7. The first essential, then, of a healthy and developing NATO lies in the whole-hearted acceptance by all its members of the political commitment for collective defence, and in the confidence which each has in the will and ability of the others to honour that commitment if aggression should take place.

8. This is our best present deterrent against military aggression; and consequently the best assurance that the commitment undertaken will not be engaged.

9. However, this deterrent role of NATO, based on solidarity and strength, can be discharged only if the political and economic relations between its members are co-operative and close. An Alliance in which the members ignore each other's interests or engage in political or economic conflict, or harbour suspicions of each other, cannot be effective either for deterrence or defence. Recent experience makes this clearer than ever before.

10. It is useful, in searching for ways and means of strengthening NATO unity and understanding, to recall the origin and the aims of the Organization.

11. The Treaty which was signed in Washington in 1949 was a collective response - we had learned that a purely national response was insufficient for security - to the fear of military aggression by the forces of the USSR and its allies. These forces were of overwhelming strength. The threat to Greece, the capture of Czechoslovakia, the Blockade of Berlin, and the pressure against Yugoslavia showed that they were also aggressive.

12. While fear may have been the main urge for the creation of NATO, there was also the realization - conscious or instinctive - that in a shrinking nuclear world it was wise and timely to bring about a closer association of kindred Atlantic and Western European nations for other than defence purposes alone; that a partial pooling of sovereignty for mutual protection should also promote progress and co-operation generally. There was a feeling among the governments and peoples concerned, that this closer unity was both natural and desirable; that the common cultural traditions, free institutions and democratic concepts which were being challenged, and were marked for destruction by those who challenged them, were things which should also bring the NATO nations closer together, not only for their defence but for their development. There was, in short, a sense of Atlantic Community, alongside the realization of an immediate common danger.

13. Any such feeling was certainly not the decisive, or even the main impulse in the creation of NATO. Nevertheless, it gave birth to the hope that NATO would grow beyond and above the emergency which brought it into being.

14. The expression of this hope is found in the Preamble and in Articles 2 and 4 of the Treaty. These two Articles, limited in their terms but with at least the promise of the grand design of an Atlantic Community, were included because of this insistent feeling that NATO must become more than a military alliance. They reflected the very real anxiety that if NATO failed to meet this test, it would disappear with the immediate crisis which produced it, even though the need for it might be as great as ever.