



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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A STEP NEARER AN ATLANTIC COMMUNITY

An Address by Prime Minister L.B. Pearson at the Opening of the NATO Ministerial Meeting in Ottawa on May 22, 1963.

... It is 12 years since the North Atlantic Treaty Council last convened in these Parliament Buildings of Canada.

At that time the Alliance faced many and grave problems. It had yet to demonstrate its real capacity to fulfil even its military role. But the promise of immense collective strength in the partnership of European and North American nations was there to be realized. There were no obstacles then, as there are none now, which the resources of the North Atlantic Treaty countries could not surmount, if sustained by hope, determination and faith.

We are here as men of peace. But we are here also to declare our full and forthright support of what is in great measure a military alliance. There is nothing strange or contradictory in this. For in the very first line of the treaty that welds us to a common purpose, we affirm our "faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and our desire to live in peace with all peoples and all governments".

It is in that spirit that I welcome this session of the Ministerial Council to Canada, whose two mother countries are both members of NATO.

The dual nature of Canada's cultural heritage and the intimacy of the links which bind us so warmly to Great Britain and to France are elements in our national make-up which we cherish. Each of our cultural streams has benefited from and been enriched by the presence of the other flowing so closely by its side. From the ebb and flow of European history both the Anglo-Saxon and the French peoples have benefited. It should not be difficult, therefore, to appreciate how much Canadians value the dual character of their national personality.

But our country - to adapt a current expression - is multilateral as well as bilateral in character. Our citizens, whose family trees have roots in France and the United Kingdom, have been joined by many others with family ties in one or