1980 Trilateral Commission Plenary

170 COMMISSIONERS MEET IN LONDON

DISCUSS STATE OF TRILATERAL RELATIONS, THE SECURITY BALANCE, THE MIDDLE EAST

Task Force Reports Review
North-South Trade, Labor Market Policies

Commissioners received by
Prime Minister Thatcher, Prince Philip

They hear Lord Carrington, Callaghan, Heath, Miyazawa, Ramphal
The London Meeting at a Glance

The eleventh meeting of the Trilateral Commission, under the chairmanship of Georges Berthoin, the Commission’s European chairman, opened in London on March 23, 1980. Gathered for this plenary conference, which came to a close on March 25, were some 170 Commission members and distinguished guests from North America, Europe and Japan. Clearly dominant in over 25 hours of debates was the need for closer and more effective cooperation among the three regions as we enter the decade of the 1980s—a decade which has started with growing East-West tensions in the wake of the Afghan crisis, instability in the vital region of the Persian Gulf, and a more uncertain global political and military outlook.

These new tests of trilateral cooperation were central to the remarks of the special speakers who addressed the group: Lord CARRINGTON, the British Foreign Secretary (see p. 10); former Prime Ministers James CALLAGHAN and Edward HEATH; Kiichi MIYAZAWA, former Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs (see p. 6); and Sir Shridath RAMPHAL, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth (see p. 21). The participants in the Commission’s meeting were also received by His Royal Highness PRINCE PHILIP, Duke of Edinburgh, on March 23; and by Prime Minister Margaret THATCHER, at 10 Downing Street, on March 24.

The first session of the conference, on March 23, was devoted to a seminar on current developments in Britain; introducing the discussion were Peter JENKINS, political columnist, The Guardian; David WATT, Director of the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House); and Peter OPPENHEIMER, Lecturer in Economics at Oxford University.

The three “topical” sessions of the conference—which form the core of this issue of Triologue—were devoted to intensive discussion of the current state of trilateral relations (p. 3); the global security balance (p. 11); and Middle East problems (p. 16).

In addition, the participants discussed the draft reports of two trilateral task forces, presented to the group by their authors (p. 19); the first deals with “Labor Market Problems and Policies in Modern Trilateral Societies: Reducing Unemployment and Smoothing Adaptation”; the second, with “Trade in Manufactures with Developing Countries: Reinforcing North-South Partnership.” Both reports, currently under revision, will be published later this year and forwarded to our subscribers.

The Trilateral Commission was formed in 1973 by private citizens of Western Europe, Japan, and North America to foster closer cooperation among these three regions on common problems. It seeks to improve public understanding of such problems, to support proposals for handling them jointly, and to nurture habits and practices of working together among these regions.

CHAIRMEN

North America:  Europe:  Japan:
David Rockefeller  Georges Berthoin  Takeshi Watanabe

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The Current State of Trilateral Relations

The discussion of the current state of North American/European/Japanese relations—the subject of a special session in London, on March 23, 1980—was introduced by former U.S. Undersecretary of State George W. Ball, Senior Managing Director of Lehman Brothers Kuhn Loeb; Hisashi Owada, Visiting Professor at Harvard University Law School and a former assistant to then Prime Minister Fukuda of Japan; and Sir Andrew Shonfield, Professor at the European University Institute in Florence and formerly Director of the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House).

A constant theme in the background of their presentations and of the subsequent debate among commissioners was the considerable redistribution of economic power which has taken place among the trilateral countries in the last decade—a redistribution which has not been matched by a commensurate reallocation of political (and military) responsibilities between the United States and its allies in Europe and Japan. By contrast with the relatively “simple” international system built under the aegis of the Pax Americana in the early post-war era, we now live in an infinitely more complex and diversified world, where the balance of power is no longer what some described as the clear zero-sum game of old between two superpowers, and where the United States is no longer such a dominant economic power. “Yet,” in the words of an American speaker, “we still seem to be acting as if the prevailing power relations were the same as in the 1950s.” This continuing hiatus, as emphasized in a great number of interventions, endangers the very fabric of the trilateral relationship.

