

I do not know anything more futile or foolish than to depreciate and ridicule the United Nations as a mere talking shop. It is also foolish to ignore its achievements. It is true it has not done what we hoped it would do. I remember ten, nearly eleven years ago, at the San Francisco Conference, when we were filled with hope for the future; and thought we had a means of freeing man from the scourge and terror of future war; indeed for a few brief moments we thought we had discovered the promised land of international peace and co-operation. A lot of illusions have been destroyed by hard reality in those ten years. But we would be making a great and tragic mistake if we abandoned our dreams completely, and retired to the international anarchy of national policies without any international organization at least to attempt to bring about some international co-ordination of these national policies.

We should not ignore the weaknesses and the dangerous trends in the United Nations, but rather try to remove them and to do the best we possibly can to strengthen this Organization, which still remains our best hope ultimately for international co-operation on a world basis.

When I say that, I do not mean to minimize the importance of other international organizations. The United Nations is the one world organization, but it does not take the place of more limited, but at least in the field of security, probably more important organizations. I am thinking particularly of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and our Commonwealth of Nations.

As far as the Commonwealth is concerned, it has a unique and peculiar value. But we will never understand that value if we think of the Commonwealth only as a Commonwealth of Anglo-Saxon members with Great Britain as their mother country. Four-fifths of the members of the Commonwealth now come from the Asian world and a great and increasing value of the Commonwealth in the future may well be found in the fact that it is a bridge between Asia and the West. If it loses that value it will certainly lose much of its importance in the world at large. We have gone through difficult times in the Commonwealth in the last 2 or 3 months, but I hope that out of these difficulties, and the shocks to which we have been subjected, will come a greater understanding of the differences inside the Commonwealth and greater appreciation of the value of this association between West and East.

Then there is NATO, which is a going concern in the field of security and which means much more to us in collective security and defence than the United Nations under present conditions could possibly mean.

Above all, inside the NATO coalition, there is Anglo-Franco-American co-operation. That co-operation has had strains put on it (in recent months), but those strains