

So far as the first series of agreements are concerned -- and they are of immediate importance to Canada because we have troops in Germany -- the special problem of the four powers was to determine how and when the Federal Republic should be given its sovereignty, in a manner which would permit it to function as an equal partner in the western coalition and which at the same time would not preclude eventual unification of all Germany. In addition, it was necessary to provide a legal basis for the stationing on German soil of foreign forces when the Federal Republic became a member of NATO.

In effect, what was done was to provide that the occupation regime, which was already pretty much of an anachronism, should be ended as soon as possible and that, in the meantime, until that regime ended legally and formally, the occupying powers would act in accordance with the spirit of the agreements under consideration.

Regarding disarmament and demilitarization, however, it was provided that the three powers should continue to exercise certain responsibilities until the Federal Republic became a member of NATO. Also the continuing responsibilities of the three occupying powers with respect to German reunification and a peace treaty are reaffirmed.

To answer the criticisms -- and we hear criticisms -- of those who might view the agreements as a deliberate step in the direction of the permanent division of Germany, the three powers issued a joint declaration during the London conference -- to which later in Paris Canada and the other NATO members subscribed -- which stated among other things:

A peace settlement for the whole of Germany freely negotiated between Germany and her former enemies, which should lay the foundation of a lasting peace, remains an essential aim of their (i.e. the three powers) policy. The final determination of the boundaries of Germany must await such a settlement.

And further:

The achievement through peaceful means of a fully free and unified Germany remains a fundamental goal of their policy.

That is the policy of the NATO countries. I am sure all hon. members would agree that this statement of policy provides a fairly clear response to any who may maintain that in their efforts to associate the German Federal Republic with the West, the Western Powers had lost sight of the ultimate aim of a peace treaty for a united Germany.