



# STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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## A MILESTONE IN ATLANTIC PARTNERSHIP

A Statement to the House of Commons on May 27, 1963, by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. Paul Martin.

... I now wish to make a report on the Ministerial Meeting of NATO which was held in Ottawa last week. The Minister of National Defence and I had the responsibility of representing the Government of Canada at that meeting. Because of the importance of the subject matter, and in accordance with the convention which attends the delivery of a statement of this importance by a Minister of the Crown, I propose to follow closely what I have prepared for this particular occasion...

The Minister of National Defence and I were afforded an opportunity to meet our opposite numbers both during and before the Ministerial Meeting itself. I had valuable talks in my office in the four days preceding the meeting with Secretary of State Rusk, Foreign Minister Lord Home, and with the Foreign Ministers of France, M. Couve de Murville, and of Germany; Mr. Schroeder - that is, with the leading members and representatives at this meeting of those countries with which we have the most intimate relations. Of course I should add, so that I would not in any way discriminate, that I was privileged to have important and useful talks with the Foreign Ministers of Holland, Belgium, Portugal, Turkey, Greece and Denmark. We were able to review not only matters which would be brought before the meeting, but also questions of bilateral concern. In ordinary circumstances it might have taken many months to establish direct personal contact with these foreign ministers or, in the case of the Minister of National Defence, with ministers of national defence from the 14 countries which attended the Ministerial Meeting along with Canada....

This meeting was timely in another sense. It gave the Government an opportunity to remove the doubts which continued to linger in the minds of our allies concerning the position of Canada with regard to the commitments undertaken on behalf of our armed forces... To that end, the Minister of National Defence took the opportunity on the first day of the conference to set the record straight by confirming to the Council in ministerial session the

information which had already been given to Parliament two days before by the Prime Minister, namely that negotiations had been resumed with the United States relating to defensive nuclear weapons systems which had been the subject of previous discussions with the United States.

I want to make perfectly clear that Canada has undertaken no new commitments at the meeting just concluded. It is, however, the policy of this Government to take the steps needed to make it possible for the Canadian forces to discharge the role accepted for them... This was as long ago as 1959. That role would not disappear if Canada failed to carry it out; all that would happen would be that some other member or members of the Alliance would have to shoulder the obligation in our place.

The kind of forces Canada agreed to contribute were to meet part of an established NATO military requirement, and I am sure that no Hon. Member of this House would wish Canada to be placed in the position where it would be foisting upon others a task voluntarily assumed by Canada ... as part of the collective defence effort of the Alliance. I stress the word "voluntarily" because the military contributions to meet agreed force requirements were assumed as a result of bilateral discussions between the NATO military authorities and individual member states, and not all of them saw fit to undertake a nuclear role. I will have more to say a little later in connection with this aspect of the NATO meeting.

... The Spring Ministerial Meeting of the NATO Council is normally attended by foreign ministers to review international developments and appraise the state of the Alliance. Defence ministers also participated at this time because there were on the agenda items affecting the organization of the deterrent forces at the disposal of the Alliance....

The decisions on defence matters taken at the meeting have attracted a great deal of public notice, virtually to the exclusion of all else. I do not wish to underrate the significance of those decisions, for they represented a further step in the integration of elements of the deterrent forces which should go some distance toward improving their co-ordination and control. But I would also draw the attention of Hon. Members to the fact that the emphasis in the communiqué was on peace. The communiqué opened and closed on that note. This is as it should be, for ours is a defensive Alliance, the military activities of which are maintained solely in the interests of the integrity of the member states and therefore of the peace of the world. The whole underlying concept of NATO is the prevention of war, and there is full realization within the Alliance that peace cannot be ensured by military power alone. So the Council has reasserted its desire to seek equitable solutions by negotiation, and it is hoped that the Communist world will come to see that they too have no less an interest in such settlements.

Some of the areas of continuing concern -- Berlin, Cuba and Laos -- are named in the communiqué and were indeed thoroughly discussed in the private sessions of the Council. I reported to

the Council on the unsatisfactory situation in Laos from the viewpoint of one of the members of the three-nation International Supervisory Commission. I expressed our determination to continue to press for greater freedom of action and movement for the Commission, and I am happy to know that the three members of the Commission have joined together in their most recent report.

