

Atlantic treaty or of giving any added sanction whatever to those agreements. As I understand it -- and I certainly think I understand the interpretation that has been given to it by those who have negotiated this arrangement -- it is merely a declaration of fact, and of intention, that the parties have not made, or will not make, any treaties or secret arrangements which are in conflict with the pacific purposes of this pact.

Article 9, to which I attach great importance, provides for the setting up of a North Atlantic council through which activities under the alliance shall be arranged. It further provides that the council shall set up whatever subsidiary bodies prove to be necessary; in particular, it shall establish immediately a defence committee.

In the North Atlantic council all the members of the group will be equally represented. Through it the democratic process of reaching agreement through negotiation, discussion and compromise will be carried out. In the event of emergency, the council will also be the instrument for deciding what policies shall be recommended to the members of the group. It is one thing for a group of states to accept, as we do under this draft treaty, common responsibilities, each undertaking its fair share in discharging them, and indeed in adding to or subtracting from them. It is, however, quite a different thing for one, two or three states to make decisions which may have far-reaching consequences for all countries and all peoples, and then one, two or three of them to ask other countries to jump in and help in solving the problems which those decisions have created. There are, no doubt, times when the requirements for consultation, for discussion and for co-operative action must be subordinated to the necessities of a grave emergency. But if there is to be genuine collective action, those occasions must be reduced to a minimum. That is one reason why I attach so much importance to the council which will be set up under the proposed treaty and which is a genuine agency for collective consultation and collective decisions, in which Canada will have the opportunity of making its voice heard in regard to those collective decisions.

Article 10 makes provision for the admission of any new European state to the group by the unanimous consent of its members if they are "in a position to further the principles of this treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area". That seems to me, Mr. Speaker, to rule out any state which is not in a position to further the democratic principles of this treaty.

Article 11 defines the procedure for ratification. As far as Canada is concerned, the government will not deposit its ratification until parliament has had a further opportunity to consider in detail and at length the terms of the treaty, and to give its approval. This article also declares -- and this declaration is important -- that the provisions of this treaty shall be "carried out by the parties in accordance with their respective constitutional processes". So far as Canada is concerned, this government regards those constitutional processes as requiring both parliamentary approval and governmental action.

Article 12 provides that the treaty may be reviewed at the end of ten years, and there may be very important changes to consider at that time in the light of the situation which may then exist.

Article 13 fixes the term of the treaty at a minimum of twenty-one years. The final article concerns arrangements for official texts of the treaty in French and in English.

The states which have been asked to send representatives to Washington for the signing of the treaty are twelve in number. Eight have been participating in the preliminary discussions: they are Belgium, Canada, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States. These eight have invited four others to sign: Denmark, Iceland, Italy and Portugal. Of these four, I am sure that we are all happy to know that Denmark and Italy, democratic Italy, have already accepted this invitation. Together, these twelve states cover a wide area; they command great resources and great power. The strength of the group, however, lies not merely, as has already