

## EDITORIAL

### Peace and War

*It is in our nature as humans to evade unpleasant realities. The possible consequences of nuclear war are too dreadful to contemplate, and the thought of our surrendering sovereignty and freedom seems so remote as to be utterly impossible. In Canada, where history and geography tend to reinforce such attitudes, many people simply ignore international affairs. There is even a reaction against the type of study this journal promotes, based on the mediaeval superstition that mentioning the devil may conjure him up. Yet ignorance may prove to be the greater evil, permitting half truths and flawed logic to go unchallenged, and false prophets to gain followers.*

Three of the articles in this issue relate to the subject of peace and war. Martin Blumenson describes the world that evolved out of World War II and the alternative forms of conflict that have emerged since nuclear weapons set limits on all-out war. David Levy, who understands the Soviet Union better than most, explores the problems of generating dialogue inside a society that forbids "public" opinion, and warns against false prophesies. Dominick Graham, concluding his philosophical trilogy, points to the dangers of mistaking what he calls the "public face of conflict" for the whole truth, and of allowing an obsession with bi-polar confrontation to blind us to more important underlying historical trends.

Insofar as the ordinary Canadian contemplates world conflict at all, he is liable to be torn between two fears. In one, the Soviet Union menaces his freedom; in another, a nuclear war threatens to destroy him. Current pressures tend to force the individual to face one of these fears and to bury the other. On the one hand, the advocates of nuclear deterrence strategy — a group which includes governments and established "responsible" opinion — point to the Communist challenge and argue that, but for nuclear deterrence, we would all fall within Moscow's control. On the other, a less easily classified "peace" or "anti-nuclear" movement argues that the ever increasing sophistication, quantity, destructive power and availability of nuclear weapons must inevitably lead to disaster. This, they say, can only be avoided if the West renounces nuclear arms. The advocates of deterrence minimize the nuclear risks. The disarmers deny that there is a Soviet threat. There is scarcely any meeting of minds and the individual has to choose which dogma to believe. Thus society is polarized and the moderate centre dissolves.

In reality, there is truth in both fears. They have to be faced together. Moscow's challenge still has to be contained. If we rely too heavily on nuclear deterrence to accomplish this, damaging in the process hope for arms control, the war that no one wants may one day occur. Facing both these facts requires us to reassess Western strategy and shift the emphasis of our containment policy away from nuclear weaponry towards the main technique of Soviet expansionism — political warfare. We have to learn the subtle, cautious arts of dealing with a giant power, increasingly plagued by internal problems, but still

driven by a mixture of ideology and paranoia.

In March this year the Centre for Conflict Studies hosted an international workshop to develop alternative strategy options. The report, described on the back cover, is now available. This is the beginning of a research programme designed to contribute to international peace while recognizing political realities.