

Europe's and Canada will continue to play its part in European security arrangements. These decisions were taken after an exhaustive examination of factors and trends in Europe, attitudes in Canada and alternatives ranging from disengagement from current world power relationships to increased involvement in collective security arrangements. Few, if any, NATO countries have subjected their membership in NATO to so thoroughgoing a study. That Canada has done so, and determined that Canadian interests call for continued membership and continued military presence in Europe, strengthens the alliance. Against this background, the precise allocation of Canadian defence resources — as between the European theatre and the North American and Atlantic regions of NATO — is largely a matter of deciding where these resources can be used most effectively in the common interest. I can tell you, however, that the Canadian Government has no plans for any further reduction in the level of its military contribution in Europe in the foreseeable future."

Excerpts follow from Mr. Sharp's December 9 report on the ministerial meeting to the House of Commons and from the communiqué issued by the alliance at the conclusion of the Brussels meeting :

House of Commons Report

The timing of my visit to Europe was determined by the NATO December ministerial meeting. In the course of my statement there, I said that the developments in the last year suggest that we may have reached a turning-point in East-West relations in Europe. The sterile confrontation that has characterized these relations since the end of the Second World War is beginning to give way to a real effort to solve many of the intractable problems presented by the division of Europe. Interlocking negotiations with the Soviet Union are taking place on a broad front.

There can be no doubt that the conclusion of the treaties between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Soviet Union and Poland constitute progress. These are historic developments that could make a major contribution to a healthier situation in Central Europe. The resumption of intra-German talks is another encouraging move, even though these talks are beset with difficulties. The question remains, however, whether the Moscow and Warsaw treaties — as yet unratified — in themselves constitute sufficient progress to justify moving toward a general conference on European security.

There was virtually unanimous agreement that the progress to date was insufficient, largely because no satisfactory arrangement for Berlin has yet been reached. Canada concurred in this view but in my intervention I suggested the alliance should not be negative about the conference idea. I proposed that in our communiqué we note the useful negotiations currently under way