

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES



CANADA

INFORMATION DIVISION

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

OTTAWA, CANADA

No. 66/11

THE NATO ALLIANCE - A MAJORITY VIEW

Statement by the Honourable Paul Martin, Secretary of State for External Affairs, in the House of Commons, March 18, 1966.

I rise to make a declaration that is being made by 14 countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization at this hour....

The Government of France on March 10 delivered a note to the Canadian Ambassador in Paris setting out the position of that Government regarding France's future participation in NATO.

The French note, which I tabled this morning, states that France intends to withdraw all its land and air forces still remaining under NATO command. French naval forces have already been withdrawn. France also requires the removal from French territory of all NATO military headquarters, including SHAPE itself. Finally, France requires the withdrawal of foreign forces and installations from France, unless the forces are placed under French rather than NATO operational command.

It is the view of the Canadian Government that Canadian forces at the disposition of the alliance in Europe should be under the operational command of the Supreme Allied Commander. The direct implication for Canada of the French decision, therefore, is that we shall have to relinquish our air base at Marville and the air division headquarters at Metz and relocate these forces and facilities elsewhere. Other Canadian forces in Europe outside France are not directly affected.

The French Government also addressed notes to all other members of NATO. These notes are all substantially similar. The notes addressed to the United States, the Federal Republic of Germany and Canada deal additionally with matters which are the subject of bilateral agreements with France.

The French intention to withdraw from the integrated military arrangements established under NATO has been the subject of consultation among the other 14 members of the Organization, who have determined to maintain the integrated defence structure of the alliance. The experience of the last two world wars and modern developments in warfare permit no effective alternative to unified command and planning arrangements for allied

forces. Recognizing the need for continuing these proven arrangements, Canada has today joined the other members of NATO in making the following declaration:

"The following declaration has been agreed on between the heads of government of Belgium, Canada, Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

"The North Atlantic Treaty and the Organization established under it are both alike essential to the security of our countries.

"The Atlantic alliance has ensured its efficacy as an instrument of defence and deterrence by the maintenance in peace-time of an integrated and interdependent military organization, in which, as in no previous alliance in history, the efforts and resources of each are combined for the common security of all. We are convinced that this organization is essential and will continue. No system of bilateral arrangements can be a substitute.

"The North Atlantic Treaty and the Organization are not merely instruments of the common defence. They meet a common political need and reflect the readiness and determination of the member countries of the North Atlantic Community to consult and act together wherever possible in the safeguard of their freedom and security in the furtherance of international peace, progress and prosperity."

I would remind the House before I take my seat that the Government of France, in the note it has sent to Canada, does not, as I said during the question period today, propose to denounce the Treaty.

s/c