

of the world, come to realize that a policy of no commitment offers very little security. In consequence, along with so many other great and medium and small powers, we accepted under the United Nations' Charter certain very precise commitments for a system of collective security.

Our expectations in 1945 and 1946 have been disappointed and, as a result, along with other members of the Atlantic community, we have been compelled to take on further substantial commitments under the terms of the North Atlantic Treaty. It may be permissible to recall that, in 1947, it was our present Prime Minister who, as Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs, suggested, in a speech to the United Nations General Assembly, that more precise obligation for collective security than those proposed by the Charter of the United Nations might be adopted by those countries who would be prepared to accept them. This proposal was one of the sources of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

At the present time there is no reasonable body of Canadian opinion which questions our maintaining substantial forces, which include a well-armed Air Division in Europe and an Infantry Brigade in Germany. Although in Canada our taxes are quite severe, there is no serious opposition to the thesis that we should contribute what we can and what we must to international security. We have, as I indicated earlier, come a long way from our somewhat reluctant and parochial point of view of the twenties and of the early thirties. Let me provide a simple illustration.

Towards the end of last January, on the conclusion of the debate on the resolution to approve the protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty on the accession of the Federal Republic of Germany -- perhaps the most important debate on international affairs in the Parliament of Canada since the war -- the resolution was approved by 213 votes to 12. I would remind you that this long and grave debate in the Canadian House was not merely upon the immediate issue -- the accession of Germany to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization -- but on the fundamental point of full acceptance by Canada of the responsibilities involved in being a member country of NATO. We have every reason to believe that the approval of the resolution in our House of Commons by an overwhelming majority reflects pretty accurately the sentiments of the Canadian people as a whole.

They, like their Government, wish that defence expenditures could be reduced, and that Canadian resources could be directed to more constructive purposes. They are not prepared, however, to lower their guard, and shun their responsibilities, unless and until their security which is interdependent with that of their friends, is assured, in freedom, by other means. There are, of course, well-defined limits to what a nation like Canada can undertake and we do not propose to undertake obligations which we shall be unable or unwilling to fulfil.

In this company of friends and neighbours, I think I might define three factors which affect profoundly -- and which indeed condition -- our attitude in international affairs. These three factors are: