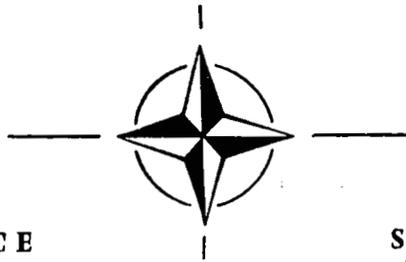


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TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY

ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES  
AT THE COMMEMORATIVE SESSION OF THE  
NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL - 10TH APRIL, 1969

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

As we gather here today, we celebrate a momentous anniversary.

We celebrate one of the great successes of the postwar world.

Twenty years ago, a few dedicated men gathered here in Washington to cement an Atlantic partnership between the older nations of Europe and their offspring here in the New World - and in this room, the North Atlantic Treaty was signed. Some of the men who gathered then are here again today - and if they would stand, I think we all, with hindsight, would like to salute their foresight.

At this anniversary, we especially honour the memory of one of NATO's great champions: the General who commanded the armies that liberated Europe; the first Supreme Commander of the forces of NATO; the American President who did so much to keep NATO strong and to give life to its principles - Dwight David Eisenhower.

His life demonstrated that there is a moral force in the world which can move men and nations. There is a spiritual force, lodged in the very roots of man's being.

As for NATO, it is precisely because it has always been more than a military alliance that its strength has been greater than the strength of arms. This alliance represents a moral force which, if we marshal it, will ennoble our efforts.

Dwight Eisenhower was a great humanist, and also a great realist. If he were with us today, he would have recognised that together, as men of the Old World and of the New World, we must find ways of living in the real world.

Third, I strongly urge that we create a committee on the challenges of modern society, responsible to the Deputy Ministers, to explore ways in which the experience and resources of the Western nations could most effectively be marshalled toward improving the quality of life of our peoples.

That new goal is provided for in Article II of our treaty, but it has never been the centre of our concerns. Let me put my proposal in the context of our times:

On my recent trip to Europe, I met with world leaders and private citizens alike. I was struck by the fact that our discussions were not limited to military or political matters. More often than not, our talks turned to those matters deeply relevant to our societies: the legitimate unrest of young people, the frustration of the gap between generations, the need for a new sense of idealism and purpose in coping with an automating world.

These were not subjects apart from the concerns of NATO; indeed, they went to the very heart of the real world we live in. We are not allies because we are bound by treaty; we bind ourselves by treaty because we are allied in meeting common concerns.

For 20 years, our nations have provided for the military defence of Western Europe. For 20 years, we have held political consultations.

Now the alliance of the West needs a third dimension.

It needs not only a strong military dimension to provide for the common defence; not only a more profound political dimension, to shape a strategy of peace; but it also needs a social dimension, to deal with our concern for the quality of life in this final third of the Twentieth Century.

This concern is manifested many ways: culturally and technologically, through the humanities and the sciences.

The Western nations share common ideals, and a common heritage. We are all advanced societies, sharing the benefits and the gathering torments of a rapidly advancing industrial technology. The industrial nations share no challenge more urgent than that of bringing 20th-Century man and his environment to terms with one another - of making the world fit for man, and helping man learn how to remain in harmony with his rapidly changing world.

We in the United States have much to learn from the experiences of our Atlantic allies in their handling of internal matters: the care of infant children in West Germany; the "new towns" policy of Great Britain; the development of depressed areas programmes in Italy; the great skill of the Dutch in dealing with high-density areas; the effectiveness of urban planning by local governments in Norway; and the experience of the French in metropolitan planning.

Having forged a working partnership, we all have a unique opportunity to pool our skills, or intellects and our inventiveness in finding new ways to use technology to enhance our environments, rather than destroy them.

The work of this Committee would not be competitive with any being carried on by other international agencies. Neither would it be our purpose to limit this co-operation and the benefits that flow from it to our own countries.

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Quite the opposite: our purpose would be to share both ideas and benefits, recognising that these problems have no national or regional boundaries. This could become the most positive dimension of the Alliance, opening creative new channels to all the rest of the world.