

were essential. Otherwise, peaceful co-existence could be achieved only by the free world accepting the domination of Moscow. This was the genesis of the North Atlantic Treaty. If the Kremlin was not its architect, it was certainly its inspiration. It is well to remember these things when the North Atlantic Treaty is now criticized as being either unnecessary in its political origin or exaggerated in its military demands.

It is also well to recall the military situation when the North Atlantic Treaty became effective in September 1949. As General Eisenhower has pointed out in his recent report, there were some thirty Soviet divisions within the shadow of the Iron Curtain, and behind them the enormous military power of the Soviet Union. In all, there were, and still are, about one hundred and seventy-five Soviet divisions under arms, half of them mechanized or armoured, and an air force of about twenty thousand planes. These forces were being rapidly re-equipped with the most modern arms. In addition, satellite states on the European front were being militarized and brutalized.

Western Europe, in comparison, was almost a power vacuum. Nature may abhor a vacuum, but potential aggressors do not. There were not more than fifteen divisions ready to take the field and there were few trained and equipped reserves. In the air the situation was even worse - there were less than 1,000 operational aircraft available in all Western Europe, many of them obsolescent. The free nations were slowly struggling back from the terrible effects of war, and sub-normal standards of living persisted. Morale was at a low ebb. Heavy industry was turning over again but most of its products were needed to rebuild and restore civilian economies. British and American armies which had liberated Western Europe had largely been disbanded. The great munitions and armament industries of Britain, the United States and Canada had been largely converted to peacetime use or closed down. There had been little effort to re-equip armed forces and much of the equipment that was available was out of date. Well, then, did we have no protection at all against an aggressor? We did. We had - or rather the U.S.A. had - the atom bomb and means to deliver it far away from this continent. But, as John Foster Dulles said in New York a few weeks ago, "We must bear in mind that our growing stockpile of atomic weapons - subject to our unpredictable use or abuse - is not everywhere reassuring."

So far as I am personally concerned, if the possibility of atomic war had to be faced, I slept more comfortably in the knowledge that these bombs were on this continent. But if I were a European, I might not have felt quite the same, in the knowledge that North American atomic retaliation for aggression against Europe was my only protection.

But now in 1952, thanks largely to the collective effort and the collective resolve represented by NATO, our situation is better and the temptation to aggression which derives from the assurance of an easy victory over isolated enemies has been substantially minimized. In NATO we have assessed the danger and drafted agreed plans to meet it. We have established unified commands in Western Europe and more recently on the Atlantic. Every member has greatly increased its defence activities and expenditures. Gradually the NATO commands are getting forces and equipment. The foundation of strength as the basis for negotiation is being established; not strength as an end in itself, but strength as a means to the end of settlement of issues with those who think only in terms of force.

All this has entailed and will entail a very heavy burden for all North Atlantic nations. These burdens will, moreover, rest most heavily on those members of the alliance whose standards of living are relatively low, and especially on those who have not fully recovered from the effects of the war. Also, and we are beginning to forget this, the burdens will seem to be even heavier than they are if we begin to doubt the reality of the danger which, in the first place, made them necessary. The real testing time for our determination and our steadiness and our belief in our policy will come when the results of that policy, in terms of the easing of tension, begin to make themselves felt. After the first sprint, will we have the discipline and resolution to settle down to the long, steady pull which may have to be kept