

Thus within less than fourteen months after the fall of Czechoslovakia, the Atlantic countries had achieved a firm alliance.

Canadian Opinion and Policy - The Treaty represented profound changes in policy for all members, but for none more so than for the United States and Canada. Hitherto, the United States had traditionally followed a policy of no entangling alliances, and Canada a similar policy of no commitments in advance of war to assist any nation, even the United Kingdom. Now the peoples of both countries were committed for twenty years to assist not only one another but, in the event of external aggression, any one of the other ten members, all of whom were Europeans. The European members included all the nations fronting the Atlantic (except Ireland and Spain) as well as Italy. Less than three years later (February, 1952) the territorial limits of the Treaty were to be extended to the eastern Mediterranean by the inclusion of Greece and Turkey. The basic reason for these profound changes in policy on the part of both the United States and Canada was that the peoples of both countries had come to realize that in the post-war world the strategic frontiers of their freedom lay in Western and Southern Europe.

The Treaty was accepted by all major groups of opinion in Canada. It was passed without a single dissenting vote in Parliament. It has since remained as a cornerstone of Canadian policy. For many years to come it will undoubtedly continue as a major concern of Canadian foreign and defence policy.

The Treaty

The first sentence in the preamble to the Treaty is a reaffirmation of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. By this statement, these Atlantic nations made clear that their alliance, far from contravening the objectives of the United Nations, was sanctioned as a measure of regional self-defence by the terms of the Charter itself.*

The Treaty goes on to declare the determination of the signatories to safeguard their free institutions and their common purpose of promoting the stability and well-being of the Atlantic area. Finally, it states their resolution to unite for collective defence and for the preservation of peace and their common security.

Highlights of the Treaty - The North Atlantic Treaty is a short instrument, as international agreements go, with a minimum of verbiage and a maximum of frankness and clarity. Four of its fourteen articles are basic to the Treaty:

(1) Under Article 3, the parties "by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid", undertake to "maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack."

(2) Article 4 provides that "the Parties will consult together wherever, in the opinion of any of them, the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the Parties is threatened."

(3) Article 5 declares that an armed attack against any member will be regarded by other members as an attack against all. In this event each party agrees to assist the

* See Current Affairs pamphlet Volume II, Number 4, p.9