

tential participants. With other NATO members Canada will now move to engage other interested countries in planning for this phase.

I should emphasize that a decision to convoke a formal conference has not yet been taken. That decision will depend on the outcome of the preparatory talks. The aim of NATO countries at these talks will be to ensure that our proposals are fully considered and to establish that enough common ground exists among participants to warrant reasonable expectations that a conference will produce satisfactory results.

For example, we want to see more normal contacts and exchanges between countries of different political and social systems in Europe. To achieve this end, the conference should deal in a practical way with measures designed to contribute to the freer movement of people, information and ideas. I was not alone in underlining the importance of this consideration at our meeting last week.

On the military side NATO ministers were agreed that certain stabilization measures could usefully be discussed at a conference in order to create confidence on both sides.

REDUCTION OF MILITARY POWER

In addition to a Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, NATO ministers devoted considerable attention to the question of mutual and balanced force reductions (MBFR). Just as we have always considered that progress in East-West political *détente* must be measured in terms of practical results, especially on the Berlin problem, so we believe that any real improvement in security in Europe will remain illusory unless it is accompanied by some reduction in the concentration of military power in the area.

This is not to say that force reductions should be negotiated at a conference. It would be impossible in practical terms to carry out negotiations on such a complex matter among the 35 participants in a conference. Preparations for a conference and for MBFR negotiations should, however, proceed as far as possible in parallel. In order that force reductions complement the political achievements of a security conference, talks on the two subjects should be concurrent but separate.

Unfortunately the explorations on MBFR have not yet begun because of Soviet unwillingness to receive Manlio Brosio, former Secretary-General of NATO, as an explorer. More recently, however, the Soviet Union has expressed its willingness to explore procedures for negotiations on MBFR. At the Bonn meeting NATO ministers affirmed their support for multilateral explorations. The next step will be to find means of translating this idea into action. I suggested in Bonn that a group should be selected among NATO members to engage the Soviet Union and other interested countries in preliminary talks to seek sufficient agreement to bring about negotiations. Considerable interest was shown in the

Canadian idea at the meeting and we hope alliance members can reach accord on some form of group approach in the near future.

The atmosphere in Bonn was very much influenced by the promising progress recently made in the broad negotiating process by which we hope to resolve the underlying causes of tension, including the division of Germany. NATO countries responded by expressing their intention to pursue the opportunities for progress on both preparations for a conference and explorations for MBFR. We should have no illusions about the difficulties that lie ahead. In many ways the task which now faces us is the most difficult of all. We shall have to combine continued defence preparedness with pursuit of *détente*, alliance solidarity with willingness to seek accommodation with the other side and firmness on basic principles with flexibility on means.

Canada has direct and identifiable interests in both security and co-operation in Europe. That is why we have supported alliance policies in defence and *détente* in the past and why we intend to work with our NATO allies in the continued search for improved East-West relations through mutual balanced force reductions and a Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

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ST. LAWRENCE CLEAN-UP

A clean-up of the St. Lawrence River has been brought closer to realization by a \$400,000-under-taking signed in Montreal on May 15 by the Federal Government and the Province of Quebec, which calls for an immediate start on integrated studies of requirements to restore the quality of the water.

The Minister of the Environment, Mr. Jack Davis, signed for the Federal Government and Dr. Victor Goldbloom, Minister of State responsible for the Quality of the Environment, for the province.

Under the terms of this interim pact, the two governments agree to pay up to \$200,000 each for the 1972-73 operations, which represent the first phase of a broad program of improvement, other aspects of which are still under discussion.

Studies will determine the types and degrees of treatment needed to restore the quality of the water in the most effective and economic way. The investigations will deal with the 100-mile stretch of the River between Cornwall, 75 miles upstream from Montreal, and the Varennes region, 25 miles below the metropolis. Use will be made of additional information from other projects on the Great Lakes, the Ottawa River and the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

One of Canada's largest rivers, the St. Lawrence serves almost the full range of uses to which a waterway can be put, including water-supply, waste-disposal, shipping, fish, wildlife, recreation and power-development.