

AMCHITKA

Perspective

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had the her consequence of leading to ence proin, so that Canadian arms found m, even Canadian representatives on the Commis such as Blair Seaborn, became rican hat to Hanoi.

brief his that it sets the stage for present ween Car and the United States. To be sure, owing its es in Vietnam, has begun to look ar, but as, if anything, meant a greater g fortresca, hence on development of the nal.

ater, not economic penetration of Canada, can inter Canadian resources such as water mistically a continental energy policy.

ant add to the American arsenal in recent M. The of this elaborate network of missiles, et and se rike ICBM's, will range anywhere 0 billion tially, it involves using Spartan nuclear w, to intercept and destroy enemy Canada, orter Sprint missiles to back them

ABM are the United States, and when the nse, Melv d, was asked at hearing of the US ons Com in 1969, whether Canada would the use e rockets, which would detonate territory, bluntly replied: "The Canadian eto power y kind, no matter how close the border a ite the fact the anti-missile could n soil."

The Canadian government, far from expressing misgivings about the ABM, equivocated. Trudeau reversed his position, following his visit to Nixon in 1969, and a year later Donald Macdonald, Canadian defence minister, in an interview with the Toronto Star, stated: "It is better to have nuclear missiles intercepted over James Bay than over Montral and Toronto. Canada would accept ABM's on Canadian soil only with 'deep regret', but this might have to be considered."

In the meantime, the Canadian Defence Research Board and other bodies had participated in secret research for the ABM for eleven years, and Canadian radar stations were involved in relaying information for the ABM system.

We come then to Amchitka, whose purpose is to perfect the nuclear warhead of the Spartan missile. Having refused to condemn the ABM system, tout au contraire, the Canadian government is in a strange position to attack a test which seems logically necessary for the Spartan warhead. It is somewhat reminiscent of Diefenbaker's refusal of nuclear weapons for Bomarc missiles which he himself had accepted.

If one is to be colonialist in one's defence policy, there can be no half-way measures. One either rejects a policy of continentalism in defence and proceeds accordingly, or one stands passively on the sidelines, a spectator and victim of American strategy.

The recently published Canadian white paper on defence is loud with words about independence and sovereignty. But when one examines the substance of this document, the only significant changes in emphasis are the ominous passages about the role of the Canadian military in policing internal dissent, as in Operation Quebec last October.

On fundamentals, the white paper repeats the old shibboleths that "co-operation between Canada and the United States in the joint defence of North America is vital for sovereignty and security."

The purported enemy for Canada remains the Soviet Union, or perhaps China, launching a strategic nuclear attack against the United States. That the real threat to Canadian sovereignty and independence may come from the United States is never mentioned

To mobilize protest against Amchitka, therefore, it is not enough to frighten people with visions of nuclear radiation and tidal waves. The simple truth of the matter is that Amchitka is perfectly rational, if one accepts the logic of nuclear deterrents and continental defence alliances.

It becomes irrational, only when that very logic is put to question, and when one begins to demand Canadian disengagement from the American empire.

Recently, France began to conduct a series of nuclear tests in the Pacific, despite the protests of a large number of South Pacific nations. Peru, unlike the others, was prepared to back up its protests with action, threatening to cut off diplomatic relations with France and Latin America. The French promptly cancelled the remainder of their tests, an admission of the effectiveness of Peru's action.

One can hardly imagine Trudeau's government even wet-dreaming a break in relations with the US. But it is not by Canadian ministers going hat in hand to Washington, begging for favours, that we can assume control over our own political economy, defence policy, environment, or what have you.

The answer to Amchitka is not mealy-mouthed statements from Ottawa and petitions to Nixon, but the sundering of Canada's defence alliance with the US, beginning with the radar lines and NORAD.

The answer to American national interest is Canadian national interest, not, it must be stressed, for the benefit of the colonial-minded ruling class, but for the Canadian and Quebec people.

If the Amchitka blast takes place, large mass demonstrations at various border points across Canada in early October, to make it clear that Canadians will no longer simply buy American defence policy second hand, would be one step towards such an independent position.

Another would be vigorous protest against the Canadian and provincial governments, such as B.C.'s, whose policies integrally support the closest inter-relationship between Canadian and American capitalism, and make Amchitkas as much a part of Canadian as of American policy.

When Canada has stopped defining its defence policy in terms of supporting the American nuclear deterrent, we will be in a hell of a better position to protest.

Thanks to The Ubysey from whom we lifted this article as well as the design.