

*The Address—Mrs. Shipley*

rules. When I first came to this house I could not understand why so much valuable time should be taken up by member after member speaking for the full 40 minutes, in effect saying what had been said by many other members who had spoken for the full 40 minutes and who had the same convictions. However, I soon learned that the privilege of speaking often and at length is valued most highly by some hon. members and that any effort to shorten debate would undoubtedly meet with strenuous opposition.

You, sir, have accomplished what appeared to be the impossible in a truly statesmanlike manner. I need not have been surprised at this because hon. members who have been in this house for a long time have told me of your tact, sense of fairness, and above all complete understanding and knowledge of the rules, which has made you one of the best Speakers, if not the very best Speaker, that this house has ever known.

I was pleased to note the remarks with respect to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in the speech from the throne. Last summer I had the privilege of joining a group of senators and members of parliament who journeyed to Paris to meet similar groups from other NATO countries. Invitations had been issued to the speakers of the assemblies of all NATO countries, but there was some doubt as to whether they would all attend. However, on our arrival we found that there was a representative group from every country. The representatives of two countries, the United States and Great Britain, about which there had been some doubt in the beginning, were outstanding in their enthusiasm.

Hon. Wishart Robertson, who headed our group, was made temporary chairman until it was determined what form the new organization should take. Subsequently Canada was honoured by the appointment of Hon. Wishart Robertson as chairman of the continuing organization.

Prior to the Canadian delegation meeting, there was some criticism in the press; in fact, I think in one or two cases they went so far as to call us busybodies. I was not disturbed about being called a busybody as I joined the group two years previously because, although I appreciated the importance of NATO in keeping peace in the world, I felt that as a member of this parliament I should know a great deal more about it.

Our meetings were held in the Palais de Chaillot, which is the headquarters of NATO. Every convenience was placed at our disposal. At the first meeting, we were made welcome by Lord Ismay, the secretary general of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. He, of

course, stressed the importance of NATO and deplored the lack of knowledge on the part of the general public of the work being done by the NATO organization. Lord Ismay told of the various methods that had been adopted to bring knowledge and a greater understanding to the public, and went on to say that he was particularly pleased that we had come to NATO headquarters as he felt that perhaps we could do a better job of disseminating knowledge of NATO to the people of our countries than could be done by the other methods that had already been tried. I cannot, of course, speak for the others who attended, but I have spoken of little else since my return. I have made many speeches to both large and small audiences and over our local radio station. We have created a definite interest in the community, because I have many bookings to speak to other groups, as soon as I can find the time.

We in this house can imagine the frustrating delays that took place in the early months of NATO, particularly, when all decisions had to be unanimous. It would have been surprising indeed if there had not been delays and difficulties, for there was no precedent for such an organization in time of peace. Yet NATO has become the framework for the common defence of over 400 million people on both sides of the Atlantic. I for one agree with Lord Ismay that, if comparable arrangements had existed in 1914 or 1939, the history of the twentieth century might well have taken another course and the world been spared the carnage and waste of two world wars.

I could not in the time at my disposal today attempt to speak of all we learned at this conference. We were briefed by the top men of the various departments and divisions. We were taken to SHAPE and received by General Gruenther, the supreme commander, who spoke to us at some length and then introduced the heads of the various divisions of the armed forces. Here again the story was the same: the great work that was being done, the need of greater support, and again the lack of knowledge and understanding on the part of the very people who were being protected by our NATO forces.

We met every day and all day for the week we were in Paris and, before the conference adjourned, we formed a continuing organization. As the primary reason for our existence is to further the aims and objectives of the North Atlantic treaty, it was felt that, excepting for enough members to ensure continuity, the same members of parliament should not attend the meeting each year, so that greater numbers would be taking an active interest in this vital organization.