar installations—the so-called Pinetree Line—reaching from Vancouver Island into the Peace River district, down through the northern states of the American prairie, up again into Ontario and Quebec and ending at the Atlantic Coast of Newfoundland. Two other radar chains—the Mid-Canada line and the Distant Early Warning system—were built further north, the former at Canada's expense, the latter (three times more costly) at that of the United States. Their existence brought United States service personnel into the Canadian northlands on an unprecedented scale. Coming and going at will, occasionally imposing its jurisdiction upon Canadians in their own country, the American presence was not well received by Canadian public opinion. Criticism of the early warning system tended to centre on this aspect of sovereignty, neglecting the more fundamental questions of whether its enormous cost was worth incurring in the era of the intercontinental missile (which it could neither detect nor intercept), or better expended upon forces designed to deal with brushfires rather than with the apocalypse.

A similar preoccupation with sovereignty rather than with survival seemed to attend Canadian reactions to the creation in 1958 of the North American Air Defence Command (NORAD). The command of NORAD, charged with the defence of North America against bomber attack, was assigned to a U.S. officer. But his deputy was a Canadian, and while the American commanders came and went, the deputy, in the person of Air Marshal Roy Slemon, R.C.A.F., stayed at the job from the outset, acquiring in the process a store of expertise and experience assuring him of the respect and confidence of senior American