

*The Premier of France*

tions about some of the clauses of the treaty of the common market. This would not be the place to discuss the details. But the point I should like to stress in particular is that, within a few months, a living and ever developing and expanding reality will have been created, the European economic community, the presence of which will profoundly modify present basic conditions. The prospects of commercial exchanges with a united Europe, in full development, will be radically different from those with our isolated countries and, no doubt, will be greatly expanded. So I beg you to have confidence in the dynamism of the new organizations, so that in their very working and operation the imperfections you criticize may be corrected.

Europe is the only way for the countries of that continent to recover true independence. It is the only way to guarantee a solid and enduring Atlantic alliance. The relations between the European and North American continents can then develop on the basis of true equality. There is nothing durable in the world if it is not founded on equality and on free co-operation.

Beyond the iron curtain, the union of the European peoples will also be a symbol of hope for all men living under oppression who have not lost their will to liberty.

Two weeks ago, six European prime ministers met in Paris, on the invitation of France, to take a major decision—that of associating with Europe the African territories today linked with Belgium and France.

As soon as it was formed, the European community decided to play the card of Africa. The industrial power of the whole of Europe will be mobilized to assure the technical equipment and social progress of Africa. I shall not conceal the fact that this historic step is largely due to the tenacious insistence of France.

The decision which I have just recalled is in line with the new policy that my government is applying in Africa—a policy which is, I fear, too little known outside my own country. Will you permit me to outline it briefly?

We are making almost revolutionary transformations in our overseas territories. The peoples are receiving the right to manage their own affairs democratically within the framework of union with France, to which they have freely consented. On March 31 next, this very month, single college elections will permit the populations of all French Africa to choose their own representatives—in full liberty—in the territorial assemblies, which will appoint, in turn, the ministers in charge of administering the territories.

Similar reforms recently led to the creation of the autonomous republic of Togo, and long discussions in the United Nations on this question have revealed their work and their democratic nature.

France has refused to make a “closed preserve” of the African territories. That is why she has opened their doors to Europe, which will give them their greatest chance. Over the next five years, the European effort in aid of Africa will exceed five hundred million dollars, in addition to a French effort which will, no doubt, exceed two billion dollars.

These figures speak for themselves. They show our resolve to apply in Africa the only possible remedy to those accomplices, blind nationalism and communism: to build a Eurafrikan group, a vast union of free peoples, efficiently helping one another, to their mutual benefit and their common prosperity.

(Text):

I reminded you a little earlier that a European union would guarantee the consolidation of the Atlantic alliance. This consideration weighed heavily in our decision to construct Europe. The Atlantic alliance is one of the cornerstones of French policy, as it is of the policy of Canada. I should like here to pay homage to the eminent role that the Secretary of State for External Affairs of Canada, Mr. Lester B. Pearson, has not ceased to play in all the work of the Atlantic organization.

Besides its important contribution to the defence of the North American continent, your country—and it is not one of the lesser reasons for our gratitude—has accepted to take an active part in the defence of the European continent. To help balance the enormous mass of Soviet divisions, Canada, like the United States and Great Britain, has stationed a part of her armed forces on the European peninsula. The presence of your soldiers on our soil imposes a sacrifice upon you for which I wish to thank you in the name of France. It is of exceptional importance to us.

In fact, in 1914, as in 1939, if there had been some thousands of British, American and Canadian soldiers in Europe, neither William II nor Hitler would have gone to war. They would have known that, from the very first moment, an immense coalition would be raised against them. Today, because of the physical presence of your soldiers, and the British and American soldiers, the Soviet union cannot have the slightest doubt about the consequences to herself of any aggression. The presence of these soldiers is a type of “deterrent” policy of the Atlantic pact.