

Here I might remark on the debt which the Alliance owes to its Secretary-General, Mr. Spaak, whom we shall welcome tomorrow on his first official visit to Canada since he assumed his present post.

But, you may say: "This is all very well, this talk about the spirit of unity and co-operation, but what has NATO got to show for it?" This is a fair question and I shall try to answer it by reference to the proceedings and results of the Copenhagen meeting.

Question of Summit Meetings

The most vital items on the agenda of the Copenhagen meeting related to the general international picture confronting the alliance, and specifically to the trends of Soviet policy and to the attitude which Western countries should adopt towards the Soviet Union. Exchanges of view on these basic themes revealed a remarkable unanimity of approach. Take for example the question of meetings at the summit level.

When the Heads of Government of NATO countries met in Paris last December, they proposed, in an effort to resume negotiations with the Soviet Government, a meeting at the level of foreign ministers. This was a reflection of a conviction that some means must be found to break the deadlock which had prevailed on disarmament matters for many months.

The Soviet Government did not accept the NATO proposal. Instead they began to bombard the Prime Ministers of NATO countries, including Prime Minister Diefenbaker, and the leaders of some neutral nations, with lengthy letters ostensibly designed to secure general support for an early summit conference. Missives are of course infinitely preferable to missiles but unfortunately the contents of these Soviet missives, when they were carefully examined, proved disappointing. It became evident that behind the seemingly forthcoming attitude of the Soviet authorities, there lurked some very firm, inflexible conditions. Difficulties arose over the agenda and over the composition of the proposed summit meeting, and even the preparatory talks were hampered by Soviet insistence on the so-called principle of parity, which translated means that they were not prepared to sit down around a table with the United States, the United Kingdom and France unless two other governments of their own complexion were permitted to join the discussions.

Despite these and other difficulties which raised in the minds of Western governments serious doubts as to the real desire of the Soviet authorities for a meeting at the highest political level, the Western position has remained positive and flexible. At Copenhagen we resolved to continue our efforts to pave the way to the summit. As the communiqué issued at the close of the meeting put it: "The NATO governments will not be discouraged nor give up their attachment to