

effect improvements, on personal contacts and on politically imaginative approaches to the problems which inevitably occur as a result of our interdependence.

If these are aspects of the continental relationship, what can we say of the more complex relationships in the Atlantic Community, which is of such great importance to both our countries?

People tend to say a good deal at present about NATO's difficulties, about the differences and uncertainties which the alliance faces. While I do not deny that there are differences and uncertainties, I think the emphasis that is sometimes put on them is misleading and can be dangerous. It is not new for NATO to be faced with problems and differences and uncertainties, and some of these in the past have been serious.

Considering the problems which we successfully resolved since 1949, I cannot be pessimistic about NATO's ability to deal effectively with the difficulties it now faces.

That the alliance remains necessary is fully recognized by all; President de Gaulle has himself emphasized the point. We have to recognize, however, that conditions have greatly changed since the creation in the early 1950s of NATO's existing machinery. We cannot, therefore, out of hand discard the French proposition that some overhaul of that machinery, to adapt it to the political and military and economic circumstances of today, could be beneficial.

In view of the great complexity of the relations within NATO and the world around it today in comparison with the situation in its early period, it is not surprising that there are differences of view about what changes might be desirable. Some want changes in the arrangements relating to nuclear capabilities; President de Gaulle apparently wants changes in the integrated military structure, although he has not yet revealed precisely what he has in mind; still others have ideas for improving the arrangements for consultation within the alliance. And in each of these areas of possible change there are different ideas about the precise arrangements to be preferred.

What I want to emphasize is that, in a free alliance, such differences of view about how to improve the organization are in themselves healthy, a sign of vitality and adaptability. Indeed it could be argued that if there were no such differences it would be a sign of stagnation. The important thing to my mind is that, in tackling these various questions, we should bear in mind our common interest in maintaining and improving the alliance. We should approach our problems patiently and constructively, avoiding division and rancour. We should remember that, while there are many things we seek in common from the alliance, there are other things, legitimate national objectives, which may not be shared by all members and that these naturally give rise to honest differences about the best course.

In such cases, we must all be prepared to compromise, recognizing that it is in our national interest to do so; for if we do not, if we adhere rigidly to national views unacceptable to our allies, then we can end