Too often in the past the Council has met in the shadow of crisis. Last December it met in the immediate aftermath of Cuba. The preceding year it was the wall in Berlin. This year we were faced with no immediate threat of armed aggression affecting the treaty area directly, and this fact was noted in our review of the international situation. On the other hand, the absence of war or the threat of war is a long way from the kind of peace we seek, and we were also forced to recognize that long-standing issues such as were named in the communiqué remain unresolved and are a continuing source of grave concern. The causes of the present lull well may lie within the Sino-Soviet bloc itself, although no one can predict how long this state of immobility in East-West relations may continue.

There was complete agreement upon the importance of maintaining continuous contact with the Soviet Union in an effort to resolve issues which might lead to war and ensure, at the very least, that neither side should misunderstand the intentions of the other.

In this connection, the decision in principle which has been reached at Geneva between the United States and the Soviet Union to establish direct communication between Washington and Moscow was welcomed by the Canadian delegation as one which should help to reduce the risk of war by miscalculation.

That agreement was one of the useful byproducts of the 18-Nation Disarmament Conference now meeting in Geneva. As I had occasion to say in one of my interventions before the Council, the outlook at the Geneva Disarmament Conference and the test-ban talks is so far from encouraging that it would be unrealistic to slacken our defence efforts. But I noted at the same time that the implications in both military and financial terms of an unrestricted arms race are such that we simply could not relax our efforts to negotiate a balanced reduction of armaments and armed forces provided we can secure the proper safeguards. To abandon this search would be a counsel of despair, although I have no illusions about either the ease or the speed with which results may be achieved.

There was unanimous support for the continuation of efforts at Geneva to bring about general and complete disarmament by stages under effective international control and international safeguards. Even though real progress in the scaling-down of arms may be some distance away (and I believe this is the case), there are related areas, such as the communications link, which can substantially reduce the risk of war by accident or miscalculation and thereby contribute to the maintenance of peace and security. Similarly, on

the subject of the nuclear-test ban, I welcomed on behalf of the Canadian delegation and the Government of Canada the recent Anglo-American approach in Moscow in an attempt to break the current deadlock. I made clear the Canadian view that there must be unremitting effort to bridge the narrow gap between East and West on this issue. Verification is, as it has so often been, the root of the trouble.

In our appraisal at the Council meeting of the state of the Alliance, a good deal of attention was paid to the improvement and intensification of timely consultation on political developments. This is a subject on which Members of this Government have had a good deal of experience, in that the Prime Minister was intimately associated in 1955 with the specially-appointed group which originally set up the procedures and basic rules which have been followed in the Alliance ever since. Since taking over my responsibilities, I have found that impressive strides have been made in this field in the intervening years, but, in that same period there has been a corresponding growth in the scope and complexity of the problems facing the members of the Alliance, which demands an even more intensive effort in this direction. I took the occasion, in reviewing this question as seen from the Canadian viewpoint, to make clear that any shortcomings there may have been on the Canadian side would be removed.

I should like to make clear to the House, as I did to our NATO colleagues, that the Canadian Government looks upon its contribution to NATO, and indeed regards the military role of the Alliance itself, as part of a broad international network of peace-keeping activities. As the Prime Minister indicated in his remarks at the opening ceremony, the interdependence of all nations is a distinctive characteristic of our era. It has come to be recognized that a local war, whether in Indochina or Africa, if not contained, can have as grave consequences as any outbreak of hostilities in the more familiar trouble spots of direct concern to NATO. Moreover, participation in many of these peace-keeping responsibilities outside the NATO area is, by tacit concern, denied to the major powers, since one of the primary objects is to prevent fighting without inviting the even greater danger of a great-power confrontation. For this reason, it has been and continues to be Canadian policy to assume international peace-keeping obligations both inside the United Nations, as in Gaza or the Congo, and outside, as in the Indochina Commissions. Through these activities we have a constant reminder that the NATO Alliance has to be seen in a broad world perspective.

To place NATO in global context in this way, is not, however, in any way to deny that the central challenge to today's world is between the closed totalitarian regimes of the Communist bloc and the free societies of the West, and that NATO is the instrument on which we all rely to meet that challenge. One of the principal subjects with which we were concerned at this meeting was the possible nature of that challenge, and to ensure that NATO forces should be so equipped as to be able to offer a range of responses appropriate to any aggression affecting the treaty area. In this

connection two decisions of importance to Canada and the Alliance were taken, both of which were noted in the communiqué.

