

I am also certain that Canadians will not be tempted by changing circumstances to falter in their allegiance to, and support for, the North Atlantic alliance. The alliance was created almost ten years ago to meet a military threat. Since then the threat has undergone several mutations, but it has by no means disappeared; and the unity of the countries banded together in the North Atlantic alliance is as much needed today to counter the threat as it ever was. Moreover, the Treaty is based on a genuine community of interest and historical background. To believe that the way of life which has spread from the maritime fringe of Northwest Europe is the best political arrangement which man has yet devised is no sentimental or historical delusion but a matter of hard common sense and practical politics; and if we believe this, then it behoves us not only to preserve but to enlarge our concept of Western unity and purpose. This task has taken on new importance as the new flexibility in Soviet policy since the death of Stalin has led to a greater emphasis on political and economic activity rather than on the military threat which, to a high degree, was responsible for the creation of the alliance.

I have been particularly encouraged in recent months by the great growth of political consultation within the North Atlantic Council. I do not conceal from you that political consultation in NATO has not always been either so constant or so detailed as we would wish. The absence of consultation at the time of the Suez crisis was a severe setback to the developing cohesion of the alliance. It was also a cause of regret to us that the rapid development of events in the Middle East a few months ago did not permit detailed consultation in NATO before the despatch of forces to Lebanon and Jordan. On the other hand, however, ever since the launching from Moscow last November of the first of a series of long distance notes, there have been the most detailed and constructive discussions within NATO on all those aspects of East-West relations that might be discussed at a summit meeting.

In six weeks or so a meeting will take place in Paris at which Ministers from the fifteen NATO countries will examine the state of the alliance, and will exchange views on the international situation. Our deliberations will not be limited to the military situation, though that, of course, will form an important part of them. We will be discussing the developments in various parts of the world where international tension is most acute. In preparation for this meeting discussions are currently being held among the Permanent Representatives of the NATO Governments in Paris on these same questions. Indeed, these discussions proceed without interruption in the NATO forum and they are having the effect of deepening and broadening the basis of co-operation among the countries of the West.