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NATO MINISTERIAL MEETING

On his arrival in London recently, from the NATO Ministerial Meeting in Paris, December 14 to 16, 1965, Mr. Paul Martin, Secretary of State for External Affairs, made the following comments:

This was a valuable meeting of the NATO ministers. Decisions will be required in the months ahead on many difficult problems facing the alliance, and it is gratifying that there has been a frank exposition of the various national points of view and of the differences that exist among them. There was a universal desire to avoid aggravating these differences but, as a result of this meeting, each of us knows better what our partners think.

EAST-WEST RELATIONS

This meeting clearly established that NATO governments have an interest that goes beyond defending the NATO area. They are looking to the eventual resolution of the outstanding issues that have divided Europe for so long. Recognizing that recent indications of Soviet attitudes are not encouraging, the members of NATO nevertheless reaffirmed their determination to find common understanding with the U.S.S.R. and the countries of Eastern Europe. This meeting advanced that purpose.

DISARMAMENT AND NON-PROLIFERATION

It was particularly significant that an organization created for defensive purposes should have demonstrated such an active interest in progress towards disarmament. In particular, there was a full awareness of the danger of nuclear proliferation in all parts of the world.

NON-NATO AREAS

It has for some time been evident that NATO could not limit itself to a discussion of problems within the treaty area. As on previous occasions there was general discussion of the areas of conflict and tension outside the area of the alliance. Vietnam, Rhodesia and Cyprus all received attention. These situations are naturally of grave concern to the alliance as a whole, even though they do not involve the reciprocal obligations of the members of NATO. It is undoubtedly helpful to those directly involved in the situation to know the views of their partners.

CYPRUS

As one of the main contributors to the UN Force in Cyprus, Canada, as on past occasions, took the opportunity at this meeting to explore the prospects of a settlement. Conversations were held with both the Greek and Turkish representatives to this end. To them, and in statements in the NATO Council, it was emphasized that there should be as broad as possible financial and other support for the UN peace-keeping effort in Cyprus.

NUCLEAR PROBLEMS

NATO will soon have to give particular attention to nuclear problems. There was a useful discussion of studies to be undertaken on some of the practical aspects of nuclear arrangements. There was a valuable opportunity for Canada to have discussion on these and other problems with ministers from the U.S.A., France, Britain and Germany.