

Secretary of State for External Affairs, for the first time, when agreement was reached on the main objectives which are to guide consultations and co-ordination of policies in NATO. The most important of these principles is "to achieve a common policy on subjects of direct concern to the alliance as a whole." Progress is being made. In these critical days the NATO Council is meeting regularly through its permanent representatives to fulfil its responsibilities but there is still room for improvement. I think I will say no more on that.

I think I ought to point out that while the Committee of which the Leader of the Opposition was a member made certain recommendations and some changes have taken place, as yet we have not arrived at that point where consultation is as complete as I would like to see it...

If we could only plan internationally to meet all of the changes of attitude and the circuitous courses followed by Mr. Khrushchov, things would be much simpler. The Leader of the Opposition asked whether there was any planning, any consultation regarding the sealing off, or any anticipation of the sealing off of ingress and egress between East Berlin and West Berlin. I frankly tell you I do not think that was anticipated. However--and I am answering him in this regard--there is planning and consultation to cover potential emergencies as they may arise with respect to Western rights and responsibilities in Berlin. I cannot, of course, disclose what action NATO governments propose to take if the Soviet Government or the East Germans attempt to block off access to Berlin. It would, however, be a mistake to imply that on this vital matter Western interests are dependent on improvisation at the time of or after the time of the event. The occupying powers, specifically the United States, the United Kingdom and France, have special responsibilities to ensure maintenance of access for their troops stationed in Berlin, and for their supplies. Under the North Atlantic Treaty and subsequent declarations of the NATO Council, all members have certain responsibilities in respect of Berlin.

The Leader of the Opposition implied that there might be a tendency to wait upon events improvidently before deciding on courses of action. I can tell the House that at the last NATO meeting in Oslo Canada took a leading part in urging the necessity of effective defence consultation on plans to meet contingencies which might arise in the Berlin situation. The United Kingdom, the United States and France are keeping the other members of NATO regularly informed of progress in their planning against various contingencies which are seen as possibly arising over Berlin, and the Government of Canada will continue to ensure that there is no slackening in the effectiveness of this consultation and planning.

This is no time for pessimism.... Equally it is not a time for optimism. Throughout the years all the free world has faced dire dangers. I remember in the fall of 1916 visiting the British House of Commons just prior to the change of administration and hearing the then Prime Minister, one of Britain's greatest, I think, the Right Hon. H.H. Asquith, say that they had passed through the gravest difficulties. A few weeks later I heard Lloyd George make his first speech as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. I was one of seven Canadians who had that privilege. I might be asked how I happened to get into the gallery. As a matter of fact, Sir George Perley