This danger facing our alliances, in the views of several participants from all three regions, is aggravated today by three sets of factors:

—the extreme volatility of the Middle East region, combined with our continuing dependence on Persian Gulf oil: If resisted, the temptation for each of our nations to “go it alone” and scramble for special positions to protect its oil supplies will seriously weaken the trilateral countries as a whole;

—the prospects of an economic recession—and the ensuing risk of “reckless protectionism” and “beggar-thy-neighbor” policies, which could have ominous economic and political consequences for all of us;

—the lack of trilateral coordination in responding to crises—as shown in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The participants offered diverse estimates of the “alliance’s behavior,” highlighting the “disproportionately weak contribution” of Europe and Japan, and the “danger of unilateral actions” on the part of the United States.

Some of the main points made in the course of the debate:
The Middle East

As emphasized by a prominent American participant, the Middle East "has become THE area" where it is imperative for the trilateral countries to focus their attention and coordinate their policies—even more so in the light of the recent manifestations of Soviet expansionism (Ethiopia, Yemen, Afghanistan . . . ) and the resulting fears in many states around the Persian Gulf. Touching upon the Arab-Israeli conflict, American and European speakers alike described the Palestinian issues as "more central than ever" to the problems of the region. The trilateral countries have to do everything in their power to help move the current negotiations "out of the narrow Camp David framework," to "enlarge them into a more realistic approach" to the Palestinian problem, in the words of a former senior U.S. official. He was echoed by a French expert on international affairs, for whom "a solution of the Israeli-Palestinian issue goes to the heart of the problem," and recent developments in the Middle East have made such a solution "essential for the political consolidation of the area." (A recurrent theme throughout the Commission's London meeting, the Middle East and the Palestinian question were the subject of a lengthy and, at times, passionate debate in the last session of the conference.)

The International Economy

The prospects of a serious recession, which could trigger a resurgence of protectionist policies on the part of the trilateral countries, were viewed by many as one of the greatest potential dangers to North American/European/Japanese relations—one which could rapidly undermine the complex ensemble of economic, monetary, trade bonds and agreements patiently built during the past decades. In the words of an American investment banker, an "interruption of the free flow of goods and services" between our countries would have "dramatic" political and social consequences in all three regions, and it is imperative that our governments show "the political courage to resist jointly" restrictive policies.

Describing the danger of "bickering among the trilateral countries" in times of economic slowdown as a "very real one," a reputed British economist emphasized the recent change in the U.S. position as a key factor: The United States "took a beating on the economic front" in 1979, and it may be some time "before the U.S. authorities are willing again to assume the risks inherent in international economic leadership." After the 1973 oil shock, this speaker recalled, the U.S. agreed to play the role of "a wholesale intermediary" for the recycling of petro-dollars, "thereby greatly exposing itself." In this respect, 1979 "was the year of nemesis," and the U.S. is likely to be "more reluctant to expose itself to such an extent," and to adopt a more cautious approach to the fundamental problem of recycling": an ominous development since the less mobile and "bankable" petrodollar deposits are, "the less smoothly and quickly they will go to the most needy countries of the international system."

Also on the economic front, a German industrialist stressed the longer-term need for the trilateral countries to cooperate in developing the kind of new technologies capable of ensuring their transition to new sources of energy—a "highest priority item" for a joint effort on their part.

Responding to Crises

The trilateral countries' performance in the face of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and, more generally speaking, their ability to respond collectively to future crises, occupied much of the debate.

A typical exchange:

An American Legislator:

"The allied response to surging Soviet expansionism in Afghanistan and the anarchy in Iran has been halting and marked with self-defeating squabbles. Our perceptions of common strategic interests remain dangerously divergent; we lack agreement even on the nature of the present threat. Different national priorities feed disagreement on defense cooperation, resulting in wide disparity in the distribution of the defense burden. . . . There is a growing sense in America that the industrial democracies are drawing further apart and that the United States stands alone in a hostile world. If this trend is not reversed and if the essential values we share are not brought to bear on our policies, I fear that pressures will mount for the U.S. to turn inward. . . . A general drift towards nationalistic parochialism could undermine seriously the work of the past 30 years in building the community of interests that has held our democracies together. . . ."

