

# STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES



CANADA

INFORMATION DIVISION

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

OTTAWA - CANADA

## No. 66/26 MAINTAINING THE UNITY OF THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE

Report to the House of Commons on June 10, 1966, by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Paul Martin.

...In accordance with our practice, I wish to report to the House on the NATO ministerial meeting which took place this week in Brussels. Also in accordance with practice in other years and with the consent of the House I should like to table two copies in French and two copies in English of the final communiqué of this meeting...

The discussions at this meeting covered a wide range of problems, but our attention was necessarily concentrated on issues directly related to the French decision, while remaining within the alliance, to withdraw from the integrated military structure.

The nature of the main problems that we had to discuss, which were internal to the alliance, made necessary an unprecedented organization of work. The meetings on Monday, June 6, were among the foreign ministers of the 14 countries, to which the Government of France had sent communications. It also proved necessary in the case of the regular ministerial meetings for the 14 ministers to hold meetings several times separately in order to work out among themselves a common position on issues under negotiation with the French. This, too, was an unprecedented procedural development and one which could have created difficulty. That it worked smoothly I regard as evidence of the goodwill of all members of the alliance. I am also encouraged to think that it reflected their genuine desire to develop forms of relationships which would make possible continuing co-operation in the future.

Never in my experience has there been a NATO meeting where the exchanges were franker, and perhaps where the problems were more difficult. This was hardly surprising. Ministers found, when they reached Brussels, that both among the 14 and as between the 14 and France they were divided on two important questions: the 14 had differing and strongly held views as to whether a new site should be chosen for the North Atlantic Council, and previous efforts to find a formula to cover negotiations between France and the 14 over the future role of French forces in Germany had proved abortive.