

objectives. These local communist parties could well be regarded as the fifth column in this cold war.

On Russia's instigation, the communist countries even created in 1947 the Kominform, a communist replica of the Marshall plan, but for a contrary purpose. By late 1947, agitation and strikes intensified a concerted and virulent form of opposition. There were also persistent efforts to infiltrate all branches of activity in western countries, particularly trade unions in France and Italy.

Was this not sufficient to incite countries which did not want communist rule to seek a means of curbing this hunger for domination and subversion? This is why the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was created on April 4, 1949, in Washington.

Originally, NATO was composed of Belgium, Canada, Denmark, the United States, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, the Netherlands, Portugal and the United Kingdom. Greece and Turkey joined the alliance in February 1952, whereas West Germany officially became a member on May 9, 1955.

In 1963, the alliance covered an area of 1,112,633 square miles in Europe and over 7 million square miles in North America, for a total of 8,579,659 square miles with a population of 493 million people.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is not only a military alliance to prevent or repel aggression, but also the establishment of permanent co-operation in the political, economic and social fields.

The signatory countries were therefore committing themselves, pursuant to the United Nations Charter, to maintain international peace and security and develop stability and welfare in the North Atlantic area.

Article 1 of the United Nations Charter provides indeed that the purposes of the alliance are to maintain peace, develop friendly relations among nations and achieve international co-operation in solving international economic and social problems.

The 1949 alliance made it possible for some small European countries which were still in a state of economic and military weakness to get together in the interest of common defence with the help of the United States and Canada. Without these two partners, NATO would not have been born or would have been left helpless, especially on the economic side. Indeed, the United States made quite a contribution with their shipments of materiel and by setting up a procurement system for the various European countries, thus giving assistance to the industrial development of western Europe. NATO's efforts were mainly aimed at establishing a deterrent to make it clear to its possible enemies that an attack against any member of the alliance would turn out to be a losing proposition. This policy has proved successful so far and the U.S.S.R. has been retained within its boundaries.

I think NATO should be maintained. In Europe, there is no question about it since political stability is still a long way from having been achieved.

Hon. members will no doubt remember the 1968 events when Czechoslovakia, a Warsaw Pact member state,

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expressed its wish to withdraw and to democratize its institution, to "desocialize" so to speak; Russia did not hesitate to restore order in the country and bring the lost sheep back to the herd.

We must now ask ourselves whether the reasons which urged us to set the NATO alliance back in 1949 are still valid today, whether the threat of aggression or extended domination of the world by the U.S.S.R. has ceased to exist and whether we can now consider the possibility of reducing or even withdrawing our involvement in the NATO forces. In my mind, the threat is still very real and we must be careful in our behaviour within NATO. We knew what we were doing and we had very specific reasons when we joined the alliance. I suggest that no decrease in our armed forces and no drastic changes should take place without previous consultations with the other NATO members.

We should also closely watch the implementation of the Warsaw Pact, particularly the actions of its main proponents. Witnessing the Russians' armament development, both marine and nuclear, is enough to make us wonder about their objectives. No country would arm itself as Russia does presently without a precise purpose. Armament is as costly in Russia as in the United States, in Canada or in any European country. For instance, in 1968-1969 Russian nuclear armament was inferior to American weaponry and we know now that by mid-70 Russia had not only caught up with the United States in the nuclear armament race but had actually overtaken them.

We know about the growing atomic submarine force of Russia. I will repeat what Camilien Houde said when he was Montreal's mayor at the beginning of the 1939-45 war: "Armament is not made for Christmas trees". Russians are not getting armed for decorating purposes: they have a precise objective.

Because of this, we should be careful about our decisions regarding NATO and Canada, as a member country, should respect its commitments, even if certain changes should be made in several areas.

A French general was saying to us when the Committee on External Affairs and National Defence visited France that in days of yore, when people used to fight with spears and swords, the only thing that could not be done with such weapons was to sit on them. Now the only thing one can do with nuclear arms is to sit on them.

According to a news report, the nuclear stock accumulated by the two camps facing each other in this cold war is equal to 15 tons of TNT for each and every human being, quite enough to destroy the whole world.

Mr. Speaker, I think we should try to find out the position we should take in such circumstances. I believe we should try to convince politicians from all countries, especially those of the great camps facing each other, to come to a peaceful agreement. Not so long ago, there were two great camps: one directed by the United States and the other by Russia. And now, communist China is also playing an important part among the military powers. The ideal would be to be able to convince the