

*External Affairs*

duly entered into between the occupying powers and the U.S.S.R. in a series of meetings culminating in 1949.

In giving this undertaking in respect of Berlin, neither the council nor its individual members was assuming obligations that were new. Indeed, the NATO partners have been bound in respect of the defence of Berlin since October 22, 1954. This obligation was undertaken by the NATO council on the occasion of West Germany joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, when all the other members of the alliance formally associated themselves with the provisions declared earlier, in the month of October, 1954 that the three occupying powers would remain in Berlin so long as their responsibilities so required. The text of the obligation assumed by Canada, as a member of NATO, is, and I quote:

—to treat any attack against Berlin from any quarter as an attack upon their forces and themselves.

Members of the house, Mr. Speaker, may recall that on December 31—that was after the termination of the meeting of the NATO council—the United States, the United Kingdom and France sent replies to the new note of November 27, 1958. In these notes, which had been discussed in the NATO council, the three occupying powers reaffirmed their right to be in Berlin, and they condemned the Soviet union's unilateral denunciation of the agreements relating to Berlin to which I have referred. In these notes of December 31, 1958 the occupying powers stated that they could not accept the repudiation by the Soviet union of these obligations in this way, and that they could not consider proposals which would jeopardize the freedom of the West Berlin population.

Speaking in geographical terms, Mr. Speaker, I may say that here is a community, West Berlin, of 2.5 million people which is 110 miles east of the West German border. This little island is isolated in the midst of Soviet controlled territory, East Germany. I must say that Canada's view is, and I state this very firmly, that we will not countenance the swallowing up or absorption of 2.5 million of our friends in West Berlin into the Soviet complex which surrounds the city of Berlin.

In the notes of December 31 the United Kingdom, the United States and France also said they would not jeopardize in any way, by negotiation or otherwise, the West Berlin population. Then again in these notes there was a reiteration of the offer which had been made over several years and which was restated and made manifest in the communique issued after the NATO meeting in December, to negotiate the question of Berlin in relation

to the whole German situation as well as in relation to the problem of European security.

Subsequent events, Mr. Speaker, have tended to confirm the wisdom of the firm but flexible position that was taken in these notes and in the meetings of the NATO council. On January 10 of this year the Soviet union sent notes to all the powers on the western side which had fought against Germany in the second world war. I have reported to the house on that note, and indeed I have tabled it here, accompanied as it was by a draft peace treaty relating to the whole of Germany.

In that note it was suggested that there should be held a conference of the representatives of these countries—28, I think there are—on the western and eastern side which had fought against Germany. The conference would discuss this draft peace treaty. In that note there was, in tone if not in content, the idea that the U.S.S.R. would be ready to consider the problem of Berlin in relation to Germany as a whole. Recent public statements—perhaps we can take some comfort from them—by U.S.S.R. leaders, indicate that they do not regard the note of November 27, 1958, to the three occupying powers in Berlin as an ultimatum.

I tabled in this house on February 17 the Canadian reply to the Soviet note of January 10. Briefly, as I stated at the time, our position is this. It would not be useful to have a large peace treaty conference until some aspects of the German question have been examined by representatives of the four states, the United States, the United Kingdom, France and the U.S.S.R., those countries that have a special responsibility in Berlin. The Canadian reply did not, and I do not now, try to lay down a blueprint for the solution of the German problem. There will be general agreement, however—I hope there will be; I will put it that way—that this is not the time for Canada or any other NATO country which has been a party to the preliminary discussion of this problem of Berlin in relation to Germany as a whole and also in relation to European security, to put forward proposals in public. However, I assert and affirm that this is no time for anything other than positive policies. We should not, in the days and months ahead—and they may be critical ones—refuse to consider any proposal that is put forward by any country in the west, or any proposals that may be put forward by the Soviet union.

Among the types of proposals which could be considered—and I am not going to give a long list; I am going to give a partial list—are those which envisage some form of mutual