

It is particularly about Article 2 of the North Atlantic Treaty that I wish to speak to you to-day. This Article sets out the non-military objectives of the Treaty. It was a reflection of the desire on the part of those who drafted the Treaty to present it to their peoples as something more positive and more constructive than a mere military alliance. You will recall that, after the war, when the United Nations Organization was being set up, there was a determination that there should be a great advance from pre-war days in the degree of international co-operation in social and economic matters. Accordingly, the United Nations was given considerable responsibilities in this field and was provided with an extensive system of specialized agencies, which are either directly subordinate to the central political structure or are associated with it. The inclusion of Article 2 in the North Atlantic Treaty in a similar manner reflects this post-war emphasis on social and economic betterment.

Under Article 2 of the Treaty the partners agreed to four binding commitments, namely: (1) to strengthen their free institutions; (2) to bring about a better understanding of the principles on which those institutions are founded; (3) to promote conditions of stability and well being; and (4) to seek to eliminate conflict in their international economic policies and to encourage economic collaboration between any or all of them. It is in relation to the third and fourth of these binding commitments that I wish particularly to speak to you to-day.

It is not a criticism of NATO to say that it has refrained from setting up administrative machinery to promote the type of co-operation to which the member countries have fully committed themselves. NATO appeared later on the scene and found, already set up, a galaxy of international organizations and agencies concerned with social and economic co-operation. Some of these agencies were regional while others had a world-wide character. Obviously it would have been neither wise nor useful to duplicate work already being effectively performed elsewhere. On the contrary, it is gratifying that some of the non-military aims of NATO were already being actively pursued at the time when the Treaty was signed.

It is most of all in the field of economic co-operation that the prior existence of other organizations has precluded NATO from taking active steps to carry out the provisions of Article 2 of the Treaty, particularly that part of the Article which refers to the elimination of conflicts in their international economic policies and the encouragement of economic collaboration between any or all of the NATO countries.