A British Political Scientist:

"It is very rare for an alliance composed of diverse and independent countries to behave uniformly—and such uniformity may not be desirable. There have been natural differences of emphasis in our responses to the present crisis, but on the whole (and leaving aside the special case of France) the alliance did rather well. Germany's growing 'activism' has made a significant difference, particularly in moderating the French posture; the Germans have reacted perhaps more gradually, but in the same direction as the U.S.; the U.K.'s has been a strong, determined and vigorous reaction; and Italy has managed to push through its Parliament, against extraordinary odds, a strongly Atlanticist resolution wholly
supportive of Western positions. All in all, the Soviet attempts to plant discord among the allies has had no great effect. . . Europe has in fact strengthened over recent years the alliance’s ability to respond to crises: Thanks especially to Germany’s efforts, it has substantially increased its defense expenditures; and it has responded to the military threat by agreeing to deploy on its soil the new generation of Euromissiles. . . .”

A Former High-Ranking Japanese Diplomat:

“Although admittedly we started from very low, Japan’s defense expenditures have increased at an average of 8 percent annually in the last eight years. . . . And when it comes to assuming a greater share of the defense burden, the recent suggestion of one of our American colleagues [that Japan undertake to build two aircraft carriers and lend-lease them to the United States] would, I think, be received very favorably by Japanese industry. . . . On the whole, however, there prevails in Japan a strong feeling of uncertainty as to the future of U.S. military strategy, especially in East Asia. This is due in great part to the U.S. Administration’s at times erratic course on the issue of American military presence in Korea; and to the current “swing” strategy of the U.S. in the wake of the Afghan crisis: Is the redeployment elsewhere of naval forces based in East Asia envisaged solely as a contingency measure, or is it a long-term strategy? Consultation on these matters is absolutely vital—and only through such consultation will Japan be able to define its broad military and political role within the alliance. . . .”

From Shared Diagnosis to Coordinated Action

A number of speakers stressed the need for the trilateral countries to assess jointly the current crises as a precondition for cohesive response. Reflecting upon the prevailing differences in diagnosis among our nations in the wake of Afghanistan, a Japanese scholar noted that the Soviet move in Afghanistan was “in many respects an expression of Soviet weakness and insecurity” and argued for “more flexibility” in the response of the trilateral countries. Echoing this call for flexibility, a French expert stressed that the U.S. viewed the Afghan crisis “essentially as an East-West conflict,” while the North-South dimension of this crisis “is also fundamental.” His prescription was that we concentrate on “helping the countries most threatened in the present circumstances: the Moslem nations”—through increased military presence in the area (he recalled that France had currently the second largest fleet in the Indian Ocean); through economic assistance (Europe’s trade with the Arab world, he stressed, is equal to its trade with both Japan and North America); and through an increased participation of the European Community in the recycling of petro-dollars. It is quite natural, in this speaker’s words, that “the U.S. should view the Afghan crisis as part of a global conflict and wish to bring its strength to bear.” Europe, on the other hand, cannot but be aware of its own weakness and vulnerability; yet, because of its particular position, it can “in its own way, and after due consultation, complement very effectively America’s response.”

While some castigated the “slovenly habits of unilateralism of the U.S. Administration” as counter-productive and dangerous to the very fabric of trilateral relations, others criticized strongly the lack of an “adequate European and Japanese response” to the present crisis. In the end, it was the repeated call for intensified trilateral consultation by many participants from all three regions which carried the day. In conclusion, looking back to the origins of the Trilateral Commission in the early 1970s, a Japanese speaker described “trilateralism” as “a constructive process to foster the sense of solidarity and commonality of destiny” among our countries; an evolving process “designed to respond to the transformations of the international system, rather than an antithetic ideology or a counter-force against these changes.” By contrast with the old post-war international system, this speaker described today’s world as one “where, strategically, the U.S. is still THE superpower but can no longer effectively act without the support of its allies”; and “where the nature and scope of security is no longer just military or strategic, but encompasses much broader and diversified preoccupations for security—oil supplies being foremost among them.” Hence the multiplication of situations “where the long-term interests of the alliance appear to be in conflict with the more immediate and concrete concerns of our nations.” This makes a continuous exercise in consultation even more crucial than ever if we are to preserve our nations’ solidarity and ability to respond to crises and change.
To Meet the Challenge

