

ministers' committee, the Treaty leaves the development of the machinery for its implementation to evolution and experience.

Consequently, in the space of about three years, there have already been a number of changes in that machinery. NATO is now, in fact, a very different body from that which was set up after the Pact was signed. Gone are the Defence Ministers and Finance Ministers Committees, the Defence Production Board, the Finance and Economic Board and the Committee of Deputies. We have now only one Council consisting of the representatives of governments and, after the Lisbon decisions, to be in permanent session. The ministerial meetings of the Council will now be merely regular sessions, with a higher level of governmental representation. The technical and day-to-day work of NATO will be done by either committees of the Council, or by committees of a permanent secretariat, which is now to be organized under a Secretary-General.

When the nature of this key post, the Secretary-Generalship, was under discussion at Lisbon, there were two points of view expressed. One, that the Secretary-General should be merely the chief administrative officer of the Organization, the head of its Civil Service. The other, that the Secretary-General should be more than this; that he should be given enough power and authority to be the active directing head of the Organization, with direct access to governments on questions of policy, and with membership on the Council. The latter view prevailed and the Secretary-General is now not only a member of the Council, but its Vice-Chairman as well, which means that at the great majority of meetings he will preside, as the ministerial chairman will not normally be present. This is an interesting and an important development in international organization; an international official becoming a member of and presiding over a Council composed of the representatives of national governments. In this sense, the NATO Secretary-General has been given greater authority in his organization than that conferred by the Charter on the Secretary-General in the United Nations.

In its broad operations NATO works on the principle of equality and unanimity among a group of sovereign powers. Every one of its members, even the smallest, has technically a veto! But this is not important because NATO is not an agency for international legislation but for international negotiation and agreement. When you are negotiating, you don't count heads - at least not formally. In fact, we have never had a formal vote at NATO, or taken action by other than a unanimous decision. We do not operate by vote or veto, but through discussion, the reconciliation of differing viewpoints, and decisions based on the general will. In these discussions, and the resulting decisions, special weight, of course, attaches to the opinion of those members whose governments carry the greatest share of the burden and the greatest responsibilities. But these, in their turn, do not ride roughshod over the opinions of the other and smaller members. In short, we are a partnership with a will to work together as freely co-operating states. That is why we have been successful in coming to agreed decisions on such important questions as the level of defence programmes, the sharing of defence burdens, and the relationship of NATO to the European Defence Community. On no other basis could NATO work satisfactorily - or indeed work at all.