

In summary, Canada is a member of a Commonwealth community and a North Atlantic community, and it is of vital importance that these grow and flourish if we are to retain in the long run our national identity. At the present juncture it seems clear that priority of emphasis must be toward our North Atlantic associations, because if that community disintegrates, the Commonwealth association will inevitably follow. If the North Atlantic community can be sustained we may be able to find an easier answer to the question recently posed by Professor Brady: "Will Canadians be content to win autonomy in the British Empire and lose it in North America?"¹

If it be agreed that a North Atlantic community, healthy and flourishing in all its parts, is a major Canadian interest, what can be done toward realizing it? Canada has already made a significant contribution by the degree of initiative it took in proposing the idea of a North Atlantic alliance, and in making it more than a military alliance by insisting upon the incorporation of Article 2 into the North Atlantic Treaty.² Little has yet been done to make progress along the lines of Article 2. At the moment defence problems and needs are so pressing that probably not much can be done and, therefore not much should be attempted. But we should remember that Article 2 is there, and study and thought should be applied now to the lines of progress that may be developed usefully when the appropriate time comes.³ In this connection we do well to be suspicious of grandiose schemes and intricate multilateral pacts. One of the most exhausting and usually least fruitful ways of spending scarce time is to try to negotiate elaborate multilateral agreements among a dozen or more members even when they are a friendly group with common interests.

It seems to me that progress can be made first by strengthening the habit of friendly consultation and co-operation on questions as they come up from day to day - most of it proceeding through normal and unspectacular channels. Secondly I think that at this stage thought can most usefully be given to making progress on a considerable number of questions which may seem small in themselves;

¹ International Affairs, April 1952, p. 195.

² The preamble (in part) and Article 2 read as follows:

"The Parties to this Treaty.....seek to promote stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area....
Article 2. The Parties will contribute toward the further development of peaceful and friendly international relations by strengthening their free institutions, by bringing about a better understanding of the principles upon which these institutions are founded, and by promoting conditions of stability and well-being. They will seek to eliminate conflict in their international economic policies and will encourage economic collaboration between any or all of them."

³ At the Ottawa session of the North Atlantic Council in September 1951, a Ministerial Committee was set up to examine and report on this matter.