

World War is beginning to give way to a real effort to solve many of the intractable problems presented by the division of Europe. Interlocking negotiations with the Soviet Union are taking place on a broad front.

There can be no doubt that the conclusion of the treaties between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Soviet Union and Poland constitutes progress. These are historic developments that could make a major contribution to a healthier situation in Central Europe. The resumption of intro-German talks is another encouraging move even though these talks are beset with difficulties. The question remains, however, whether the Moscow and Warsaw treaties – as yet unratified – in themselves constitute sufficient progress to justify moving toward a general conference on European security.

There was virtually unanimous agreement that the progress to date was insufficient, largely because no satisfactory arrangement for Berlin has yet been reached. Canada concurred in this view, but in my intervention I suggested the Alliance should not be negative about the conference idea. I proposed that in our communiqué we note the useful negotiations currently under way indicate our satisfaction that some progress had been achieved and express the hope for further progress in the near future.

You will note that in the communiqué the member governments confirmed their readiness as soon as talks on Berlin had reached a satisfactory conclusion, and in so far as other on-going talks were proceeding satisfactorily, to enter into multilateral talks to explore when it would be possible to convene a conference or series of conferences on security and co-operation in Europe.

The question of mutual and balanced force reductions is one NATO has been pursuing actively in recent years and is of particular interest to Canada. In Brussels, the NATO ministers renewed their earlier invitation to interested states to hold ex-



Mr. Mitchell Sharp, Secretary of State for External Affairs (right) and Prime Minister Edward Heath of Britain, in conversation at 10 Downing Street, London recently.

ploratory talks on the possibility of negotiations on force reductions and indicated a readiness within this framework to examine different aspects of the question, including the idea of foreign force reductions, which was publicly advanced by the Warsaw Pact countries last summer.

In the course of the foreign ministers' meeting I expressed Canada's satisfaction with the results of the recent NATO-sponsored colloquium on oil spills, which recommended that the governments should work through IMCO to eliminate by 1975, if possible, all intentional discharges of oil in the sea as well as to minimize accidental spills. This could be a breakthrough in one area of maritime pollution, particularly since the undertaking involves countries representing a high proportion of the world's oil carriers. It is an excellent example of NATO's ability to contribute in a practical way to the solution of problems of current concern to its members.

On the defence side, the decisions taken helped to place the respective roles of North America and Europe within the Alliance on a more equitable basis and to ensure that in the period of negotiation ahead, the Alliance will be able to proceed with confidence.

TALKS WITH EUROPEAN LEADERS

Turning to my bilateral discussions with European leaders, I was struck by their determination to make progress towards integration. I have already spoken about enlargement. Discussions are taking place about an economic and monetary union and, perhaps more remotely, a common foreign policy. These internal preoccupations have overshadowed the problems enlargement presents to third countries, and for multilateral trading arrangements.

I sensed, however, a growing recognition of the wider responsibilities that an enlarged Community must shoulder, resulting from its sheer size and wealth as the world's largest trading unit. I found as well an awareness of the dangerous deterioration in international trading relations which would arise from a confrontation between a protectionist United States and a Europe bent on consolidating its own economic progress.

EEC PRESIDENT TO VISIT

In my discussions I expressed the positive Canadian view of the movement toward greater European unity, while stressing that EEC enlargement should not and need not be brought about at the expense of third countries like Canada. I impressed upon my European colleagues the need for a renewed dialogue between the Community and North America to avert the very real danger of trade confrontation apprehended by qualified observers on both sides of the Atlantic. In this connection I am encouraged by the fact that Signor Malfatti, President of the European Economic Community, has accepted by invitation to come to Canada next spring....