

including France and Germany, who were trying to work out a common market and common machinery for the development of atomic energy. The Minister considered this to be one of the most hopeful developments which had occurred in Europe in the last ten years.

Mr. Knowles, M.P. for Winnipeg North Centre, asked Mr. Pearson whether he had any comment to make on the statement, attributed to Sir Winston Churchill, that in view of the new attitude of the Soviet Union it might be possible for the Soviet Union to join in the spirit of NATO. The Minister replied that Sir Winston was, as usual, looking a long way ahead. It was generally agreed that it would be desirable to bring about a situation where the Soviet Union or any other country could be associated with the spirit of NATO because this spirit was essentially defensive and co-operative; Sir Winston's language had, however, been chosen very carefully and the association of the Soviet Union or any other country with the spirit of NATO was not quite the same thing as an invitation to the U.S.S.R. to join NATO at the present time. The Minister recalled that when he had been in the Soviet Union, Mr. Khrushchev had asked him "Why don't you let us join NATO if it is such a fine organization?" At that time Mr. Pearson replied that if a state of confidence, co-operation and friendship between the Communist and non-Communist world had been reached which would enable countries of the Atlantic Alliance to invite the Soviet Union to join with them and to share their most secret defence information and planning then NATO would not be necessary at all and there would be no point in asking the Soviet Union to join it.

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Mr. Starr, M.P. for Ontario, requested the Minister's opinion on whether NATO was growing in strength or whether some laxity might be developing among the member nations. Mr. Pearson replied that in his opinion NATO as an organization was changing in character, as the situation in the world was seemingly changing. He thought that NATO had reached a point where its defence goals were not likely to increase. He would hope that the collective strength of NATO could be maintained but he did not think that there was likely to be a desire to build that strength up above the present point. For this reason, the urge to achieve a high level of defence strength which had manifested itself so clearly a few years ago was now less evident. The feeling of urgent and immediate danger had been lessened and this had brought about a change in the climate of NATO. There was a danger that people would begin to lose some interest in NATO. This was one of the problems with which the Council would now have to deal.

NATO Information

Mr. Decore, M.P. for Vegreville, stated that the Soviet claimed to be champions of national freedom and supporters of freedom from colonialism although they were in fact the worse offenders with regard to colonialism and the worst oppressors of freedom. He wondered whether consideration had been given to exposing the basic contradiction in this Soviet position. The Minister replied that a great deal of consideration had in fact been given to this matter in the last two or three months and that one of the subjects discussed at the recent ministerial meeting had been NATO information policy and propaganda. The Foreign Ministers had discussed how to make their information