

Supply—External Affairs

to go over the same ground which was covered by the Prime Minister on that occasion. I merely point out that for many months there have been warnings by the Soviet union that there would be a peace treaty signed with East Germany and there have been various threats, not all confined to one side, incidentally.

Threats do not obtain very good results. Perhaps this is one of the ways in which the Leaders of the Soviet union misunderstand the people on the western side. The Soviet cannot obtain results by threatening the Canadians, the British, the people of the United States or other western nations. We have been threatened before, and have met those threats with the proper action. That is the reason we are in active business in the world today. We do not back down in the face of threats.

There is an election campaign under way in West Germany which tends to add to the confusion with respect to the situation in Berlin. Voting takes place on September 17, ten days from now. The leader of the main opposition party is the mayor of West Berlin. I suppose knowing elections as we do, we might have expected that there would be a great many statements made which might not have been made the day after the election.

I also draw attention to the flood of refugees from East Germany into West Germany. This is a very significant factor. It shows more clearly than a million words could do what the people in East Germany think of the regime in that country. Of course it has had a very damaging effect on the image of communism which is being portrayed to other nations of the world.

Let me say a word also about President Kennedy's stand on Berlin. A few weeks ago he made a speech, which probably all hon. members heard, in which he set out the position on which the western world would stand. I think it was wise to do that in order that there could be no misunderstandings, no miscalculations, as are supposed to have happened in the case of both the first and second world wars. He went further and said that the United States was willing and anxious to enter into negotiations about this whole question, and that too was very wise. Our own Prime Minister has said the same thing and has stressed the need for negotiations. At one stage or another all parties have said that there must be negotiations in an attempt to iron out this difficult problem.

Our policy today on Berlin and Germany is that an attempt must be made to settle it around the table. There are many channels and methods for exploring with the Soviet union possible grounds of agreement. Partly to this end the foreign ministers of the three

major western powers and of West Germany will be meeting in Washington on September 14, one week from today, to discuss further the steps which may be taken to reach a satisfactory agreement with the Soviet union. Similarly, consultations will continue in the North Atlantic council—and there have been many consultations in that council during the last few weeks—about peaceful solutions to this dangerous problem in accordance with the United Nations charter.

Through these discussions with our allies and in negotiations with the Soviet union it is hoped that it will be possible to reach an honourable accommodation with the Soviet. Canada certainly will do everything in her power to help bring about negotiations, and will do her part to see that they are brought to a successful conclusion.

The third material factor with which I wish to deal briefly is the position of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Today I would think there are not very many Canadians who believe that NATO is superfluous, and that it does not have a very important part to play in the world situation. So often it is forgotten that this is a defensive alliance. It was not set up for purposes of aggression. We know that the countries of that alliance do not believe in aggression. It was set up to defend western Europe and the north Atlantic area. It is so important that that organization be kept strong.

The Deputy Chairman: May I interrupt the minister. Under the rules, his time has expired. Would the committee give unanimous consent for the minister to continue?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Green: Mr. Chairman, through you may I thank the members of the committee for giving me this extension.

In recent months discussions in the NATO council have greatly improved, and I am glad to be able to announce that on Monday next we shall have in Canada Mr. Dirk U. Stikker, the distinguished secretary general of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. He will be here for a two day conference with Canadian ministers, and this will give us an opportunity to review the whole NATO situation. Mr. Stikker took on this difficult post just a few months ago; he has been making a great success of that work, and we shall welcome him very warmly when he pays his first visit to Canada.

I think Canada must state once again that she believes in the equality of membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. There is always the danger of the bigger nations trying to set up a sort of executive or control body. A few months ago there was