

These are some of the reasons why Canada has always tended to look upon the Atlantic as a bridge and not as a line of division. That perspective is appropriate not only to our historical personality as I have tried to suggest. It also enables us to play our part as a responsible middle power with a greater measure of independence than we could reasonably expect to have in a purely continental context.

These may be regarded as peculiarly Canadian reasons for supporting the conception of a transatlantic community. But this is not to say that the conception has any less validity for our Atlantic partners. As regards our collective defence, it is surely self-evident, in this nuclear missile age of ours, that the continental approach provides neither a complete nor an effective answer. And, when we go on to consider that the challenge confronting us is not simply or solely military in nature, then I cannot see that it is sufficient for us to pool our military strength to meet that challenge. That is one reason why Canada has always attached great importance to the non-military aspects of co-operation within the Alliance and why we have looked upon the Atlantic Alliance as an instrument for bringing the Atlantic nations together in a community united as closely as possible in policy and in purpose.

As the Canadian Prime Minister put it when he opened the ministerial meeting of the NATO Council in Ottawa in May 1963:

"The Atlantic nations must come together in one Atlantic Community. The West cannot afford two such communities, a European one and a North American one, each controlling its own policies and each perhaps moving away from the other as the common menace recedes."

We welcome the resurgence of strength and self-confidence in Europe. That strength and self-confidence have added to the resilience of the Alliance and to our ability, as members of the Atlantic community, to play a constructive part in the world at large -- particularly in our relations with the developing world. By the same token, we should regret any reversion to a more restrictively national or continental approach to the tasks we share in common. That would not be in the Canadian interest and we do not think it would be in the wider interest of the Alliance as a whole.

I should like next to say something about the Canadian position on the various issues that face us in the realm of defence. Canadian policy, as it has evolved since the formation of the Alliance, has been based on three related elements:

- first, a contribution of ground, air and naval forces to Western Europe and the North Atlantic;
- second, a contribution to North American air defence through NORAD; and
- third, a contribution to international peace keeping through the United Nations.