

How many of us who are its heirs can express the philosophy of freedom? We feel it, but that is not enough. We need to understand what we espouse. Criticizing communism is not enough. A knowledge of freedom's aims is necessary, so that uncommitted peoples can understand the worth and superiority of freedom when compared with communism. I can think of no better way to explain freedom than for the nations of the free world to meet together, exchange ideas, and reach a common basis for a Declaration of Freedom's Creed. Such a Declaration would give to the uncommitted world a solemn pledge of willingness to work with them for better economic conditions, in which human dignity, equality and tolerance will be recognized, and personal liberty -- freedom of thought, expression, association and religion -- pledged to those who will join in freedom and for freedom in the struggle for men's hearts and minds.

During the last war President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill "being met together", as they said, in that historic document called the Atlantic Charter, "deemed it right to make known certain common principles in the national policies of their respective countries on which they base their hopes for a better future for the world". And they proceeded in eight resounding articles of the proclamation to tell the world what their countries, and those associated with them, were fighting for.

These two leaders declared that their nations sought no aggrandisement and no territorial changes not in accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples involved. They affirmed their belief in the rights of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they wished to live. They declared that with due respect for existing obligations, they would further the enjoyment by all states, great or small, victor or vanquished, of access on equal terms to the trade and raw materials of the world. They expressed their belief in mutual co-operation among the nations to secure for all, improved labour standards, economic advancement and social security. They pledged themselves to support such post-war measures as would afford assurance that all men in all the lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want.

The effect of the short, precise and readily understandable document was an inspiration to the legions which upheld freedom. It was a message which the people of many lands were waiting to hear. Within a few months it had been signed by 26 nations and became known as the United Nations Agreement.