

THE ROME MEETING OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL

At the Ottawa meeting of the North Atlantic Council, it was agreed that more frequent meetings of the Council was desirable, and it was understood that the next meeting should be held in Rome within the course of the next few weeks. The underlying reason behind this agreement was primarily the desirability of high level meetings in order to keep important policy matters constantly under review now that NATO is advancing beyond the stage of planning to the stage of implementation of plans. The Council was accordingly called to meet in Rome on November 24.

The fact that the Council was meeting in Rome during the discussions in the United Nations Assembly in Paris on a resolution calling for the limitation of armaments was too good a propaganda opportunity to be missed by Mr. Vishinsky. In his remarks as Chairman of the Council in the opening session in Rome, Mr. Pearson answered Mr. Vishinsky as follows:

Our determination to strengthen our defences under the North Atlantic Pact, when we have, unfortunately, every reason to feel that strength for defence is necessary in the world today, and our loyalty to the principles of the United Nations Charter, are two parts of the same policy. No single subject that we have discussed, or will discuss in our Council, no matter what may be maliciously said to the contrary, prejudices or weakens that loyalty. Our objective in the North Atlantic Organization is not to build up armed strength with which to threaten anybody, but solely to create sufficient forces to ensure that aggression, if it should occur, will not subjugate the free peoples of any part of our community. We have no intention of diverting from peaceful use anything like the resources which would be needed for aggressive action, but we have every intention of securing the strength needed to defend ourselves. We hope that this limited strength will make it easier for us to solve by negotiation, if possible, through the United Nations, some of the problems which now so tragically and dangerously divide the world.

As Mr. Kraft, the Foreign Minister of Denmark, described the tasks of NATO and the United Nations, Rome represented the work of today and Paris the work of tomorrow. NATO countries must strengthen their defences in order to bring about an approximate balance between the strength of the East and of the West, for without that balance there will be no security and without security all talk of reduction of armaments is empty.

Committee Reports

The Military Committee, which is the senior military body of the Organization, had met immediately before the Rome meeting and passed several reports, including one on the readiness and effectiveness of North Atlantic forces. General Eisenhower, the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, and his chief of staff, General Gruenther, made oral statements to the Council on this and other questions related to NATO defences in Europe. The Council also heard interim reports on the work of the Temporary Committee, which is studying how to reconcile military requirements with the political and economic capabilities of members. It is anticipated that the final report of the Committee will be submitted to governments before the next meeting of the Council. Mr. Abbott, the Minister of Finance, is Canadian representative on the Committee and has attended meetings in Paris from time to time.

It will be recalled that in September 1950, the North Atlantic Council decided that Germany should make a contribution to the defence of Western Europe. It was felt that this could best be brought about by the organization of a European army, and six European countries have been meeting in Paris since February 1951 to explore how this could be done. At Rome, the Council heard reports on the progress of their