

External Affairs

ence idea not been accepted in principle and had NATO not made of the Berlin element an essential pre-condition for a conference. It is not unusual in diplomacy that movement toward a certain goal, in this case the conference, itself results in the resolution of long-standing problems. Similarly, it may well be that the conference will set in train further movement toward easing of tensions.

On MBFR, the alliance noted with regret the lack of a Soviet response to the offer to send an explorer, in the person of Mr. Brosio, former Secretary-General of NATO, to Moscow. This was a proposal made by Canada at the June meeting. In the course of the past ten days both Mr. Brezhnev and Mr. Kosygin have renewed expressions of Soviet interest in force reductions but confined themselves to generalities. If the Soviets would receive the explorer, progress would be made positively and quickly toward substantive negotiations. That they have not done so, I believe, reflects the fact that the Soviets and their friends have not yet worked out either their procedural or their substantive position on MBFR and are having real difficulty in deciding how to respond.

The alliance is not making negotiations on MBFR a precondition to the holding of a conference, but ministers noted that if a conference was to address itself effectively to the problems of security in Europe it should deal in a suitable manner with measures to reduce the military confrontation.

Ministers took note of the strains imposed upon the alliance by continuing monetary and trading problems affecting member nations. At Canada's suggestion, it was agreed that these problems should be kept under continuing review.

My discussions with Mr. Malfatti, President of the European Economic Commission, Mr. Mansholt, Vice-President, and other senior officials came at a particularly apposite time, on the eve of the Council of Ministers' consideration of United States proposals for resolution of the monetary and trading problems now facing us. I told Mr. Malfatti, as I had told Mr. Rogers in Washington a week earlier, that Canada is willing to make its contribution to a general settlement but does not regard bilateral negotiation of the removal of the surcharge as either feasible or desirable.

I stressed to the commission Canada's interest in eventual movement toward freer trade and expressed the hope that once current difficulties are overcome the commission would show willingness to move further in this direction. I also took up with the commission specific problems of access to the Common Market for Canadian agricultural and forest products, in particular, rapeseed.

I am glad to be able to report that I found that attitudes to Canada have become more realistic in the past year. The commission now has a much clearer concept of Canada's identity and its position in the trading world. There is no longer a tendency to lump Canada with the United States. This changed attitude is a direct result of the frequent and frank exchanges we have had with the commission and with the ministers who make up the council. These we will continue, and I again stressed to Mr. Malfatti and his colleagues our wish to have consultation with the community put upon a more systematic basis. This is not an easy matter, since consultation at the ministerial

[Mr. Sharp.]

level such as we have with our other major trading partners, like the United States and Japan, involves the Council of Ministers, consisting today of foreign ministers of six countries, soon to be ten. Until this final goal can be achieved we are working toward regular consultation with the commission and pursuing our interests in bilateral consultations with ministers of the member nations of the community. The setting up of consultative machinery was also the principal issue I discussed with the French Foreign Minister, Mr. Schumann.

My conversation with Mr. Schumann was one of a continuing series in which we discussed many aspects of our shared interests and particularly our responsibilities as major Francophone countries.

While I left Canada intending to meet Mr. Palamas, Acting Foreign Minister of Greece, as it happened the meeting took place at his request. He wished to urge upon me the need for a continuing Canadian contribution to the United Nations force on Cyprus. I explained the Canadian position, that we will maintain our forces in Cyprus only so long as we believe that their presence can contribute to the reaching of a settlement and not just to allow the parties to the dispute to put off a settlement indefinitely.

I expressed to Mr. Palamas the deep concern many Canadians feel about the situation in Greece. Mr. Palamas assured me of his government's firm intention to implement the constitution progressively and restore democracy in due course. I urged upon him the need for the Greek government, if it sets store by the opinion of others, to act in accordance with its words. Elections, I suggested, would go far in this direction. I can tell the House that Mr. Palamas was left in no doubt of the depth and strength of Canada's concern for democracy in Greece.

I should now like to table the communiqué issued after the meeting of the North Atlantic Alliance, and suggest, if the House agrees, that it be printed as an appendix to *Hansard*.

Mr. Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

[*Editor's note: For text of communiqué referred to above, see Appendix A.*]

Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, I should like to thank the minister for his statement and his usual courtesy in making it available to the opposition spokesmen at something earlier than the last minute. It would be easy to say that the statement was innocuous or vacuous but I will resist the temptation and compliment him rather on its realistic moderation. It compares most favourably with the starry-eyed "look what I found" statement of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) after his return from Washington via Damascus.

However, I cannot refrain from commending the minister—and I have been watching this for a good many years—for what strikes me to be a changed attitude toward NATO. In 1968 and later it looked as though the present government would throw NATO into the ashcan of discard. Of all the errors of anticipation and execution of the present government, the one which I feared most was a reassertion of the Mackenzie King doctrine of isolationism. I might be tempted to make political capital out