

It was also felt that we should work for greater co-operation in the economic sphere, for the strengthening of our free institutions, and for promoting a better understanding between and conditions of well-being among our various peoples.

To promote this development a ministerial committee of five was set up in Ottawa, representing Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and Canada. It will begin its work at Paris on Monday next, though useful preparatory work has been done in London by a group of officials under the chairmanship of a member of the Department of External Affairs. The chairmanship of this ministerial committee falls to me as the next president of the Council; so, as the Prime Minister has indicated, I shall have to attend its meetings when I am in Europe for the meetings of the United Nations Assembly. We have welcomed the appointment of this committee but we do not expect, nor should we expect, immediate or, indeed, early concrete results. Indeed, the Atlantic community is something which will take many years, many decades to develop. That does not mean, however, that we should not work and plan towards this great end now.

To work towards the establishment of a North Atlantic community of nations, all sharing in the great legacy from the past, all with their own special contributions to make in the future, all pledged to be of mutual assistance to one another, is surely a task worthy of our finest efforts and of our greatest zeal. The goal of such a society, strong, varied and secure but not self-centered or exclusive, and anxious to profit by contact with other civilizations, is, it seems to me, an ideal which can support and encourage us all through all the difficulties of the present time.

#### The Position of Germany

There is one great Western European state which was absent from our Ottawa meeting, but which was very much in our thoughts. I refer to Germany, a country which has made such a great contribution to the growth of and indeed to the destruction of European civilization.

At our Rome meeting the question of free Germany's association in our common defence will be considered, and some highly important decisions may require to be taken then.

I am sure that all hon. members of the House are familiar with the reasons which have made it impossible to conclude a peace settlement with Germany. The main one is the continued division of that country into two areas of occupation, and the refusal of the U.S.S.R., which occupies one area, to permit any German unity except on a basis which they think will ensure communist control - that is Russian control - of the united country. Unity, based on free self-government, must one day soon come to Germany; and, if it is on the right basis, the sooner the better; but it must not come in such a way that a united Germany will be forced to go the way of a united Poland and Czechoslovakia, and become a united Russian satellite.

In the absence of a peace settlement, I think it will be agreed that this nation, whose continued democratic and peaceful development is so important to all of us and to the future of Europe, should not remain indefinitely in its present position. It is in all our best interests that Germany should be encouraged to assume increasing responsibility for the guidance of its own destinies, on the basis of equality within