

*North Atlantic Treaty*

council to take effective steps for the preservation of peace and the prevention of aggression in the manner agreed upon and outlined in the charter.

I shall endeavour to point out in a few minutes why a regional pact is necessary, even though we all regret that the failure to establish universal collective security has produced this necessity. Before doing so, however, I want to emphasize a point which appears to me and to my party to be of supreme importance. This point was made in the statement by the C.C.F. national council which I placed before this house on January 31 last. That statement said:

The C.C.F. is convinced that mere military alliances cannot guarantee peace. Economic recovery must continue to be the primary objective.

I believe this is absolutely true. Nothing done or arranged through this proposed pact should be allowed to interfere with the rebuilding of the economy of western Europe and the world. Some rearmament is essential in the present circumstances and in view of the world situation, but surely it would be sheer folly to believe that armaments, at the expense of economic recovery or economic well-being, can serve as a basis for peace, even though armaments may still be necessary to guard it. The C.C.F. therefore urges our government to stand firm on this point; and when the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Pearson) rises to speak I hope we may receive some assurance that this will be done.

Those of us who were at the San Francisco conference hoped and believed that the victorious nations would unite to prevent aggression, to end the threat of war, and to lay the foundations of that permanent peace for which men and women of good will hoped and prayed. But even whilst we were at San Francisco and the conference was in progress, indications were not lacking that understanding would be difficult. The Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent), the hon. member for Peel (Mr. Graydon), and others who were at the San Francisco conference will remember the reported disappearance at that time of sixteen members of the Polish resistance movement who had proceeded to Moscow under safe conduct to discuss the Polish situation, an incident which in conference circles caused very grave concern. The Prime Minister and others will probably remember also that every inquiry made at that time of the soviet delegation was met either by silence or by a shrug of the shoulders, and there were grave misgivings on the part of many of us who learned of the circumstances.

Shortly after that a Labour government was elected in Great Britain. As we know, they

[Mr. Coldwell.]

believed absolutely there was every possibility that they would be able to reach understandings with the soviet union on basic problems. It was not long, however, until it became obvious that the communist government and its parties throughout the world had launched a vicious offensive against democratic socialist governments and their parties everywhere. Because of that and the bitter attacks on countries with democratic socialist governments, to which we listened with grave and growing concern at Lake Success in the autumn of 1946, it became evident that far greater difficulties faced the world than were anticipated at San Francisco. Every attempt to reach agreement in the security council and to settle international disputes coming before it was thwarted, more often than not by use of the veto; and again, may I say, those of us who were at San Francisco will remember that it was with a good deal of apprehension that the Canadian delegates, at their private meetings, finally came to the conclusion that we had to accept the veto in order to get a United Nations organization. This afternoon the Prime Minister placed on record the statement I so well remember, the appeal by Canada and the small nations to the security council at the general assembly in October, 1946, to call together the military staffs as provided for in the charter, because, as he said at the time, otherwise there would be national defence commitments anew, and perchance the very recovery of all our countries and their rehabilitation would be interfered with and perhaps postponed indefinitely. I remember those appeals, particularly by Canada and the other smaller nations, for a meeting of the general staffs of the great powers to arrange for the joint international police force, and how those appeals failed to elicit any response from the soviet delegates. Attempts to provide for the control of atomic energy as a potential threat to mankind also have been without effect, as everyone knows. I listened carefully to the debate in the assembly early in December, 1946, when proposals for disarmament were blocked by Russia's refusal to agree to international inspection of armed forces and potential war industries. I heard Sir Hartley Shawcross's dramatic offer to hand over the keys of British industries and to lay bare all information with regard to the United Kingdom's war potential if Russia agreed to be equally frank. Unfortunately the U.S.S.R. has consistently refused to allow international inspection, to which other nations were ready to agree. She has maintained a vast army but insists on the destruction of the atomic bomb, even though at the time that insistence was first made the western