

It was for this reason, among others, that the Canadian Government has indicated on numerous occasions that it was ready to consider modifications in the NATO organization which would be acceptable to all members of the alliance. This was our motive in proposing in 1964 that the NATO Council should undertake a study of the future of the alliance. In this way we hoped to start an exchange of views in which France and our other allies could participate and in which plans could be discussed for adapting the alliance to the changed circumstances of the 1960s. Although the proposal was endorsed by the ministerial meeting in December 1964, there was subsequent resistance to the study being developed because it was thought by many of our allies that it might tend to precipitate a confrontation with France. In these circumstances, we were not able to pursue the proposal.

Now France has chosen to act on her own, so that, as matters stand, we have no alternative but to take account of France's unilateral decision and concentrate on limiting the adverse consequences to NATO.

I am bound to say that the Canadian Government regrets the French decision and is not persuaded by the arguments which the French Government has used to justify its actions. Our experience in the last two wars has led us to conclude that there is no effective alternative to unified command and planning arrangements for allied forces. That is even more true of modern warfare, with the emphasis on rapid and dependable communications and on quick, but jointly and carefully considered, responses. The need for continuing these proven arrangements is accepted as imperative by all other members of the alliance. Last week these governments agreed on a declaration of their continuing support for the Organization and you will have read in the press that the text<sup>(1)</sup> was released in Ottawa on March 18.

As you will have gathered from this declaration, the Canadian Government continues to give its full support to the organizational arrangements which have been established over the years in NATO. This does not mean that we think the military organization cannot be improved. Within the conception of unified command and planning, we believe that the military organization would profit from a re-examination aimed at improving its effectiveness and rationalizing the command structure. The readjustment which is imperative as a consequence of the French decision will afford an opportunity to apply the lessons we have learned. This opportunity must be seized.

In spite of its decision to withdraw from the integrated military arrangements of NATO, the French Government has stated that it does not intend to denounce the North Atlantic Treaty in 1969 - that is, that it will continue to be a party to the Treaty. The implications of this intention, in the light of the announced decision to withdraw from the integrated military arrangements, have yet to be explored with the other members of NATO.

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(1) For this text, see SS 66/11.