

# SUPERIOR FORCE THE BEST GUARANTEE OF PEACE

*From an address given by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable L.B. Pearson, on September 21, 1948 to the Ontario Municipal Association, Kingston, Ontario.*

The Canadian Government has made it clear that it is not only willing, but anxious, to join the other North Atlantic democracies in establishing a regional collective security pact for the North Atlantic.

We believe that the maintenance of an overwhelming superiority of force on the side of peace is the best guarantee today of the maintenance of peace.

As you know, representatives of the Canadian Government have been participating for over two months now in informal and exploratory discussions in Washington on the problems of security raised in the Vandenburg Resolution. These discussions have taken place between representatives of the United States, the United Kingdom, France, the Benelux countries and Canada.

## DISCUSSIONS FRUITFUL

All the governments concerned have agreed that no information about these discussions will be made public until a decision is reached.

It is not, therefore, possible for me to tell you today how these discussions are going. I can, however, say that the Canadian Government has every reason to believe that the discussions will be fruitful; that Canada is playing a useful part in them.

The Canadian Government has also, since the end of July, had an observer present at the discussions in London of the Military Committee of the Brussels Powers - the United Kingdom, France and Benelux. The United States has also had observers present at these meetings. The reports of this Military Committee go to the Chiefs of Staff of the Brussels Treaty Powers and from them to the Defence Ministers of those five powers.

The Canadian Government has taken these steps towards the creation of an effective regional security system with, I am sure, the overwhelming support of the people of Canada. The people of Canada have given this support knowing that Canada's participation in such a security system may require that, in an emergency, we share not only our risks but our resources. It would, for instance, be the task of a North Atlantic security system, once it is established, to agree upon a fair allocation of duties among the participating countries, under which each will undertake to do that share of the joint defence and production job that it can do most efficiently.

## CONTROL OF POLICY

Such a sharing of risks, resources and obligations must, however, be accompanied by, and flow from a share in the control of policy. If obligations and resources are to be shared, it is obvious that some sort of constitutional machinery must be established under which each participating country will have a fair share in determining the policies of all which affect all. Otherwise, without their consent, the policy of one or two or three may increase the risks and therefore the obligations of all.

This does not necessarily mean that every member of a regional security pact need be represented on all levels in all organs of the regional organization. To insist on this would make some of the organs unworkable. But it does mean that every organ of the regional security organization will derive its powers from a constitutional grant of those powers to it by all the members of the organization.

During the last war our three great allies - the United Kingdom, the United States and the Soviet Union - reserved to themselves the sole right to make the big strategic and political decisions of the war. It was the two great Western powers, and not all the Western belligerents, which appointed, for instance, the supreme Commanders in Chief. That arrogation of power by the United Kingdom and the United States may have been necessary during the critical emergency of war, especially as before the war no steps had been taken to organize for collective defence. However, it might be argued on the other hand that, even during the war, the total military, economic and moral strength of the alliance against Germany and Japan would have been greater if there had been a constitutional system under which each of the allies had a fair share in the determination of policy and under which the organs of the alliance were created by the allies as a whole and owed their authority to the allies as a whole.

In any event, I feel sure that it would not be possible in any effective peacetime organization of collective security to accept the procedures which were adopted in the wartime organization of the grand alliance.

## DECISIONS BY ALL

It is, for instance, one thing for a group of states to accept common responsibilities, each taking its fair share in discharging them, and indeed, in adding or subtracting from them. It is, however, quite a different thing for one, two, or three states to make decisions which may have far-reaching consequences for all countries and all peoples,