

Today, the facts, the compulsions, and the opportunities lead inexorably toward closer international association and away from the self-sufficient sovereignty of the nation state. The jet planes that fly, the rockets that range in outer space, the universal revolution of rising expectations, combined with the speed of technological change which make their realization possible -- all these make it essential that we move ahead in the field of political and social organization in a way which is at least remotely comparable to our technological and scientific progress.

We can begin with the "like-minded" Atlantic nations, which have already acquired a sense of community and a habit of co-operation, but we must include, ultimately, all mankind. The world is too small for less, yet we continue to boggle even at the first careful steps.

If there is anything that has been made crystal clear by the grim experience of half a century, it is that neither peace nor security nor prosperity can be achieved or maintained by national action alone - or by national policy alone.

So this is no time to weaken in our support for the NATO alliance because it is having difficulties. We must solve these difficulties. But we must not stop there. We must move forward with new resolve toward an international community with common political institutions which covers more than a single continent and spans the Atlantic.

It must also be more than a military alliance. Try as we might, we have never been able to make NATO much more than that. An alliance for defence only, however, is an anachronism in the world of 1966, especially when nuclear power is not shared, by possession or by control, among its members. As Professor Hans Morgenthau has put it: "It is no longer possible to rely completely on the promise of a nuclear ally to forfeit its very existence on behalf of another nation." A guarantee of nuclear support against aggression simply does not now have the credibility that would make it a fully effective deterrent and therefore a guarantee of security.

I repeat, we must develop common, unifying political institutions which would provide for collective foreign and economic policies, as well as genuinely collective defence.

Nothing less will be adequate to meet today's challenge of jets and rockets and hydrogen bombs.

As a leader of a government, I am very conscious that politics is the art of the possible. Anyone with political responsibility must think in terms of what can be done at any given time -- of what public opinion will accept. He must not allow the best to become the enemy of the good. Nevertheless, if we don't keep "the best" always before us as an eventual and essential objective, not only shall we never reach it -- we may even fail to reach the more immediate and good objectives. Nor should we always wait for a crisis to force us to act.