

dangerously short of what has been planned for a particular period.

In one important respect, which is sometimes overlooked, the NATO countries certainly are much stronger. Production lines for military equipment are now rolling in North America and in the United Kingdom, and very considerable progress has been made in this field in Western Europe. The equipment position of NATO forces is steadily and encouragingly improving.

If there are some signs of lessening international tension - and there are - this is because of the growing strength and continuing unity of the North Atlantic alliance. But there is certainly nothing to warrant resting on our oars because of that fact, though, as we settle down to the long pull - I believe this is good rowing technique - we may decide to strike a somewhat slower rate. There is certainly no evidence that the Russian military strength has been reduced. There is evidence that an increasing proportion of their military budget is being spent in developing and producing new equipment to strengthen their already huge forces. They are certainly preparing for the long pull, confident that they can outlast the West and, if necessary, wait for the "inherent and inevitable contradictions and conflicts of capitalist society" to divide, weaken and ultimately destroy us.

In this long pull we must not ignore of course - and we do not - the effects of rearmament on the economies of member nations. The national economy of nearly every European member of NATO has been a tender plant since the war, and in the case of European members particularly rearmament has meant continued sacrifices for their peoples. However urgent rearmament is, it has to proceed in accordance with the economic and political capabilities of the member states. Otherwise we would invite those economic and social conditions within member nations which would create a favourable climate for the growth of Communism in our society.

It was to avoid this sort of danger that the Council of NATO ... established at its Ottawa meeting over a year ago a temporary committee to review military requirements and national programs in the light of the economic, social and political capabilities of member nations. A similar review for the current year is now under way and will be shortly completed; but that review has been conducted in a different fashion. I think this is of some interest in the light of the fears that were expressed here at the time of the last meeting - that NATO might fall completely under the military. The Council of NATO, which has established its position, is the directing and controlling body of NATO and is now in permanent session. That Council, through its Secretariat, is conducting these annual studies and will control the decisions which will be made and passed on to various governments and parliaments arising out of the studies. When this review is concluded, and it should be concluded shortly, NATO members will no doubt have further guidance on NATO requirements and on their national programs. These, while agreed plans, must be flexible and constantly reviewed in the light of changing circumstances and requirements.