

I would say, first of all, it continues to be our foreign policy that we should strive toward a wider Atlantic Community. Our expectations, however, have not been greatly encouraged in recent years. Some countries in NATO—one, in particular—do not readily subscribe to our view, and yours, of an Atlantic Community.

As you know, under Article 2 of the Treaty we had caused to be included in that document a provision for providing for economic as well as military collaboration. In spite of efforts made by successive Canadian governments, it has not been possible, within the precincts of NATO, itself, to develop that kind of collaboration. But in O.E.C.D., the Organization for European Co-operation and Development, which is made up of all of the NATO members, other European states and Japan, the economic collaboration which we envisaged for NATO is pursued—and, I think, with some considerable success.

For instance, at the last NATO ministerial meeting, the Italian Government proposed consideration of the gap between the technological advance of North America and Europe, and called upon NATO to examine this gap, to try to give to the European countries greater opportunities for sharing in modern technological advancement. This is a question which will be pursued in O.E.C.D.

But if we have not succeeded in the realization of the Atlantic dream, we have at any rate the European Common Market, we have EFTA, we have the application of Britain, and possibly all of the EFTA countries for participation in the European Common Market.

I should think that our aim is—and this is the Government's overall policy and objective—to widen this group of countries, at some stage, into an Atlantic area, not only for economic but for political reasons.

Those who advocate the disbandment of NATO, military disbandment, overlook, I think, the great importance of the Alliance itself. This Alliance need not be an inward looking organization. It must not fail to take into account the inter-dependence of the world, our obligations to other sectors.

But there is no doubt that the Western world does have qualities of community of interest that warrant us creating and perpetuating an organism for our benefit. And believe me, the task of creating an organism that is readily available for political consultation—altogether apart from the military collective action—is by no means easy.

It would be a matter of the greatest tragedy, in my judgment, if we were not to recognize at least what President de Gaulle has laid down as the importance of the concept of an alliance of like-minded members. The advantage of this, long after the need for military contribution will have gone, will be very great for us, and particularly for Canada.

Canada is a small country on the North American continent, next to the most powerful country in the world, perhaps the most powerful country in the history of the world, a country with whom we enjoy close collaboration.

Nevertheless, if we are sometimes concerned about economic influence, we ought to be concerned about other kinds of influences. It is very much in our interests to have a European connection, a European participation, and perhaps also a hemispheric participation.

This Alliance, NATO itself, does give us the basis for continuous European contact, which I believe is necessary to avoid the dangerous results that flow from North American isolation.

All of this in turn, as you say, could provide the basis of a strong concept of an Atlantic community to serve both our political and our economic interests, and it is one towards which we must continue to move.

Senator FLYNN: May I ask the minister, Mr. Chairman, if he sees a contradiction between the economic ends of the Alliance and the purposes of the European Common Market? Because, if Great Britain enters the Common