

We do not know because we do not know whether anything has happened to make the danger more remote or the fear less menacing. Time alone will tell us whether any real change in Soviet policy has occurred or is likely to occur. The countries of the free world cannot, however, sit back and wait for time to bring its answers, in the hope that the answers will be happy ones. We must consider what our own policy should be, after the best analysis we can make of the circumstances we face. We must meet new situations as they develop, without being unduly elated or unduly excited by phenomena which should be interpreted as representing only a shift in tactics, designed to achieve the same old objectives in a new way; until results in action prove to us that there has been a real change in the direction of strategy and policy.

We should, I think, be unwise to alter our own policy of strengthening co-operation between countries of the free world on the likelihood that the members of the international communist conspiracy will, in the near future, enter whole-heartedly into the peaceful and friendly family of nations. It would be folly to think that it would be safe now or in the months ahead to abandon or weaken the collective defensive arrangements which have been necessitated by the common danger we face.

It would, of course, be equally foolish not to seize any and every real chance to relax the tension that has existed since the last war, however slight and however temporary that relaxation might be. But we should never relax our vigilance. The Russians are very fond of that word "vigilance". It is a good word for us too.

We should be firm, then, and we should be vigilant. We should not be provocative and we should not be gullible. We should be ready to welcome changes for the better, and to meet genuine initiatives for peace in the future, as we have always done in the past, half way. But above all, we should not abandon our efforts to build up our defence - military, economic and moral; or be lured away by some mirage from the policy of strengthening the co-operation and increasing the unity of the nations of the free world.

In this way we will not bring peace or security overnight; or the one co-operating free world of which we dream. But we shall at least have helped to create a situation of political confidence and physical strength; a basis on which the settlement of issues which now so tragically divide the world may one day become possible.