

managed Western response to a Soviet complaint to the Security Council in April 1958 concerning Strategic Air Command flights toward the Soviet Union prompted Ritchie to note that the Council was “impotent in the face of real risks to peace and security” [Document 138]. At the thirteenth session of the UNGA, this impotence was manifestly evident, as no constructive measures were put forward to kick-start disarmament negotiations under the aegis of the UN. By this time, two independent conferences in Geneva dealing with surprise attack and nuclear test suspension were underway, and the UN was reduced to simply passing resolutions supporting these conferences.

Chapter Two of this volume examines Canada’s participation in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Two topics were of immediate interest to Canadian officials. First, NATO was involved in formulating a major policy document—known as MC-70—that set the minimum force requirements for each member country between 1958 and 1963 [Documents 181-204]. Canada played a decisive role in convincing the NATO Council to incorporate the implementation of MC-70 into the 1958 Annual Review process [Document 193]. Ottawa, however, refused to commit the financial resources necessary to fulfil its MC-70 obligations, including the acquisition of a second aircraft carrier and the re-equipping of its air division in Europe with strike aircraft. Canada’s need for fiscal retrenchment was also evident in its appropriations for mutual aid to NATO countries [Documents 237 to 242], which dropped to ninety million dollars for fiscal year 1959-1960, a substantial reduction from the figure of 290 million dollars in 1953-1954.

The second substantive policy decision capturing the attention of Canadian officials regarding NATO was the contentious issue of nuclear weapons stockpiles in Europe [Documents 205 to 236]. Volume 25 of this series will provide extensive documentation on the formation of policy concerning the role of nuclear weapons in North American continental defence. Ottawa nonetheless maintained an active interest in the American proposal to provide nuclear weapons to its NATO allies, especially in the light of the fact that Canada’s army brigade in Europe might be called upon to arm itself with tactical nuclear missiles. After the NATO Heads of Government meeting in Paris in December 1957 endorsed the American stockpile proposal, Canadian officials maintained a careful watch on the progress of negotiations between Washington and European capitals concerning the incorporation of nuclear weapons into the arsenals of Western Europe. The possibility of the Federal Republic of Germany acquiring nuclear weapons was of particular concern, and a frank exchange of views between Secretary of State for External Affairs Sidney Smith and his American counterpart, John Foster Dulles, occurred in the spring of 1958 [Documents 221 and 226]. Department of External Affairs officials remained unclear about the command and control of nuclear weapons stockpiles throughout this period. A colourful exchange of letters between General Charles Foulkes, the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff, and Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs Jules Léger in the summer of 1957 [Documents 206 and 207] revealed the “considerable difference of opinion” [Document 206] between civilian and military officials concerning the control of nuclear weapons. Foulkes believed that NATO military leaders had full authority to use nuclear weapons without seeking the assent of political leaders, while Léger categorically denied the supremacy of the military over their civilian counterparts. This debate took