

The pursuit of these political objectives involves military activity, which for Canada is not and cannot be a matter of national ambition but, rather, a contribution to keeping world peace, and foreign aid as a contribution to raising the standard of living in less-developed countries.

The purpose of the current review of foreign and defence policy is not to question whether Canada should be engaged in political activity, keeping the peace and foreign aid. And it is not to question the value of NATO as such, for NATO is going to continue for some time to come with the support of its European members and the United States, no matter what we do.

The review of our foreign and defence policies is designed to find out if we are serving our own interests best and making our most effective contribution to world order and world prosperity under our present arrangements. If not, these arrangements will be changed. Coming to NATO, the questions the review asks are the same: is membership in NATO in Canada's national interest? does membership in NATO represent an effective Canadian contribution to the maintenance of world peace?

I can't answer these questions for you today, since the Government has not yet arrived at any conclusion. I can, however, discuss with you the background against which the decision will be made and some of the considerations that will bear upon it.

The late forties was a critical period for the Western world. Wartime co-operation between the Western allies and the Soviet Union had disappeared. In three years, the U.S.S.R. had established political domination over five Eastern European countries and part of Germany, together making up a population of about 100 million. The final takeover of Czechoslovakia also saw growing Soviet pressure on such countries as Finland, Turkey and Iran, and the blockade of Berlin. Canada, having seen two world wars explode out of European quarrels, saw yet another explosive situation developing.

Western Europe, weakened by war, feared both aggression from the powerful military forces maintained by the Soviet Union and Moscow-directed internal Communist subversion.

The democracies of Western Europe had to find a way to protect themselves and the way of life they represented. Hopes that the United Nations might be able to provide such protection through universal collective security had soon been dispelled - in part by the indiscriminate Soviet use of the veto. This was the background against which NATO came into being, a pooling of resources by like-minded nations to protect a common way of life.

While the immediate threat which led to the establishment of NATO was to the Western European democracies, it was seen in Canada and the United States as directly affecting North American security. The lesson of two world wars had been learned, and we accepted that we could hardly remain uninvolved if a third such war should break out. At the same time, however, Canada shared the general feeling that it is possible to benefit by past mistakes; that, by taking the right action at the right time, it should be possible to prevent a war rather than have to fight it. Gradually, it came to be accepted that the effective action which was required could only be