

*Supply—External Affairs*

gation to try to fully understand the basis and aims of French policy. This is not with any intention of playing an intermediary or mediating role, although this we would not shirk. We believe, however, that on certain occasions we could usefully encourage some of our allies to adopt a more sympathetic attitude toward French preoccupations. In particular we understand and support the French view that no hasty decisions should be taken when crash programs are not really required. We also agree with the head of the government of France that it is important that there be a fair balance between the European and North American contributions to the Atlantic alliance.

So if by waiting a little now, as is recommended, the right balance can be established between the contributions which North America and Europe can make to Atlantic defence, we believe that a delay, which in any case is required for the consideration of new British proposals, would be justified. On the other hand we hope the government of France will acknowledge the importance which we attach to the ties which bind us to Europe and display appreciation of the advantages both for Europe and for France of a vigorous and deepening Atlantic partnership.

From our point of view there can be no doubt as to where we stand. We have upheld the trans-Atlantic links with our mother countries in Europe. This is indeed so much a part of our heritage that we can trace the same thread from the time of our reactions to the American revolution through our part in two world wars, to our role in the evolution of the commonwealth idea and the conception and development of NATO. The government of Canada is therefore bound to be concerned that every possible effort be made to avoid any cracks or cleavages within the alliance and to arrest the development of continentalism, whether of the European or North American variety, since such concepts would tend to isolate us and weaken the effective influence which Canada can exert internationally. The serious potential consequences for our defence and for our economic prosperity, and in the long term for our political independence, must be recognized.

Mr. Chairman, we in Canada believe that NATO has served a very useful purpose, not only for the defence of its members but for the peace of the world. One of the consequences of the so-called disarray which exists is the fact that it has been a successful defensive alliance providing defence for its members and serving to contribute substantially to the peace in the world.

[Mr. Martin (Essex East).]

There are differences as to the nature of the military organization of NATO, one group taking the position that only by an integration of forces can we hope to pursue the effective development of the organization, and the other taking the position that the alliance should be based on the contribution made by individual national military bodies co-operating together for the purpose of common defence. NATO is an organization made up of freedom loving nations, and because they are free nations they suffer the disability of the consequences of that very freedom. There is not the same dissentient expression in bodies that are not made up of free nations.

We are thus the inheritors of some disadvantages which arise out of the very strength that gives meaning to the concept of freedom which each of the 15 nations in the NATO alliance enjoys. I think nothing is to be gained by failing to recognize that there are differences of view as to the kind of military organization that should be pursued in NATO. There is public discussion of this, and there have been discussions at the ministerial meetings of the council itself. These discussions have reflected efforts to see if some compromise arrangement could not be arrived at.

As I said in answer to a question put to me by the Leader of the Opposition a few days ago, it would be a matter of the greatest regret if as a result of these differences in the concept of organization there was to be any slackening in the unity or the integrity of NATO itself. This I think can be avoided, but it is only correct to emphasize that some feel that in order to avoid a confrontation of a serious nature we should seek to arrive at some *modus vivendi* among the various partners. The new British government has informed its allies that it is engaged in a thorough review of British defence policy, including an examination of the proposals for a multilateral force. As this review progresses I have no doubt it will be discussed by the British government with its NATO allies. We for our part will look forward to the visit to Ottawa on December 9 of the British prime minister and his foreign secretary. We believe this will provide the opportunity for the two commonwealth members of the western alliance to have a direct bilateral exchange of views on the range of problems covered by the British review.

Shortly thereafter the Minister of National Defence and I will go to the NATO ministerial meeting in Paris. There we will have the opportunity for further conversations with the French government, continuing the series of