

# True North Strong and Free? : Non-aligned group provide a buffer

by K. Graham Bowers

Gwynne Dyer, noted Canadian historian, broadcaster, and author, peddled his proposal for the formation of a non-aligned nordic nations organization, at the *True North, Strong and Free?* conference last weekend.

Dyer would like to see such an organization include Canada, Iceland, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Kalaallit Nunaat (formerly Greenland). The intent of this organization would be to provide a buffer between the two superpowers — more of a psychological buffer than a militarily strategic one.

This psychological buffer would, in Dyer's view, help to break down the traditional alliance system, which he blames for much of the arms race anxiety, because it perpetuates a "them vs. us" attitude.

Historically, the biggest threat to a nation has almost always been other nations. But now Dyer feels that our tools of defense — nuclear arms — have become the greatest danger, and it is against nuclear war that we must defend ourselves.

If this is true, then the old them and us thinking of military alliances is now obsolete, and the only way we can defend ourselves against nuclear war is to prevent it. It cannot be defended against once it has begun.

Dyer identified the biggest weakness in his proposal as one of possibility. He posed the question, "Would the Americans let us do it?" And responded, "They would certainly be very cross."

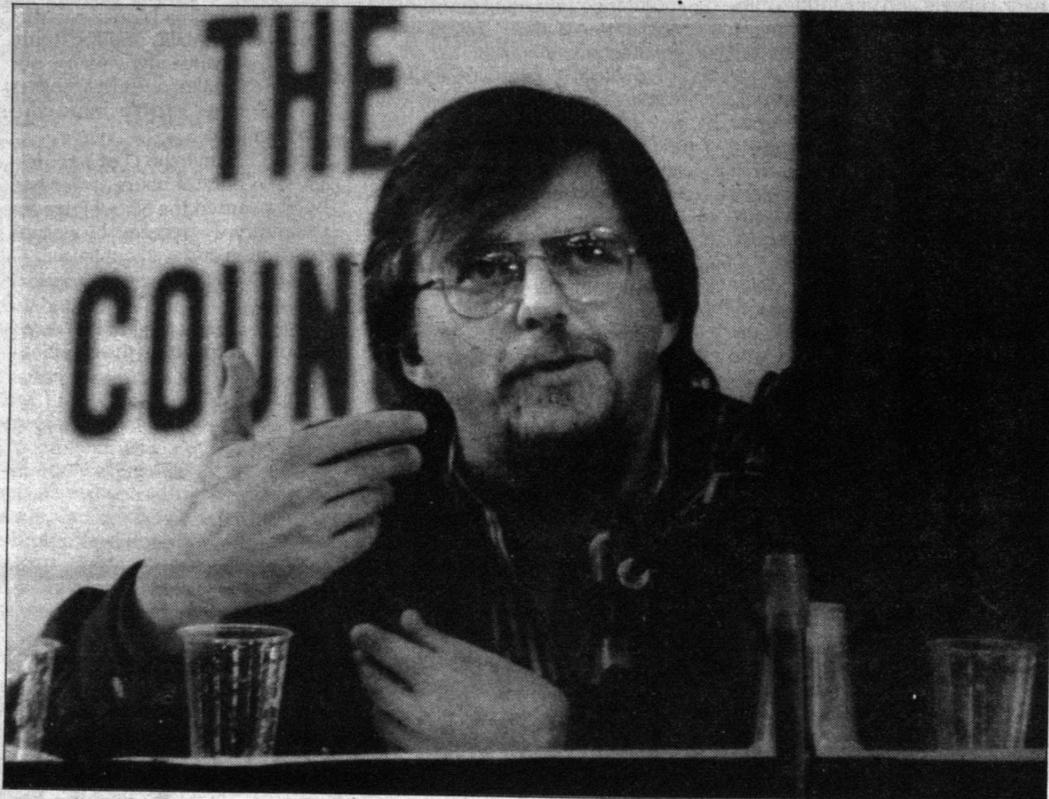
But he felt the United States would not invade or impose total economic sanctions, and, in fact, could not, even if they wanted to, because both actions would cost them too much politically in the international world, and both would be almost impossible to get an agreement on within the United States.

Also, he suggested that economic sanctions, although they could cripple Canada's economy, would be too costly to many sectors of the American economy.

He expects that limited economic sanctions, and similar pressures, would be used, much as they have been in New Zealand.

There, the United States is upset with New Zealand's "Nuclear Allergy" — New Zealand refuses to allow U.S. Navy ships carrying nuclear weapons into its harbours. This angers the United States because they will not reveal which ships are, and which are not, carrying nuclear weapons.

Until they change this policy, New Zealand is refusing dock entry



Canadian thinker Gwynne Dyer

photo Bruce Gardave

for all U.S. Navy ships. The very minor economic sanctions have been only a minor inconvenience to New Zealand.

Other measures, such as pressure applied through SEATO (South East Asian Treaty Organization, much like NATO) have been more difficult for New Zealand to ignore, yet it has not retreated from its stand.

Dyer feels that Canada could endure similar political and economic pressure as the price to pay for following an independent foreign policy.

Any stronger pressure from the United States would also be unjustifiable according to Dyer. "If the Soviet Union can tolerate Finnish non-alignment, is it so unreasonable (for the United States) to grant Canada the same freedom?"

Dyer then went into more detail on the Soviet-Finland situation and that of the United States and Canada.

Finland is strategically important to Soviet defense policies because it is a potential route for nuclear missiles attacking the Soviet Union.

Finland and the Soviet Union have an agreement under which Finland promises to immediately notify the Soviet Union of an attack, to make every reasonable effort to repel the attack, and to permit Soviet troops to enter Fin-

land to help repel the attack. Finland is not a member of the Warsaw Pact.

