

It was during the Paris Conference in 1946 to make peace with Italy and the Balkan satellites and later at the General Assembly of the United Nations that the Western Powers affirmed that Russian conquest had gone far enough.

Efforts to make a peace settlement with Austria and Germany got nowhere. The Soviet government apparently decided that the postponement of a settlement in Germany would create conditions of chaos favourable to the Communisation of Germany. Britain, the United States and France felt that economic stability, ordered government and financial reform were necessary steps in the rehabilitation of Germany, which itself was essential to European recovery.

In the wider field the absence of co-operation on the part of the Soviet Union was vividly revealed. In the Security Council Russia used the veto twenty-seven times, and failed to co-operate with the other Great Powers in providing the military support for the Council required by the Charter. Soviet action made it necessary to look to other means within the Charter to provide for effective measures of collective security.

Something had to be done.

Article 51 of the Charter permits measures of collective self-defence against aggression and allows regional arrangements for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The first step was taken when the Benelux countries, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, along with France and Britain signed the Treaty of Brussels on March 17th to form the Western Union. The five countries agreed to put their full resources into the defence of each other. It was the first important effort to unite the military and economic strengths of the countries of Western Europe in their own defence.

The announcement of Western Union immediately was followed by statements by the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Canada. These were of the utmost significance - they declared their governments' intentions to support this effort to defend democratic order.

The countries of Western Union have been working at political, economic and military levels to give substance to the words of this agreement. And, a matter of the greatest importance, they, together with the United States and Canada, have been working on the problem of how to strengthen Western Union with a North-Atlantic Security Pact. The reason for this is obvious. We all know now that it is much better to stand together than to fall separately. And make no mistake about it. If a war comes, if the Soviet Union commits an act of aggression, it will be an act which will break our peace and ultimately threaten our security. The only war possible today is a war of aggression by the Soviets. I have heard some people - just a few - speak about the possibility of Canada being neutral in such a war. I do not believe that this is even a theoretical possibility for us. Our vital interests, even our territory could be open to attack. The choice in war would be a simple one - Communist or Canada. Our people would never tolerate a position in which we were passive while our country was being defended by others.

For these reasons we have, as Mr. St. Laurent said, pressed for the consummation of a North-Atlantic Security Pact. That policy was supported unanimously by the National Liberal Convention in a resolution adopted at Ottawa on August 6th of this year, by the C.C.F. on August 21st and by the Progressive-Conservative Party on October 2nd.

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