

## STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION  
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 49/12

### NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY - I

Text of a statement delivered in the House of Commons by the Prime Minister, Mr. St. Laurent, on March 28, 1949.

Just four years ago today, Mr. Speaker, on March 28, 1945, this House adopted, on a division of 202 yeas against 5 nays, a resolution endorsing the acceptance by the government of Canada of the invitation of the governments of the United States, the United Kingdom, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the republic of China, to send representatives to a conference of the United Nations to be held on April 25, 1945, at San Francisco, for the purpose of preparing a charter for a general organization for the maintenance of international peace and security. The terms of that resolution provided that this House endorse the acceptance by the government of Canada of the invitation to send representatives to the conference; that this House recognizes that the establishment of an effective international organization for the maintenance of international peace and security is of vital importance to Canada, and, indeed, to the future well-being of mankind, and that it is in the interests of Canada that Canada should become a member of such an organization.

This House then approved the purposes and principles set forth in the proposals of the four sponsoring governments, and declared that it considered those proposals a satisfactory general basis for discussion of the charter of the proposed international organization. The House agreed that the representatives of Canada should use their best endeavours to further the preparation of an acceptable charter for such an international organization for the maintenance of international peace and security, and that the charter establishing the international organization should, before ratification, be submitted to Parliament for approval.

The adoption of this resolution had been preceded by a lengthy debate which made it abundantly clear that although the people of Canada had -- in your generation, Mr. Speaker, and mine -- participated in two victorious wars, they realized at what terrible cost in human life, human suffering and anguish, to say nothing of the cost in material wealth, these victories had been and were being won, and that the establishment of an effective organization for the maintenance of international peace and security was of vital importance to Canada, and, indeed, to the future well-being of mankind.

The conference was held, and the representatives of more than fifty nations affirmed their determination to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, reaffirmed their faith in the dignity and the worth of the human person, and agreed to practise tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours; to achieve international co-operation in solving international problems and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion; and, moreover, to refrain in international relations from the threat or the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state.