If Canada were to replace its membership in NATO, NORAD with a similar agreement, Dyer feels that American fears would be allayed to a large extent.

Dyer also feels that if the nordic countries adopted a non-aligned policy, and did so as a joint action, then it would become an easier action to take. "There is less pressure to play the ally game if your neighbours are not playing," he said.

Regardless of whether it is an easy or difficult decision, Dyer feels it is the right thing to do and that it would set an excellent moral example for the rest of the world.

He feels many NATO members would respect our position because "half the member nations of NATO would quite cheerfully leave tomorrow if they had the nerve."

Dyer insists that a non-aligned group of northern, industrialized nations is essential. He dismisses any suggestion that Canada should join the existing non-aligned nations instead of his proposal, be-

cause it is essentially a group of third world countries, and we are not in the same situation as they are. "We're the ones that are going to blow up the world, not them," exclaimed Dyer.

Dyer's proposal received both praise and criticism.

One of those who criticised it was George Ignatieff, Chancellor of the University of Toronto, advisor to the Canadian government on disarmament, and former Canadian ambassador and diplomat.

Ignatieff does not believe we would be able to satisfy the Americans that we would not allow our country to be used as a platform for an invasion of the United States.

He did agree with Dyer that there are problems within NATO and NORAD, and especially NORAD. He cited as one example the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962.

When the crisis first began, NORAD declared a full nuclear alert on President Kennedy's orders but Prime Minister Diefenbaker rejected the alert, and for four days the Canadian military was unsure whether it was on a full nuclear alert, a partial alert, or no alert at all.

Some changes have been made to NORAD and its command structure since the crisis, but Ignatieff believes that more is necessary to make NORAD safe for Canada and Canadians.

He would like to see NORAD brought under closer civilian control through the North Atlantic Council of NATO. If this is not done, he thinks that we should withdraw from NORAD.

Ignatieff summed up his position by demanding "No incineration without representation!"

## The anti-nuclear cause

by Juanita Spears

A recent poll showed 50 per cent of the Canadian population was against cruise missile testing on our soil, said Wendy Wright, Co-ordinator of the Toronto Disarmament Network, in a speech Sunday afternoon.

Wright, one of the three women guest speakers for the *True North Strong and Free?* inquiry spoke to approximately 5,000 participants on *What the Individual Can Do to help the anti-nuclear arms cause.*

"If all those who oppose Canada's involvement in arms testing

were to speak up and be heard, the arms race would soon be over," said Wright.

She told the audience that average Canadians feel cut off from the government and that they feel government officials would not listen to what they have to say.

She went on to urge individuals to talk about their concerns about nuclear arms. Talk to friends, neighbours, work colleagues and encourage discussion at home and at school.

If they do that, they will soon find out they are not alone in their

views and concerns, said Wright.

The Toronto Disarmament Network, in conjunction with other peace organizations are preparing now for the next federal election.

For the next two years they intend to encourage people to make the political candidates in their ridings voice their views concerning nuclear arms and testing. The group wants voters to elect candidates opposed to the continuation of cruise testing and research into nuclear arms.

## Resolutions point to neutrality

by Juanita Spears

Canadians want changes made to Canada's present defence and foreign policies with respect to nuclear arms control, was the overwhelming consensus of the 5,000 strong audience gathered in the Butterdome this past weekend for the *True North Strong and Free?* public inquiry.

The symposium wound up the two-day inquiry into Canada's defence policy and nuclear arms by passing a number of resolutions thought to reflect the general feelings of the participants.

The resolutions that passed included:

- Canada rescind the cruise missile test agreement if the USA exceeds the SALT II limit.

- Canada endorse the Soviet nuc-

lear test moratorium and urge the USA to respond in kind.

- Canada establish an International Crisis Management Centre to reduce the risk of accidental nuclear war.

- Canadian government should establish an independent commission to examine alternative security policies for Canada including the possibility of non-alignment and neutrality.

- The department of external affairs report to parliament what military commodities have been exported and to which destinations.

- Canada withhold all financial, political, and moral support for S.D.I.

Further resolutions put forward by the three member panel in-

cluded:

- One from Rev. Lois M. Wilson, Canadian President of the World Council of Churches proposing that this conference request and encourage full, frank and informed participation from government officials in future consultations on peace and security.

- The resolution from retired Major-General Leonard Johnson that the government restore funding to the CBC so as to enhance its international coverage and thus its abilities to give Canadians clear windows on the world.

- A resolution (put forward by the third panelist Cynthia Cannizzo, Assistant Director, Strategic Studies program at the U of C) that in order to protect its sovereignty and serve its best interests at home and ab-

road, Canada should a) maintain an adequate defence capability and b) continue to work within its alliances and elsewhere to promote both nuclear and conventional arms control was defeated.

This was the only resolution put forward that inspired debate. In fact, one audience member accused Cannizzo of being consistently aggressive and militaristic throughout the inquiry.

Moderator Jean Forest, admonished the speaker and informed the audience that they could speak to issues but not to personalities.

Another audience member was heartened with the applause evoked by the admonition and suggested that if the audience could not tolerate differing views within this symposium how could they hope to

realistically expect tolerance and trust from other cultures.

Yet another audience member thanked Cannizzo for her proposal and suggested that she had kept the inquiry from being totally biased.

The only other resolution not to pass was:

- Canada acquire ice capable submarines and other forms of underwater surveillance for the security of the Arctic.

Letters and the resulting resolutions will be sent to Prime Minister Mulroney, Defence Minister PerrinBeatty and the provincial and territorial governments throughout the country.