

12 was too large a number for effective investigation and report, in the time available, we agreed that there should be an executive committee of three full-time members to do most of the work. They were the "Three Wise Men". We had hoped for the report of the full Committee of Twelve for our Rome meeting last December, but this was impossible. However, by December 13 the draft of the Executive Committee's report was ready. That report was then given preliminary consideration by the 12 governments, but when the Committee of Twelve met a few days later, it was clear that more time would be needed to deal adequately with the important recommendations that had been made. Therefore, governments were given until the 15th January to submit their observations to the Executive Committee, who will consider them and then report to the Committee of Twelve.

As might have been expected, some recommendations in the report of the Three are being questioned by the various member states. Certainly some of them have been questioned by the Canadian Government in the observations we have forwarded to Paris, though many others were accepted. The Committee now has the job of hammering out by compromise and adjustment a final report for the North Atlantic Council meeting at Lisbon, which we hope will receive unanimous approval. If it doesn't, then any government objecting to any part of the report will explain its objections, and the Council will then consider the matter. This is, of course, a much longer and more difficult procedure than if the North Atlantic Council were a single dictatorship; a form of super-state. Stalin wouldn't take so long in telling the Poles, through Marshal Rokossovsky, what they were to do. But ours is the better way because the eventual result will be acceptable to all and will stick until it is changed by all.

Canada occupies, in a sense, a special position in NATO. We are not a member from Europe where the sense of imminent physical danger is always present and where for centuries the armed citizen has been accustomed to patrol the frontiers, just as he is now becoming accustomed to watch the skies. There is always for him this spur of present menace to speed defence preparations. Canada, however, is an overseas country, and for a hundred years has had a feeling of at least geographical security. Our lands have not been invaded or our cities bombed and despoiled. It is, therefore, the more to our credit that Canadians almost unanimously have realized that, if war cannot be prevented, and we hope and believe that it can, the first line of defence of Canada is across the ocean; that we are willing to take commitments in advance to make that defence effective.

The United States is in the same position as we are geographically, but not in any other way. She is the great leader, the super-state, with interests and responsibilities around the globe, with the leading voice, and rightly so, and with a major share in the decisions that have to be made. The burden of world power is always heavy and the price high. The United States has not been anxious to assume this role but, to her credit, and to our relief, she has accepted it and the price that goes with it.

But Canada is not a world power and our voice in the collective decisions reached and policies decided can only on rare occasions be a decisive one, though we can and do speak with enough vigour when the occasion seems to demand it and our voice is, I think, respected.