

Now it is argued sometimes that our role in NATO and NORAD has in some way diminished our acceptability as a peacemaker. In my view, there is no reason to doubt that a continuing role in peace-keeping is compatible with our participation in collective defence arrangements. As a country desiring to make a responsible contribution to the maintenance of peace, it is desirable that we continue to make a contribution to regional defence arrangements genuinely devoted to the maintenance of peace.

The key to our collective defence arrangements is NATO. I recognize that, at this time, when there has been significant improvement in East-West relations and, I believe, hope of still further improvement, there are some who argue that NATO is no longer needed or even that it is a hindrance to the development of improved East-West relations. In my judgment it is a sign of the success of the alliance that we can indulge freely in such speculations.

These are questions that are being asked not only in this country but in most countries of the NATO group. NATO foreign ministers decided, as a result, in December of 1966, to commission a study of the future tasks of the alliance. This was an adaptation of a proposal put forward by Canada in 1964. The study was completed and the results were approved by ministers at the last December ministerial meeting in Brussels. I would like to read several paragraphs from the conclusions of this study, which were agreed to by all members of the alliance:

"The Atlantic alliance has two main functions. Its first is to maintain an adequate military strength and political solidarity to deter aggression and other forms of pressure and to defend the territory of member countries if aggression should occur. Since its inception, the alliance has successfully fulfilled this task. But the possibility of a crisis cannot be excluded as long as the central political issues in Europe, first and foremost the German question, remain unsolved. Moreover, the situation of instability and uncertainty still precludes a balanced reduction of military forces. Under these conditions, the allies will maintain, as necessary, a suitable military capability to assure the balance of forces, thereby creating a climate of stability, security and confidence.

"In this climate, the alliance can carry out its second function - to pursue the search for progress towards a more stable relationship, in which the underlying political issues can be resolved. Military security and a policy of détente are not contradictory but complementary. Collective defence is a stabilizing factor in world politics. It is the necessary condition for effective policies directed towards a greater relaxation of tensions. The way to peace and stability in Europe rests, in particular, on the use of the alliance constructively in the interest of détente. The participation of the Soviet Union and the United States will be necessary to achieve a settlement of the political problems in Europe."