

But I can say that all the members, all the foreign ministers representing the great powers and the others, are agreed upon the fundamentals of this alliance, which are that we intend to remain free; we intend to maintain our military strength in the absence of political settlements and controlled disarmament; we intend to contain Communist aggression; we intend to remain firm in our dealings with the Soviet Union, but willing to explore any road to political settlement provided it does not endanger our security.

NATO Goals

There are different ideas on how to proceed in the future. What is needed in the alliance is more willingness on the part of those who want changes to propose them, and more willingness on the part of those who profess partnership to start practising it. If we are to adapt the alliance to changed conditions, there are certain goals which we believe are worth pursuing. First and foremost, so far as this country is concerned, we believe there must be increased emphasis on the transatlantic nature of the alliance. Any development within the alliance toward European or North American continent-ism will be resisted by this country, I hope. We will never choose, I hope, between the two sides of the Atlantic, because we cannot; for our historic ties are with Europe while at the same time we are a North American country. Greater co-operation between the two sides of the Atlantic is to us the only sensible policy if the Western alliance is to continue to evolve as a partnership of like-minded nations.

Second, Europe today is vastly stronger than in 1949, and many European countries think, quite rightly, that they should play a larger role in the direction of the alliance politically and militarily. I am sure concrete proposals would accomplish this and these would be welcomed by all. I urged my colleagues at the meeting to let us have these proposals.....

Finally, we need better consultation in the military as well as in the political and economic spheres. There have been enormous improvements in recent years and, as a result, the alliance is stronger today than in 1949. Because we now feel freer than before to go our own ways, there is an even greater need to tell each other what we are doing and why.

I am afraid that that is now the situation. If we fail to do so, mistrust sets in and we lose sight of the fundamental reasons which keep us together and we become obsessed by our differences.

Canada's Relations with France

When the Prime Minister and I visited Paris last January, we agreed that we would consult with France at the ministerial level. We found that President de Gaulle and his ministers shared our desire for a closer relationship. Although only a short time has elapsed since that visit, I believe I can already say with confidence that our conversations marked an important milestone in Canada's relations with France.