

GOVERNMENT  
  
OF CANADA

## STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION  
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
OTTAWA - CANADA

### THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY

No. 49/10

Text of a broadcast on the North Atlantic Treaty delivered by Mr. L.B. Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs, over the Trans-Canada Network of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation at 8.45 P.M. on March 18, 1949.

Tonight in your newspapers you will have seen the text of the proposed North Atlantic Treaty. It is a short and simple document. It has a brief preamble, and fourteen short clauses. It is, however, a document of great importance. When it has been signed and ratified, the peoples of the free and democratic states of the North Atlantic community will have promised each other to work together in peace and to stand together in danger.

The text may not have contained many surprises for you. Though you are seeing it now for the first time, the general principles upon which it is based have been freely discussed in public now for many months. Members of the Government, the press, and the public generally, have considered this proposal for a treaty from many angles. They know the gripping sense of danger which has led the western nations to negotiate it. They know also the methods which are being considered to meet this danger. The actual terms of the proposed Treaty do no more than put in precise language the agreement for collective action which we have been led to expect.

This Treaty is still only a proposal. The text has been laid on the table in Parliament. Sometime within the next few days and before the Treaty is signed your representatives in Parliament will be given an opportunity to express their views about it. If it is approved -- and I hope it will be unanimously approved -- there will then be a conference in Washington early in April at which the Treaty will be signed. After signature, it must be ratified. The Canadian Government will not ratify this Treaty until Parliament has again been consulted. The right of the Canadian people to express through Parliament their view of this important development in our foreign policy is therefore fully recognised and fully protected.

It is now about nine months since representatives of a group of North Atlantic countries first met to prepare a North Atlantic Treaty. At that time the work of rebuilding the western world, which had been successfully started, was in danger of being destroyed by the forces of subversive communism supported by the mass and might of militaristic expansionist Russia. In Canada we realised that the lands of Western Europe might be shut off from us by a sudden act of aggression. These lands are an important part of the free world to which we belong. They have nurtured our culture and buttressed our freedom. They have been the source of many of our supplies of material goods. They have been the principal market for many of our exports. Most important of all, we have learned from hard experience that