

What I was referring to when I said we had commitments was the political commitment which we undertook in signing this pact and that commitment, of course, stands and is accepted not only by the government but I think by hon. members. That political commitment is to come to the help of any member of the alliance if that member is the victim of aggression. We accept that commitment. It is a commitment for the defence of Canada, by coming to the help of our partners in the alliance if those partners should be attacked. That is a political commitment which we undertake. How that commitment shall be worked out, though, is another matter.

Yesterday when the hon. member for Peel was speaking he mentioned the fact that no details had been given the house or the country in regard to that particular commitment. But I would point out to him and to the house, Mr. Speaker, that it took us nearly a year to work out the political commitment which I have mentioned, and we have only just begun to work out the plans which constitute a military commitment under the treaty. We have signed the treaty; we have laid the basis of the organizations required under the treaty. There remains to be worked out the contributions which each government shall make in carrying out these political pledges, these contributions to be effective once the aggression has taken place and is recognized as such by the members of the alliance, including Canada. This development of the treaty has just begun, and it will take some time to work it out. Therefore it will not be possible to know exactly what are our military undertakings and our military commitments until that development is completed. I think that if it is clearly understood, Mr. Speaker, that I was talking about the ultimate political commitment in the treaty and the Minister of National Defence was talking about the military undertakings which we may have to take in order to discharge our political commitment, it will be clear that there is no contradiction in the two statements.

Many references, Mr. Speaker, were made during the debate to the United Nations and our policy in regard to the United Nations. I would merely like to repeat in that regard that our adherence to this organization remains the cornerstone of our external policy.

We are having difficult times at Lake Success. It is not easy to make the United Nations the effective organization for peace we all hoped it would be. One evidence of these difficulties is that we have had to work out regional arrangements not outside of, but supplementary to the United Nations. Nevertheless I would like to emphasize again that these regional arrangements, whether they be political such as the north Atlantic pact or whether they are financial, along the lines of the talks we have had to have with our friends from the United Kingdom and the United States, or of whatever nature they may be--these regional arrangements remain secondary and supplementary to our adherence to our world organization which we hope will some day make all such limited arrangements unnecessary.

That is not possible today. The reason is, of course, as I need hardly repeat, the split in the world between west and east, which reflects itself in practically every undertaking of the United Nations. So long as that split remains it is absurd to think, and we would be only deceiving ourselves if we did think, that the United Nations as a universal organization can discharge the function of preserving peace which it was set up to discharge and which some day we hope it will discharge. But before that can be done we have to bridge the gap between the communist east and the democratic west. Though that problem at the present time seems almost insuperable, we must keep working toward its solution.

This afternoon the leader of the opposition (Mr. Drew) said that the best hope for that solution was by somehow getting to the people of the communist countries. If we could pierce the iron curtain and get to the hearts and souls of the people behind it I am sure, just as he was sure, that we would find they are as peace-loving as the rest of us. If we could sweep away that mistrust and hatred that has been caused by the tyrannical masters of the Russian communist people, if we could sweep that away and get our own message across to those people, then that split would be healed and we would have a world