

Stikker in 1951 Urged Atlantic Union Study

THE SYMPATHY of the new NATO Secretary General, Dirk Stikker, for Atlantic Union was first shown 10 years ago in a speech he made, as the then Dutch Foreign Minister, at a secret meeting of the NATO Council during its Ottawa session in September 1951. The following excerpts are reprinted from the October 1951 *Freedom 6? Union* which obtained the text of his speech at the time:

AFTER QUOTING Article II of the Atlantic Pact, Mr. Stikker said: "From the outset, then, it was intended that the treaty should be more than a defensive alliance. . . . The ideas of the framers went even beyond this concept of economic cooperation, essential as it was: they considered the treaty as a constitutional act which, they hoped, would eventually give rise to a community of North Atlantic nations." He continued:

"Turning now to the present state of mind of our people, we find anxiety and in some cases even vacillation. I venture to think that the concept of an Atlantic community coordinating the long-term policies of member countries over a wide range of activities will be warmly welcomed on both sides of the Atlantic. This idea is of such a magnitude that it is certain to grasp public imagination, to strengthen confidence in the future, and to increase preparedness for sacrifices for the common defense of the Western world. The proclamation of the aim of establishing an Atlantic community may well reverse the mood of apathy and uncertainty which at present threatens to jeopardise our efforts.

"It would therefore appear to be of the greatest importance for the governments to elaborate this concept and to examine methods for its practical realization. In this connection, the movement for an Atlantic Federal Union, which originated in the United States, is of particular interest. This concept contains valuable and promising ideas for future developments, though it can hardly be considered ripe for implementation for the immediate future.

"Though we are not at present able to assess the full extent of the practical consequences of such a step we know that the establishment of an Atlantic Union on federal lines would create additional and difficult organizational problems at a time when the first objective must of necessity be the speedy building up of an adequate defense against attack.

"This certainly does not mean that the idea should be put aside. On the contrary, it deserves our sincere attention and sympathy. It is therefore gratifying to see that the idea finds such a strong following in the U.S. Congress and Canadian Parliament. . . .

"Indeed, I am afraid that the exclusive emphasis on the common military effort, justified as it was under the circumstances, threatens to become a one-sided approach to the problem with which we are faced. . . .

"I would further suggest that we issue a 'Declaration of Intention' stressing the determination of the parties of the Treaty to move progressively towards closer association. Thereby we might give new courage to the waverers and offer our peoples new hopes for a better future. . . .

"What our peoples need is faith. Faith in the possibility to gain peace through strength; faith in the possibility of securing a decent standard of living; faith, above all, that our institutions are able to ensure that freedom from fear and want that is so ardently prayed for by our peoples. What are we doing to restore this faith in our peoples, stricken by a feeling of hopelessness? What are we doing to counteract the constant aggression of the Soviet Union against this very point, the morale of their opponents?

"I feel that we can only hope to strengthen the wavering beliefs by providing that we are able to respond to the challenge of the Soviet Union, that we are not just a loosely linked group of states, coming together under the pressure of a common fear, to resist all aggression from without, but equally resolute to regard all difficulties of any member as common difficulties and to solve the problem of the community by an effort of all."