

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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NATO'S MOST HARMONIOUS MEETING

Statement to the House of Commons on December 17,
1962, by the Secretary of State for External
Affairs, Mr. Howard Green.

... I thought the House might be interested in a brief report on the NATO ministerial meeting which took place in Paris last week and which I had the privilege of attending along with my colleague the Minister of National Defence...

In the background of this particular NATO meeting was the Cuban crisis; and by the way, may I say that this crisis should not be regarded as having been finally settled as yet. It is true that big steps have been taken toward a settlement, but this has not yet been concluded. The Cuban crisis has had quite noticeable effects on the Alliance. One is that as a result of the crisis the diplomatic position of the Alliance itself has been considerably improved. Then, in my opinion, the crisis has served to draw the allies much closer together than they were previously and in the case of the government of each country--and certainly this is true of Canada--it has increased the value we place on this defence organization.

Credit to U.S.

The meetings in Paris lasted for three days and were very harmonious. In fact, they were the most harmonious meetings of NATO that I have attended. Great credit, of course, was given to the United States for the firmness yet moderation shown in the Cuban crisis. Some question was raised with regard to methods of consultation in a crisis like this, but no real complaint was made against the United States for the manner in which the allies were consulted or informed.

I think we in the Alliance face a new position with regard to consultation. Many threats are of global nature, and furthermore, one can never be quite sure in what part of the world the next threat is going to come. Then there is the question of the rapidity with which a crisis may arise. That, of course, was true in the case of Cuba, and it made consultation difficult. The Permanent Council will be studying from now on methods by which consultation can be improved. There is no doubt that we could have a better system, and an attempt will be made to work one out.

On the first day of the conference, there was an extensive review of the international situation dealing primarily with East-West relations. On behalf of Canada I took the position that NATO now has the initiative as a result of the Cuban crisis, and that every effort should be made to retain that initiative rather than getting into the position of always waiting for the Communist world to make the first move with NATO then acting in response to Communist initiatives.

Contingency Planning

It was agreed that the Alliance must be kept strong, and we believe as well that it should be prepared to negotiate at all times. I think that is a sound policy provided there is no letting down of the guard. We also suggested that there should be an attempt made now to do some contingency planning, as it is called, in the political and diplomatic fields. There has been such planning in the military and economic fields but not sufficient in the diplomatic field. For example, I think there should be several plans worked out which would cover what the Alliance should do in case the Russians sign a peace treaty with East Germany. This is the type of contingency planning I think should be done in the political and diplomatic field.

Then we went on to point out that there is a contact with the Communist world in the disarmament negotiations which are going on in Geneva. I did not deal with this subject at any length, but Canada is one of the four NATO countries represented on the Disarmament Committee and, of course, it is a very good field in which to negotiate.

We also dealt with the relationship between NATO and the United Nations. In days gone by there has been a tendency in NATO to write down the United Nations, for quite frequently NATO nations have been criticized in New York. Canada has felt that more importance should be placed in NATO on the activities of the United Nations. For example, we pointed out several ways in which NATO's position had been improved by activities at the United Nations within the last year, and perhaps the House might be interested in these six examples which I gave:

1. The increasing support which U Thant is receiving and which indirectly undermines the prospects for the troika approach.
2. The determined current effort to find a solution in the Congo and to reduce United Nations operations and costs. These are all examples of how United Nations activities have been of great help to NATO.
3. The satisfactory outcome of Belgium's transfer of power in Rwanda and Burundi.
4. France's brilliant achievement in bringing independence to Algeria.
5. The decision of the International Court on the sharing of the peace-keeping expenditures of the United Nations.

6. The gain in prestige for the United Nations, as well as for the West, which has taken place as a result of the outcome of the Cuban crisis... U Thant has played a significant role in these negotiations, and there can be little doubt that Soviet prestige has fallen in the United Nations and in the eyes of the uncommitted nations of the world.

Sino-Indian Dispute

In this international review I also dealt briefly with the Chinese attack on India. Here again, NATO is vitally concerned with all the developments arising from that unfortunate conflict. Canada feels that India must not be expected to rush to align herself with the West--or, for example, to make application to join NATO. Some people may think that would be very nice, but if India were to give up her unaligned position she would certainly lose a great deal of her standing in Asia and in Africa. We have quite a good understanding of India; there is not only the Commonwealth relationship but we serve with India in the United Nations Emergency Force in the Gaza Strip and in the Congo forces, as well as on the Supervisory Commissions in Indochina. We believe India's position should be viewed with a great deal of sympathy by the members of the NATO alliance.

In the military field, the second day was devoted to a consideration of military questions. I think the most significant feature of that discussion was the suggestion by the United States that there is now ample deterrent capability on the Western side. Of course there is great deterrent power on the Communist side as well, with the result that it is very unlikely that either of the great nuclear powers would wish to precipitate a nuclear war and the resulting terrible destruction that would ensue. Thus it follows that the crises are likely to be of a nature not quite serious enough to precipitate a nuclear war. In other words the Communists may go just so far that they do not actually precipitate a nuclear war.

There is a realization that NATO forces could be improved considerably to deal with that type of situation. In Europe there are, of course, some proposals for a European nuclear deterrent in the shape of medium-range ballistic missiles. This question was not decided. It will be studied further by the Council. It involves great expenditures; these missiles cost a great deal of money, and I think the European nations would be expected to provide a good deal of the cold, hard cash for such a deterrent. There would also be the question of control, how they would be handled and so on. The Europeans seem to favour land-based medium-range ballistic missiles, while the United States is more interested in having such a force at sea.

Conventional Forces

With regard to the conventional forces, there was a plea made by the United States for strengthening them, but this would not apply to Canada; in effect the proposal was made to the European nations... Canada

strengthened her conventional forces a year ago at the time of the Berlin crisis. We were very pleased to have it pointed out, not by ourselves but by the military authorities and the United States, that Canada had lived up to her commitments and, for example, that our brigade was the only combat-ready unit in the NATO forces other than those of the United States. In spite of rumours which I have seen in the press at home since my return, there was not a word of criticism of Canada's military efforts in NATO.

There was also a discussion on research development and production. As you know... in NATO Canada has always been in favour of sharing arrangements for this type of development, and the Minister of National Defence made a statement to that effect in the course of the discussions.

Finally there was a discussion about special aid to Greece to help her with her defence expenditures. She is unable to continue the heavy expenses to which she is committed, and all the nations, or most of them in any event, are now arranging to give her some help with her defence costs. For example, Canada in 1963, subject to Parliamentary approval, will provide \$1 million in the way of spare parts for planes which Canada supplied to Greece at an earlier date, and also \$1 million in the shape of foodstuffs for the Greek army. Greece is a strong, close friend of Canada, and is very grateful to us for taking this position.

It was agreed that the next meeting, which takes place in the Spring, will be held in Ottawa on May 21, 22 and 23. I am sure that had Hon. Members of the House been in Paris they would have been very gratified if they had been attending the meetings... with the reaction of the delegates from the other member nations. They were simply delighted to be coming to Canada for this meeting, and I am sure we will all see to it that they get a warm welcome and that they leave Canada with as good an impression as they have of our country at the present time...

S/C