

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 51/30

NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION

An address by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. L.B. Pearson, delivered to a meeting of the Council Deputies of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, in London, on June 25, 1951.

I am very glad to be given the opportunity to meet with the Deputies of the North Atlantic Council. The decision to establish the Deputies was one of the wisest the Council has made. It should rank in importance with that to establish an Integrated Force under General Eisenhower.

When the Council met here thirteen months ago, it was apparent that the kind of co-ordination of NATO activities essential for the success of the whole undertaking could not be provided by the necessarily infrequent meetings of Ministers. Since that time, the variety, complexity, and difficulty of NATO problems have vastly increased. It is hardly possible to exaggerate the importance of the role of the Deputies, not only in tackling those problems one by one, but also in giving continuity and direction to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as a whole. The Deputies, however, to discharge their important responsibilities, need the backing of and to be endowed with effective authority by the governments which they represent. They need also leadership and that has certainly been provided by your Chairman, Mr. Spofford.

To my mind, perhaps the most important attribute of the Council Deputies is their competence to deal with the many related aspects of the task of co-ordinating the civilian side of the NATO effort, and its relationship with the military agencies of the Treaty. Certainly in the course of your work you have had to consider military, economic and political problems of great importance and variety, and you have worked with a degree of cohesiveness which parallels the best traditions of "Cabinet solidarity". We all recognize that this group has responsibilities which are quite distinct from that of a Cabinet in any of our Governments. There is, however, a similarity in the fact that, although your final action takes the form of recommendations, these recommendations have a very great importance since it is unlikely that any NATO Government would reject a course of action which had the unanimous approval of your Council. It is that factor which underlines the great responsibilities which attach to your deliberations. It is that fact, too, which makes it all the more important that an effective link should be established between the Council Deputies and the subordinate agencies of NATO, so that in coming to your decisions here on which recommendations to Governments are based, you are acting on the best advice available. As a former Civil Servant, I have a lively appreciation of the value of adequate preparation and expert advice before final decisions are taken. I think, therefore, that the recent steps to strengthen the organization by the establishment of the Defence Production Board and the