

While continuing to strive to make the United Nations a success, we must not allow it to become an obstacle to progress. Use can be made of this article and other provisions of the Charter to bring together like-minded countries within the United Nations which have a common will to unite for worthy ends - and mutual security is surely a worthy end.

You have doubtless read about the project which is now evolving for a defensive pact binding the countries which surround the North Atlantic Ocean. Discussions began last summer in Washington to see what could be worked out, without committing at that time anybody to anything. Seven countries took part in these discussions - the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, which last March concluded between themselves an alliance known as the Brussels Treaty, and the United States and Canada. The first stage of these discussions ended a few weeks ago in agreement on a paper to be considered by the seven governments. This consideration has now been completed, and the discussions are to be resumed at once. There is still a good deal of ground to cover, and I do not anticipate that final conclusions will be reached until early in 1949.

What I hope will emerge is a treaty binding the countries which I have named, and other North Atlantic countries, to work together in peace to combat aggression, and, if need be, to fight together in war. Surely any aggressor, no matter how powerful, would think several times before taking any action which was likely to cause war with a coalition of over 250 million people controlling a very high proportion of the industrial capacity of the whole world. It seems to me that the time has come in the cold war when it must be made abundantly clear that, if a hot war begins, the free nations will be prepared, equipped, and ready to go.

My Government has taken a leading part in publicly urging the establishment of this defensive group of free states. I should like to quote a few words from a speech last month by the new Prime Minister of Canada about this project:

"For my part, I believe that the most certain and the most practical approach to security for us is the achievement, as soon as possible, of an alliance of the North Atlantic nations. It is not enough to have right on our side; it is just as important to have the strength to defend the right. The only way to achieve that strength is for us and the other North Atlantic nations to combine our resources. We know only too well where isolationism leads. The last war proved conclusively that isolationism is no guarantee of security."

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"Anything less than a North Atlantic Pact would give us no real hope of maintaining a preponderance of material and moral strength on the side of peace. And it is only if we can maintain an overwhelming preponderance on the side of peace, that we can maintain the peace".

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