

*External Affairs*

out some arrangement of that kind with a more formal and binding effect than the documents I just mentioned so that when one government takes action without consultation or even with consultation that seems to controvert the principles of this particular agreement it could be appealed to in order to restore the position.

As the Hays-Coffin report says, Canadian and United States interdependence demands a new category of relationship. That kind of relationship which is perhaps becoming necessary can certainly not be worked out at the kind of meeting held in Ottawa in January, and I am not depreciating the importance of that kind of meeting. It requires, as the minister undoubtedly knows, a great deal of continuous preparatory work before documents can be produced. The main purpose from our point of view in any such arrangement would be to ensure that Canadian rights and interests and our separate national position would be protected as the compulsions and the necessities of interdependence become more and more apparent, as they are becoming increasingly apparent every day.

I suggest that the present machinery is not adequate for that purpose. I also suggest—and I would not wish to be misunderstood in this regard—that important as is the recognition of this continental interdependence in such a way as to protect Canadian interests, that would not go nearly far enough. One important aspect of the kind of negotiation and conference I am talking about would be to discuss the relationship of this interdependent continent, especially in the economic field at the present time, of course, with western Europe which is now recognizing the interest of its own interdependence through the common market and the European free trade area. If we on this continent do not give some degree of consideration to and take some action about this development which is taking place in Europe—and I have said this a good many times—we will perhaps one of these days be faced with the division of the Atlantic world between the North American and European segments. No one will gain from any division like that except those who are attempting to destroy the whole Atlantic community.

Perhaps the time has come, Mr. Speaker, to lift the consideration of these matters to the highest level of examination and collective action both here and in western Europe in order to try to frustrate what is possibly the first objective of Soviet policy today, the splitting of the Atlantic nations—the western nations—into this European and North American division.

The minister had a great deal to say about NATO and European problems and more particularly about the Berlin and German problems. The minister could not cover everything even in an hour and a half and perhaps on another occasion he will let us know something about the operation of the NATO organization during the last year. He might tell us, for instance, how the earlier recommendations for consultation are working out and how the NATO council is performing as an agency for the co-ordination of western foreign policy. It is not enough in an international organization of this kind to take pledges to consult.

Consultation can mean many things but it does not mean very much if it means only that one member of the coalition confronts the other members with decisions taken and documents drafted and then asks for the help and co-operation of the other members in finalizing the decision. I get the impression that NATO through its council is making progress in this regard. Perhaps the minister will have an opportunity before long to tell us about that.

The situation in Berlin seems to me to deserve all the attention that the minister gave to it. It is difficult to visualize any more dangerous position than that which we find in Berlin at this time. I do not want to be unduly alarmist. We have had these crises, we have had these situations before and somehow or other we have at least overcome them to the point that they were not permitted to degenerate into conflict.

But it is hard not to be frightened about the developing possibilities of tragedy in Berlin at the present time, especially in the light of the words that are now coming out of Moscow. The minister had a good deal to say about the statements of last November and December and they, of course, were important, but some of the statements that have come out of Moscow and other places in the last week or two have been more frightening. We must hope that they are only, as the minister indicated perhaps they might be, merely political statements for domestic consumption. But it does look as if we may have a situation develop in Berlin where an irresistible force will find itself up against an immovable object, and when that happens something has to give.

I agree entirely with the minister and we on this side certainly will support the government in any steps it takes to make the position clear that the western powers must stand absolutely firm in regard to the situation in Berlin, that they do not dare yield to bluff or blackmail on that particular issue,