

policies. At the same time, there are clear indications of a growing desire for greater European self-assertion *vis-à-vis* the United States, within NATO and in the general context of transatlantic relations. While still conscious of the benefits of United States economic and military strength, the Western European nations are now more aware of their separate identity and increasingly concerned about the consequences of American leadership for their own freedom of action, whether in political, military or economic fields. This concern has been sharpened in recent years by United States preoccupation with Asia, with its dialogue with the Soviet Union and with its internal problems, developments which have made Atlantic ties seem less secure.

Western Europe will no doubt remain dependent on the United States for its defence for many years to come. In other fields the interdependence between the two continents will not be as complete but it will continue to be important. A more integrated Western Europe will doubtless wish to maintain co-operative ties with the United States because of interests shared in common. Economic, scientific and technological co-operation show no signs of abatement, especially in the private sector. Cultural and political affinities are being maintained across the Atlantic and should not be underestimated. All this does not mean that transatlantic ties will be maintained automatically. A solid effort will no doubt be required on both sides of the ocean to ensure that the changes now in train in Western Europe come about in a spirit of co-operation with North America.