

I shall take up NATO first because that organization embodies the concept of the North Atlantic Community to which the leading countries of Western Europe and North America belong. The strength and well-being of this community depend upon close economic co-operation between the member countries on both sides of the ocean. It is as members of that community also that they are collaborating in the other organizations I have mentioned.

Unfortunately, the aims and objectives of NATO are not always properly understood, even in this country. I am sure that you are better informed than was the case with an American woman journalist who was interviewing my United States colleague, as he was sailing from New York to take up his appointment as United States Ambassador to NATO. She asked him what kind of clothes he would have to wear in that country.

Even Canadian friends of mine, who ought to know better, frequently say when they meet me "You are now at SHAPE, are you not?" As you know, SHAPE is the designation of the NATO military headquarters for Europe, while I am accredited to the North Atlantic Council, the supreme governing body of NATO. These remarks of my Canadian friends only go to show how closely NATO is identified in the public mind with a purely military alliance. This is not surprising because NATO is primarily a military alliance. It was established to restore the balance of power in Europe and thereby deter aggression. As such, it has become the greatest single force for peace. It is because of the existence of the NATO integrated forces and the deterrent to war represented by the atomic or thermo-nuclear threat that talks with the Soviet leaders have now become possible.

But NATO is something more than a military alliance. It is a community whose members share common ideals and a similar if not identical way of life. In this community lies not only the main strength to deter aggression against the free world. Its members are also the heirs of great traditions of freedom and democratic government. In this century of almost unbelievable technical change and social advancement, the countries of the North Atlantic Community are in the vanguard and the way in which we evolve our societies to meet new economic conditions is sure to have broad implications, not only for the rest of the free world but perhaps also for countries which are not yet free. The North Atlantic Community is a dynamic nucleus, but it is not in any sense exclusive. Co-operation within the community should have as its ultimate aim the broadest co-operation among all like-minded countries.