

At headquarters, Naples, the seventh anniversary of NATO was celebrated by Admiral Fechteler and representatives of fifteen NATO countries. The Admiral is C.in-C. Allied Forces, Southern Europe. The birthday was marked by a ~~man~~ planting ceremony of sixteen cedar trees, one for each NATO nation and one for NATO itself. A representative of each country handled a spade in turn.

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HEADQUARTERS, ALLIED FORCES SOUTHERN EUROPE (HQAFSOUTH), Naples, Italy,  
April 4 -- The seventh anniversary of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization  
was heralded today at NATO's Allied Forces Southern Europe headquarters  
with representatives of the 15 nations participating in colorful ceremonies.

Impressively assembled in front of the Southern Europe headquarters  
were 60 men, representing all services, from France, Greece, Italy, Turkey,  
U.K. and U.S.

Italy was represented by her Carabinieri, dressed in their  
traditional uniforms with the three-cornered hats, and the United States by  
members of the U.S. Marine Corps.

Admiral William M. Fechteler, USN, Commander-in-Chief, Allied Forces  
Southern Europe, headed a list of speakers at the ceremony, which was  
attended by high ranking civil and military officials.

In his address Admiral Fechteler said much progress has been made in  
NATO since its last anniversary. "In May of last year, Western Germany with  
its energetic population and strong economy joined NATO. Here in the  
Southern Command, we established in October a powerful addition to our  
ground force strength in Italy, the Southern Europe Task Force. In January,  
we activated the 5th Allied Tactical Air Force to bolster our air might in  
the Southern region."

He warned, however, that "the threat of aggression is just as real today as it was seven years ago. It is a well known tactic of the enemy to beguile us with smiles, and to foster our dissolution by specious peace talk. Recently we see in progress an active campaign to denounce a great communist hero. This may be still another stratagem to lure us into a sense of false security. We must not be deceived by such acts. We must remain firm and strong in the face of a very clever adversary."

Addresses were also made by the senior nationals of the NATO southern command. They were French Major Robert L.M. des Essars; Italian Major General Carlo Unia; Greek Brigadier General Anastasios J. Vianopoulos; Turkish Brigadier General Cemal Aydinalp and British Group Captain F.C.P. Wright.

Exhibited at the ceremony was the Southern European Task Force's rocket launcher, the "Honest John".

Following the addresses a historic tree planting ceremony was held. Sixteen cedar trees, one for each NATO nation and one for NATO itself, were planted in front of the headquarters by dignitaries from each country. In front of each tree a small sign was placed to identify the country it represented.

The colorful ceremonies came to a close with a fly-over of Italy's "Quarta Aerobrigata" jet planes.

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