

# Canada Weekly

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## North Atlantic Treaty Organization celebrates twenty-fifth anniversary

In a statement marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), April 4, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mitchell Sharp, reviewed its accomplishments and spoke of its role in the future. Mr. Sharp's statement follows:

\* \* \* \*

In looking back over the last 25 years one is struck by the profound changes that have occurred in the circumstances facing the alliance and the capacity it has demonstrated to respond effectively to a threat to their common security. Although considerable progress has been made on the road towards *détente*, the members of the alliance, including Canada, remain convinced that, pending more substantive achievements in the field of disarmament or the establishment of an effective world collective security system, their individual interests are best served by their common commitment to mutual assistance under the North Atlantic Treaty. In support of this collective approach to security, Canada continues to contribute forces to the various elements of NATO's defence activities - the defence of Europe, the defence of the North Atlantic, and the defence of the alliance's North American region.

In the meantime, NATO has responded regularly to new tasks that have developed. For some time it has been serving as a forum for the exchange of information and for the harmonization of members' views on a wide range of political issues. This process of continuing consultation is of particular value to smaller alliance members such as Canada because it gives us direct and immediate access to the thinking of our allies and an opportunity to bring our own views to their attention. More recently, NATO has assumed the major new function of coordinating the approach of its members to such important East-West negotiations as the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe in Geneva and the force reduction talks in Vienna. All of the allies including Canada share a desire to find practical ways to further *détente* and are satisfied their individual interests in this area

are best served by the close harmonization of positions that NATO makes possible.

The late Lester B. Pearson attached considerable importance to Article II of the North Atlantic Treaty which emphasizes the desirability of co-operation amongst alliance members in fields outside the traditional politico-military sphere. It is therefore gratifying to note that in addition to its role in this area, NATO is making a regular contribution to the search for solutions to problems in fields such as science and the environment that affect the well-being of its members in quite a different way. The approach, which is low key and pragmatic, is based on the idea that NATO's well-established techniques for co-ordination and consultation can usefully be exploited in any area of common concern to its members.

## Canada in NATO's future

Looking to the future, it seems clear that for some time to come NATO will continue to have a major role to play in furthering the individual and collective interests of its members across a wide range of subjects. For Canada, however, our membership in the alliance is likely to assume still another dimension in the period ahead. We welcome and support the efforts of our friends in Europe to develop their political and economic unity. At the same time we are seeking to diversify our own international relations and in this effort the newly-emerging Europe will be an area of particular significance for us. As our new relations with Europe evolve we have every reason to believe that Canadian membership in NATO in common with eight of the nine EEC members will provide opportunities for co-operation in areas of mutual concern.

NATO's capacity to fulfil these useful functions in the period ahead

## Late hockey result

Montreal Canadiens, last year's Stanley Cup winners, were eliminated by New York Rangers by a score of 5-2 in the sixth game of the best-of-seven quarter finals on April 18.