

together as freely co-operating states. That is why it has been successful in coming to agreed decisions on questions of vital importance to us all. On no other basis could NATO work satisfactorily - or, indeed, work at all.

The solemn covenant to which the Atlantic governments subscribed in 1949; the steady progress which has been made in strengthening our defences, and in developing the institutions and practices of Atlantic co-operation, are among the most remarkable developments of a remarkable era.

Striking as this development has been, we should not forget that if the Atlantic coalition remains merely an improvised reaction to post-war perils; a by-product of a cold war; it is not likely to survive the emergency which created it. Its foundations must go deeper than that. They must reflect the enduring links which bind the old world and the new. I think that they do.

The Atlantic peoples have common traditions and spiritual values derived from the same ancient sources. There has long existed a natural and permanent foundation for a community of interest and action. Over many centuries - through exploration, through settlement, and in peace and in war, we have drawn not only the material elements from a common civilization, but, more important, the same basic principles of social and political belief, the same fundamental freedoms of speech and worship, the same practices of tolerance and respect for the rule of law, and the same indestructible belief in the inherent worth of the individual and his right to freedom, even the freedom to be wrong. Fear is not the only thing holding us together.

It is not, however, easy to live and work in a world whose future is darkened by the lengthening shadow of man's growing capacity for self-destruction. It is not easy for free democracies in peacetime to devote large proportions of their energies and resources to defence. It is not easy to maintain an 'alert' which in the nature of things must last for many years. Nor is it easy in the absence of all-out war for proud and sovereign states, whether great or small, to adapt their national policies to the wider interests of a larger international community.

It is only by identifying and taking the measure of these difficulties that we can combat and overcome them. To ignore them, to pretend that they do not exist, would be to jeopardize the great task to which we have put our hands. Certainly the disciples of the philosophy of world domination know that they exist, and are determined to do everything possible to exploit and exaggerate them, in the hope that they will ultimately destroy the unity we have achieved and which they fear so much.

Since the death of Stalin, our coalition has also had to face a new complication "peace offensive". This may bring its opportunities, which we should exploit. But it may also bring new tests and even dangers which, on our part, will call for steadiness and patience. We