

nations to our south. Like ourselves, they are determined to be independent and to reach their own decisions in international affairs. Several, like us, are middle powers, and, like us, are exerting growing influence in the councils of the world. I have found co-operation with Latin American countries such as Mexico, Brazil and Argentina -- to name only a few -- both natural and useful in the United Nations, and I look forward to an intensification of Canadian trade and political relations with all Latin American states. I believe that many of you here today, with your far-reaching business connections, have much to contribute towards this objective.

5. Our Participation in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

The fifth sketch I would draw for you is of Canada's partnership with 14 other like-minded nations in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. One of the principles underlying the North Atlantic Alliance is that no state, however powerful, can guarantee its security in the nuclear age by national action alone. Since its inception in 1949, NATO has brought to all its members -- large, medium and small -- a measure of security and purpose in the face of a serious Soviet military challenge. The Treaty binds its 15 member states together for the defence of North America and Europe, and it is in recognition of the fact that the defence of the two continents is indissolubly linked, that Canada has maintained a fully equipped air division and brigade of ground forces in Europe, notwithstanding heavy defence commitments at home in North America.

Today NATO endows us with a source of mutual confidence and responsibility for the vital East-West negotiations lying ahead which no member, by itself, could have attained. That spirit of interdependence can be maintained and enhanced, however, only if the fullest advantage is taken of the opportunities for consultation which the NATO Council offers on matters which significantly affect the Alliance as a whole or its members. That is not to say that all NATO countries must speak with one voice on all questions. That is both impossible and indeed undesirable in an alliance of equals, for it is this very independence of thought and expression which distinguishes NATO from the Warsaw Pact.

It does, however, mean that by discussion of vital questions in advance of action by member states, such action may be taken in the light of and with a full appreciation of the viewpoint of other members, be they great or small powers. I believe this concept of consultation to be of the utmost significance in relation to the forthcoming East-West negotiations which, by the limited participation which is possible at such talks, will find some members of the Western team doing the negotiating and others on the side-lines. For this reason Canada has urged that the Western negotiating powers must keep the Council in their confidence in the preparation of a pre-summit negotiating position. It is for the