

*North Atlantic Treaty*

ground, at least for the present, because of the impossibility of making it work while some of the member nations are determined that they will not let it work.

Just as the pacts of Locarno and Paris sought to achieve what the covenant of the league of nations had been intended to achieve, so the North Atlantic pact is intended to put into effect within a limited area, and under the terms of the charter, those principles which the United Nations charter declared to be in effect throughout the whole world. The pact now about to be signed will bring new hopes of peace, freedom and security to the free world which is so gravely threatened at this hour, or on the other hand it will be as completely impotent as were the pacts of Locarno and Paris, depending upon whether the intent, the spirit and the practical operation of this pact are given living reality or, on the other hand, the nations which sign it forget all the tragic lessons of the last half century and once again treat the declaration, which they now sign with such high hopes, as nothing but a pious expression of good intentions.

It was with the bitter memories of what had happened before that those who met at San Francisco in 1945 insisted upon a positive declaration providing for collective action, to preserve peace and to prevent aggression. Since then one nation, and one nation alone, has been the aggressor, but along with the flagrant violation of the letter and spirit of the United Nations charter by the soviet empire, we have also witnessed the failure of the other signatory powers to stand together in preserving the freedom of those nations which have been enslaved since that charter was signed.

Now, because of that failure, the draft of a new charter is before us. That charter can become an effective instrument for the preservation of freedom and of peace only if the tragic lessons of the past fifty years are remembered, and we act upon the lessons that we gather from the history of those years.

In effect, this resolution now before us amounts to an instruction by this house to those who will represent us in Washington that we mean business and that we are determined that this pact will work. We are dealing with no mere academic problem here today. We are dealing with the survival of our nation. That is what we are discussing. We are dealing with life and death. We are dealing with a choice between freedom and slavery. We are dealing with a fundamental issue between religious freedom and atheism, such as has been carried to the lands enslaved by communism wherever they may be.

Never since civilization became general throughout the world have the free nations faced so great a threat. Not only are we challenged by the extending aggression of the soviet empire, but we are equally threatened with the destruction of civilization itself. In this case failure to defend our national independence carries with it nothing less than the destruction of our civilization, and the end of our way of life. To those who are unwilling to recognize that as a possibility, it is only necessary to point out that other great civilizations have disappeared completely in the past and centuries elapsed before mankind again emerged from the dark and abysmal ignorance which followed. The world is faced by the organized forces of the anti-Christ who directs the aggressive plans of the soviet empire from the Kremlin.

We are told by the treacherous agents of that evil power here in our own country that this pact means war.

We have already had read to us extracts from a circular which is being distributed by those treacherous agents within our country. The truth is that failure to make such a pact a working reality will mean war, and a war in which the forces of freedom are not united to defend themselves against the threat of military aggression from without and treachery within.

Those who have seen the meaningless horror of two world wars have the greater reason today to think and to speak in a way which will help to prevent the recurrence of an even greater disaster. Those who have lost members of their own family and have seen their closest friends blasted into eternity before their eyes are the least likely to urge the adoption of any measure which would increase to the slightest extent the possibility that others would share that unhappy experience. It is because those who have seen war in all its horrors are so anxious to do all in their power to prevent a repetition of that horror on a wider and more disastrous scale that they urge with such feeling and with such vigour that this pact in fact become the basis of real collective action to preserve peace in the years ahead.

In proportion to its population no nation is capable of contributing more to the hope of security than Canada. In two world wars men and women from every part of Canada have demonstrated their love of freedom. More than one hundred thousand Canadian graves in distant lands testify to the part that Canada has already played in the defence of freedom. The greatest tribute we can pay to the memory of our gallant dead is to do all we can today to prove that their sacrifice has not been in vain.