

Foreign policy as much as domestic policy centres around issues which can determine the security and economic well-being of several generations of Canadians. The preservation of an alliance, the termination or avoidance of armed conflict anywhere in the world, the co-operation of nations to ensure economic progress - these are among the essential elements of our foreign policy and the leading objectives of our diplomacy.

You will probably have heard of something in the past few days about the serious problems within the North Atlantic alliance created by the decision of France to withdraw from those measures of military integration which support the guarantees of mutual assistance contained in the Treaty. I hope that you and all Canadians will understand the importance of the questions involved.

In 1914 a generation of young Canadians was committed to the barbarism of trench warfare and mass slaughter in Northern Europe. In 1939 another generation was caught up in the world convulsion of war, ideological hatred and mass genocide. I am speaking today to the representatives of a generation which, if we were not all consumed in nuclear fire first, would be in the front line of another ghastly blood-letting that might bring Western civilization down in ruins.

In 1949 the nations which signed the North Atlantic Treaty drew the correct conclusions from their experience. They decided that they must organize their security collectively in their own region, pending the establishment of universal collective security through the United Nations. They set on record before the world, for the benefit of any whose ambitions or temptations might lead them to hope otherwise, that they would fight collectively and immediately to resist any intrusion into the area covered by the guarantee.

To render the deterrent force of the guarantee as effective as possible, a degree of military integration unprecedented in peace-time was undertaken. That military integration has been both a sign of mutual interest and trust within a new type of alliance and an appropriate response to new conditions of warfare.

I am sure that a number of you have visited Europe or will do so. When you find there abundant evidence of economic prosperity, the flourishing of the arts and the healthy mingling of the traditional and the new, you must give due credit to the defensive shield which has guaranteed the recovery of a large part of the continent. The founders of NATO expected this recovery, and more than that. Canadians and others have looked beyond military measures and beyond European recovery as an immediate aim to the possibilities of developing an Atlantic Community with political, economic and military stability and well-being beneficial for the Atlantic nations and for other parts of the world.

Differences of opinion have developed, however, about some of these relations. I should like to stress some points which are occasionally the subject of controversy among Canadians.