

State of NATO

The third material factor with which I wish to deal briefly is the position of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Today I would think there are not very many Canadians who believe that NATO is superfluous, and that it does not have a very important part to play in the world situation. So often it is forgotten that this is a defensive alliance. It was not set up for purposes of aggression. We know that the countries of that alliance do not believe in aggression. It was set up to defend Western Europe and the North Atlantic area. It is so important that that organization be kept strong....

In recent months discussions in the NATO Council have greatly improved, and I am glad to be able to announce that on Monday next we shall have in Canada Mr. Dirk U. Stikker, the distinguished Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. He will be here for a two-day conference with Canadian ministers, and this will give us an opportunity to review the whole NATO situation. Mr. Stikker took on this difficult post just a few months ago; he has been making a great success of that work, and we shall welcome him very warmly when he pays his first visit to Canada.

I think Canada must state once again that she believes in the equality of membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. There is always the danger of the bigger nations trying to set up a sort of executive or control body. A few months ago there was concern over a possible three-nation executive, a three-nation triumvirate directing NATO. Now, with the Berlin crisis, West Germany has been taking part in the various discussions on Berlin with the United States, the United Kingdom and France. I think we must take care to see that there is not a four power group assuming executive powers in the Organization.

At the last meeting of the North Atlantic Treaty foreign ministers, we were very pleased to find that there was practically unanimous opinion that there was no incompatibility in the member nations of NATO taking independent stands in the United Nations, particularly on peace keeping activities of the United Nations and on appeals to world opinion. Canada has never believed that membership in NATO should restrict her activities in the United Nations.

Problem of Disarmament

A fourth material factor today is the question of disarmament. ... Canada was a member of the Ten-Nation Disarmament Committee which was torpedoed by the five Communist members in June of last year. Two months later, with the United States, we were able to bring the question before the Disarmament Commission of the United Nations and to obtain a unanimous resolution there that negotiations should be resumed. Subsequently we brought in