



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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CANADA AND COLLECTIVE SECURITY

Speech by the Honourable Paul Martin, Secretary of State
for External Affairs, to the Canadian Club, Toronto, on
November 13, 1967.

For the first time since the Canadian Government decided to join in advocating the establishment of a peacetime alliance of North Atlantic states almost 20 years ago, Canada's participation in and contribution to collective-security arrangements have come under some questioning by some responsible and serious-minded Canadians. This development has not been unique to Canada; it has been manifested in most NATO countries. This questioning is healthy. We must and do regularly re-examine our foreign policy and defence commitments to determine whether they continue to serve Canada's evolving national objectives. We have recently reassessed with special care the grounds for participating in collective-security arrangements.

We seek for Canada an independent foreign policy attuned to developing world conditions and carefully calculated to promote our many and varied national interests. To this end, we still hope for the eventual fulfilment of our post-war hopes that we might entrust our security to the United Nations. As a step in this direction, we support the growth of the United Nations peace-keeping role and are ourselves prepared to contribute to it. But we also consider that Canada must continue to participate in collective defence arrangements - which represent the pursuit of peace and security through interdependence.

Western relations with the Soviet Union have been gradually improving ever since the death of Stalin. But the process has been uneven. Think back only five years. Khrushchov was still making threatening speeches. The Soviet Union had been trying for four years to cut West Berlin off from West Germany. Soviet missiles had been secretly set up in Cuba and provoked the most dramatic East-West confrontation of the post-war era. Few questioned then - only five years ago - the importance of collective-security arrangements for the preservation of our common security. Indeed, Western governments responded at that time by increasing their forces in Germany - and this included Canada.

How much the atmosphere has changed in five years - and I am pleased to say, for the better. We now look forward with justified confidence to the possibility of achieving an eventual European settlement by agreement with the Russians. NATO has made and is making an essential and constructive contribution