The first was concerned with the ability of the Alliance to deal with the obvious threat posed by the Soviet Union's mounting arsenal of nuclear weapons. Paragraph 8 of the communiqué described decisions taken by the Council to regroup and organize certain elements of the nuclear deterrent forces under the command of the Supreme Allied Commander Europe. These forces will henceforth include the whole of the United Kingdom V-bomber force and three United States "Polaris" submarines. This formidable new strength to be at the disposal of SACEUR will be added to certain tactical nuclear forces already in being or programmed and already assigned to him. This decision was of direct relevance to Canadian forces in Europe for, by indicating our willingness to arm the Canadian air division with the weapons which will enable it to discharge the strike role to which it was committed ..., the way has been opened to permit Canada to play its part in the new arrangements.

Let me make it perfectly clear this decision in no way makes Canada a member of the "nuclear club" in the sense of owning or manufacturing nuclear warheads. Indeed, the decisions taken at this meeting affecting the Organization of the Alliance's existing nuclear forces are entirely consistent with resolutions unanimously adopted by the United Nations to avoid the further spread of nuclear weapons under independent national control. Custody of the nuclear armament of all the forces involved, with the exception of the United Kingdom bombers, will remain as before with the United States. I also want to make it clear that there is no new assignment involved for Canadian forces, as they were already assigned ... to SACEUR's command. These arrangements were welcomed by the Canadian delegation as steps which, through the greater sharing of knowledge and responsibility for nuclear defence, will help to knit the Alliance together and, in the words of the communiqué, "improve co-ordination and control of its nuclear deterrent forces"....

The steps I mentioned earlier should be seen as part of the democratization of the Alliance with respect to the exercise of its heavy responsibilities in the nuclear field.

The second decision of importance is recorded in Paragraph 9 of the communiqué, where the need to achieve a satisfactory balance between nuclear and conventional forces was recognized. To this end, the Permanent Council has been instructed to undertake, with the advice of the NATO military authorities, a comprehensive review of the interrelated questions of strategy, force requirements and the resources available to meet them. I have already mentioned that NATO must be able to offer a range of responses to any challenge, and this means that, if that challenge is conventional, then the conventional means must be available to meet it without premature recourse to nuclear weapons. At the same time the nuclear strength must be there to deter any possibility of a direct challenge with nuclear weapons.

The cost of maintaining the correct balance must be shared equitably amongst the members of the Alliance and must be geared to the capabilities of each, having regard to its resources and its other military obligations. For example, Canada has heavy responsibilities in North American defence, in NATO and in the United Nations and in other peace-keeping activities. Our contribution too must take into account these responsibilities and the resources we have to meet them, and our planning must be projected as far as possible into the future if we are to make the most useful contribution to world peace in all these fields.

... The Prime Minister has announced in the House, as the Minister of National Defence did in the Council, the Government's intention to conduct a national review of defence policy and to set up without delay a Parliamentary Committee as part of that process, and a motion to that end will shortly be introduced. Our national review will thus go forward in parallel with the NATO review, a fact which will be helpful in considering the full range of our defence obligations. The outcome of these two reviews should enable the Government to form considered judgments on the extent to which the present allocation of the Canadian defence effort should be continued or adjusted.

There has been a good deal of public speculation ... as to why there was no mention in the communiqué of another project in the nuclear field which is known to have been under active consideration in the Alliance. I refer to the so-called multilateral force and, in particular, that aspect of it which would consist of a mixed-manned fleet of "Polaris"-carrying vessels. This question was not on the agenda because the special mission headed by United States Ambassador Livingston Merchant has not yet completed its visits to all the capitals of the Alliance. I wish to say no more at this stage than that the Canadian Government hopes to receive Ambassador Merchant's group and himself in Ottawa some time during the first week in June in order to inform itself better of all the ramifications of this proposal.

By any reasonable test ... the Ottawa meeting was one of the most successful the Alliance has had....

It is easy, and, I regret to say, fashionable to emphasize the centrifugal tendencies in NATO, tendencies which are bound to manifest themselves in any organization of free and sovereign states whose co-operation has so succeeded as to bring a measure of relief from external pressures. It is precisely because NATO has succeeded in deterring aggression and promoting the security of its members that they can afford to indulge in the luxury of some dissent, precisely inherent in the fact that NATO is made up of freedom-loving states.

This meeting of the Council had before it certain matters for decision designed to reinforce the enduring character of the partnership between Western Europe and North America. It took

decisions unanimously and in a spirit of harmony. It is wrong to say NATO is in a state of disarray. The assembled ministers were responding in a tangible way to the keynote address of one who has from the beginning lent inspiration to the Alliance. I refer to the Prime Minister of Canada. The wise counsel he gave in opening the meeting, his assessment of NATO's achievements, his warning of the perils that lie ahead and his plea for unity created the climate for a meeting that will be recorded, I believe, in the history of the Alliance as another milestone in Atlantic partnership....

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