

Our determination in the North Atlantic group to become strong for defence when we have every reason to feel that strength for defence is necessary in the world of today, and our readiness to consider and make clear in advance the principles on which we believe an effective limitation of armaments can be achieved, are two parts of the same policy. No single subject that we have discussed or will discuss in the North Atlantic Council will prevent or even make more difficult the type of agreement which is sought in the resolution which we are now considering before this United Nations Committee.

Indeed the confidence which certain free states are gaining by the increase of their own defensive strength through collective action should make it easier for them to negotiate a settlement of political difficulties which, if achieved, would make some of this military strength unnecessary. This growing confidence, based on collective strength and action of a limited group of nations, is, I think, a much stronger basis for such a settlement than the anxieties and fears which it has replaced.

Nevertheless, we admit that it is only a second best, forced on us by the dangers and fears of the international situation, and much less desirable than the universal collective security which we still hope to achieve through the United Nations. The resolution which we have before us today, if it could be accepted and acted on, would be one step in the achievement of that larger objective which would make the more limited efforts of such organizations as the North Atlantic Council unnecessary.

Our objective in that Council is not to build up armed strength with which to threaten the Soviet Union, or anybody else - we have no intention of diverting anything like the manpower or resources which would be needed for such a mad purpose. Our objective is solely to create sufficient forces to make impossible any sudden knockout blow against us and to ensure that aggression, if it occurs, cannot subjugate the free peoples in any part of our community. Our military plans, therefore, are keyed to the limited strength needed for defence. Our plans are measured in scores of divisions and not in the hundreds that would be essential for any offensive action.

We believe that now our strength is growing. And it is our belief that as it grows the time will come when other and now unfriendly governments will realize, as we for our part realize, that negotiations are desirable for limitation of armaments and for many other things.

It is, I think, precisely because the armed strength of the Western Powers is increasing, and will continue to increase unless and until the international climate improves and an effective and fool-proof system of disarmament is negotiated and implemented, that we take very seriously the resolution before us; and this effort to formulate principles and to set up machinery on the basis of which limitation of all armaments and the abolition of some can take place.

Knowing as we do that our own North Atlantic plans are solely defensive, and that they are an alternative which has been forced on us, we do not for one minute admit any charge that they are inconsistent with our loyalty to and our work in the United Nations; the kind of work in which we are engaged today in this Committee. It is the