



REFERENCE PAPERS

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Statements made by the Canadian  
Government on the proposed

NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY

(January 20, 1948 - October 25, 1948)

On January 20, 1948, the Prime Minister, Rt. Hon. W.L. Mackenzie King in a speech in Ottawa, said:

"So long as Communism remains a menace to the free world, it is vital to the defence of freedom to maintain a preponderance of military strength on the side of freedom, and to ensure that degree of unity among the nations which will ensure that they cannot be defeated and destroyed one by one."

On the day the Brussels Treaty was signed, (March 17, 1948), the Prime Minister said in the House of Commons:

"This pact is far more than an alliance of the old kind. It is a partial realization of the idea of collective security by an arrangement made under the Charter of the United Nations. As such, it is a step towards peace, which may well be followed by other similar steps until there is built up an association of all free states which are willing to accept responsibilities of mutual assistance to prevent aggression and preserve peace....."

"The Canadian Government has been closely following recent developments in the international sphere. The peoples of all free countries may be assured that Canada will play her full part in every movement to give substance to the conception of an effective system of collective security by the development of regional pacts under the Charter of the United Nations."

In the House of Commons on April 29, 1948, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Rt. Hon. L. S. St. Laurent, said that the free nations of the world or some of them might soon find it necessary to consult together on how best to establish a collective security league composed of states which were willing to accept more specific and onerous obligations than those contained in the Charter of the United Nations, in return for greater national security than the United Nations could now give its Members. He went on to say that such a collective security league might grow out of the plans for Western Union now maturing in Europe and that its purpose would not be purely negative but that it would have the

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