

*External Affairs*

emotional upsurges but also unwilling to take commitments one way or the other that may be unwarranted tomorrow. Canada must and will, under its present leaders, do everything to ensure its safety and the peace of the world, which does not mean only in the matter of preparation to resist any offensive but also in the field of diplomacy and human relations, as was so aptly done by the Prime Minister during his memorable tour around the world.

**Mr. Alistair Stewart (Winnipeg North):** Mr. Speaker, no one surveying the international scene today can have many, if indeed any, illusions about the long-term future. In the long run I am pessimistic. In the short run, however, there have been certain significant changes which might be welcome. Since the death of Stalin there has been an obvious change in the policy of the Kremlin, and it is one which I think we ought to consider carefully. What it means I do not profess to know, if indeed it means anything. Nor for a moment do I believe that the long-term underlying policy of the Kremlin has changed one iota, but it is apparent that we have been given some extra time. That extra time we can use not only for our own defence but for the defence of the world.

The question is: What use are we making of that time which has been given to us? Today humanity possesses the most fantastic weapons of destruction. Perhaps their very fantastic nature makes for still greater security for all of us, for it is realized that the magnitude of devastation which could be wreaked upon the earth now is such that it makes war almost impossible to contemplate. That is the hope, and it is a hope which is shared in other quarters. I notice that Sir Winston Churchill, speaking in the British House of Commons last December, had this to say:

I have sometimes the odd thought that the annihilating character of the new weapons of destruction may bring an utterly unforeseeable security to mankind. A war which begins by both sides suffering what they dread most—and that is undoubtedly the case now—is less likely to occur than one which dangles the lurid prizes of former ages before ambitious eyes.

I think there is conceivably some justification for his view and, as I said, we have been granted some more time. To what use are we putting it? I have the unhappy feeling that the government is squandering that time. There seems to be a lack of urgency for those things which today ought to be urgent. I want to deal with some of them, particularly at first with certain aspects of NATO. On the 4th of February, 1949, at page 239 of *Hansard*,

the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Pearson) had this to say about the North Atlantic treaty:

I feel strongly . . . that this regional association must be far more than a military alliance. It must make a collective contribution to the social and economic betterment of the peoples of its member states.

We believed that too and because we believed it we voted for the treaty. I am not so sure that that view is still valid. I am not so sure that NATO has become anything other than a military alliance, and if history is any criterion a military alliance is not the strongest or the best basis on which to build our security. But what has been done along these lines of economic and social betterment?

In the January issue of the monthly bulletin of the Department of External Affairs we are given a report of the North Atlantic council ministerial session which met in Paris last December. I only want to deal with the economic and the political aspects of this report, rather than the military aspects, which will be discussed in greater detail at a later stage in the session. The government's version of this report said, in part:

The second conclusion—

The first dealt with military matters.

—was that the policy of the NATO countries in these circumstances must be to pursue the twin aims of building the defensive and economic strength and political unity of the Atlantic community, while at the same time seeking to negotiate on outstanding differences wherever possible . . .

That is a statement of policy and a statement of principle that is impeccable but in actual fact what does it add up to? How are we building this vitally necessary political unity in the Atlantic community? I am certain that we cannot build it by peripatetic cabinet ministers going to Paris, nor can we build it on the civil service in Paris, no matter how admirable it is; nor on the general staff, no matter how excellent it may be. I think the Department of External Affairs has been lax in not trying to convey to the people of Canada what NATO really can be, not what it is—God forbid. It is not adequate in any sense just now, but the department might convey what NATO could be from the point of view of the Atlantic community and in the larger sense of what it means to the security of all of us.

I have argued in this house on other occasions that it would be desirable to have an Atlantic assembly made up for the most part of representatives of the various parliaments who, perhaps during certain weeks in the year, would review the work of NATO. I think for the sake of NATO itself it is vitally necessary that such a review be undertaken. I do not like the idea of cabinet