

Whether we like it or not, the technical developments of our time are leading us towards "one world". If we do not get there as a result of peaceful co-operation we will almost certainly have that end imposed on us by force at the conclusion of a devastating war. Naturally we want to move towards world unity the peaceful way, and we are more likely to do so if political and economic stability are maintained over as wide an area as possible. That is the reason why the North Atlantic Treaty is a constructive contribution to the objectives of our larger policy. To the extent that it increased the security of the members of the North Atlantic community it also increased their ability to co-operate in the work of the United Nations, to fulfil their commitments under the charter, and also to base their policies on the assurance that "one world" may be attained by peaceful means since no one will risk the attempt to impose it by force.

Therefore I suggest that we must never cease to emphasize that the North Atlantic Pact is for peace alone. I am more convinced of this than ever before since our discussions in London. I can assure the house, if any assurance is needed, that if any member of the North Atlantic group had aggressive intentions or tried to engage in provocative diplomacy - and this of course is not the case - the other members of the group would neither follow nor support that member. There need be no doubt on that score no matter what the so-called communist "partisans of peace" and their misguided followers may say. The nations of the North Atlantic community who are co-operating for peace can, I think, face the days ahead with renewed and indeed increased confidence because of the decisions that we took at the recent London meeting. In a general way the significance of this council session rests in the evidence it gave of the ability of free nations to meet extraordinary circumstances by vigorous and imaginative measures. The North Atlantic alliance was formed in the first instance in response to a physical threat, the threat of an aggression against the members of our community. Against a common danger we agreed to stand together and use our resources collectively for defence and peaceful development. I have always believed, however, that the North Atlantic Treaty was a response to a deeper and more significant compulsion than that of fear. All the circumstances of our times, political, economic, technical and cultural, point to the necessity for greater unity amongst the free nations of the world. And by unity we mean far more than paper agreements for common action in certain contingencies. We mean a genuine coming together of peoples on as wide a front as possible.

We have learned, and indeed all history teaches us, that this is a process which cannot be forced, and which cannot develop except in a favourable climate. We know that it is most likely to prosper amongst people with a common background and similar ideals, and that it must take full account of the realities of national identity, national loyalty and national traditions. In other words, we are faced in our time, in the sphere of international organization, with the old familiar social and political problem of freedom and organization. It seems to me that the North Atlantic Treaty, arising out of the emergencies of the post-war situation, is an attempt of far-reaching importance to solve this problem within an area where success is least difficult.

Many of the conclusions of our meeting in London are of course necessarily secret, because they affect the details of defence planning. Nevertheless, if you will examine the published conclusions of the council, you will find evidence which I think supports my judgment about the importance of the meeting. In the first place we have taken a decision in the military defence field which I think