

concern to the members of NATO and ought, therefore, to be discussed in a NATO context. Geographical limits cannot be placed upon the process of consultation on national policies. We certainly have had cause to learn this recently if we never knew it before; just as we also know that the NATO circle of consultation and co-operation will not be large enough for many of these questions, and that our NATO circle can never be exclusive.

I have said earlier that the cohesion and strength of NATO depend primarily upon the closest possible co-operation between the United States, the United Kingdom and France, and in what I have just said about consultation, I have been thinking particularly of consultation among these three. They are the members of NATO with the most to contribute to the Atlantic Community, in both a material and political sense. They carry the heaviest responsibilities and upon them mainly rests the obligation to work together. This is particularly true of the United States because it is the strongest member of the Alliance. In fact, it has been said recently that the United States is the only member that has any substantial freedom to choose its course of action for itself. I think I understand what the author of that remark meant, but I am inclined to doubt if even the United States has very much freedom to choose its own course of action in this narrowing world and in the face of apparently limitless Soviet ambitions. I am fully aware, however, of the crushing weight of responsibility carried by the United States and the other major members of NATO, and I realize how easy it is for those who do not have such great responsibilities to preach about consultation. Let me, however, add just one further point. While the bigger members of NATO may have far more to contribute, militarily and otherwise, than the smaller ones, there is no member we could easily do without. We need them all and we want them all, freely and enthusiastically doing their part to build up Atlantic unity. It is very important, therefore, that the smaller members of NATO have a sense of full participation in the councils of the Alliance and that they are taken into the confidence of the other members to the greatest possible extent. The result, I am sure, will be better than that suggested by a Princeton Professor in the Times this morning when he wrote:

"Do not coalitions of this sort (asked the professor) always end by the weaker members of the group trying to cash in on their nuisance value at the expense of the stronger and richer members?"

We have good machinery in the NATO Council for this close consultation. We have, I think, made recommendations in our Committee Report by which this machinery can be improved. NATO has an efficient and devoted Secretariat, at the head of which is a man, Lord Ismay, who has provided unselfish, experienced and international leadership of a very exceptional kind which has left us all greatly in his debt. As he leaves NATO, we are indeed fortunate in securing as his successor a dynamic