Kiichi Miyazawa
Member of the Japanese Diet; Former Foreign Minister

Following is Mr. Miyazawa’s March 23, 1980 address to the Trilateral Commission:

When a few of us here today first met in New York in the summer of 1972, to charter what has now become the Trilateral Commission, we were motivated by our common perception of the importance of expanding communication and consultation among the countries of Western Europe, North America and Japan, countries which share many common values and commitments to freedom, democracy and an open world economy. Although we did not intend that the Commission would be an actor in any ideological struggle with the Soviet Union or other communist countries, we nevertheless perceived that the values and common interest that brought us together were not shared by them. We sought to have an open forum for free discussion among private citizens in which we could air our differences with confidence that, in the final analysis, we sought the same basic goals. The distance between the trilateral countries on the one hand and the Soviet Union and its allies on the other is not narrower now than then. Although there have been times during the past decade when we thought we saw signs of improving relations, by the end of the decade it became apparent that the gap, if anything, has grown wider. While we should by no means abandon the effort to seek an improved dialogue across the gap, we feel today that the need is greater for us to close ranks in our endeavor to strengthen what I may call an alliance of common values in order to defend freedom and democracy against the challenges arising out of the most recent world developments.

I am using the word “alliance” not in a narrow military sense but in a much broader context to mean the network of cooperative relationships among the industrialized democracies for their threefold common objectives:

– to maintain international peace and security;
– to promote a sound development of the world economy; and
– to defend our basic values of freedom and democracy.

This alliance relationship is presently undergoing a testing period, calling for the mobilization of the wisdom, imagination and skill of the leaders of the industrialized democracies if the alliance is going to maintain its cohesion and vitality. There is obviously no need for me to recount the events and trends of the history of the past three decades, during which we have witnessed enormous structural changes of the international community in the political, military and economic fields. We are all aware of the fact that as a result of these changes, we no longer live in a world in which America occupied the dominant position and exercised her leadership in a way befitting her position on such global issues as the security of the free world and the reconstruction and development of the international economy. Gone is the time when America carried almost singlehandedly the burden of responsibility as the leader of the free world because she alone had the power and influence commensurate with such responsibility. Today, with the global diffusion of power, America has lost her once dominant position, though, in relative terms, she is still by far the greatest power among the industrialized democracies and the
stronger of the two superpowers. Thus, we are now confronted with a twofold question:

- Have we adjusted our mutual concepts of the alliance relationship to the reality to the new power structure of the world?
- What are the requirements to make this relationship truly responsive to the needs of the times?

When the alliance relationship between America and her partners was overwhelmingly one-sided, it was America that defined the interests of the alliance and the policies to be pursued. In short, what was good for America was also good for the alliance as a whole. And America’s partners concurred in this proposition. Pax Americana was accepted by the alliance because, as I said before, America alone had the power and responsibility to deal with the global issues and because she had the vision and magnanimity to define her own national interests in such sufficiently broad terms as to accommodate those of her allies.

Since then, the power structure of the world has undergone a profound change. The Soviet Union has established herself as one of the two superpowers after two decades of persistent efforts to build up an enormous military might, and there is yet no sign of the Soviet efforts slackening in the near future. Moreover, recent events culminating in the Afghan crisis have demonstrated in no uncertain terms that the Soviet Union continues to pursue an aggressive policy to use her military power, directly if necessary, to expand the area of political influence whenever opportunities present themselves. In the sphere of international economy, the power relations between America and the rest of the world have also changed in a significant way. Among the industrialized democracies, the relative positions of Western Europe and Japan have considerably risen. And the dramatic development in the 1970s, which no one can overlook today, is of course the geometric increase in the power of the OPEC countries.

Chancellor Schmidt of West Germany, during his recent visit to Washington, is reported to have said that it is in America “that there is the greatest reservoir of talent, energy and untapped resources, and this remains the main hope.” I believe that all of us here share this recognition with Chancellor Schmidt. Yet, faced with the new power structure of the world, it has become somewhat fashionable these days to talk about “the decline of America.” This, it seems to me, is inherently dangerous despite its ostensible innocence of objectivity, for this kind of argument tends to lead us astray by diverting our attention from the real issue. Does “the decline of America” mean that the main hope of the free world, as described by Chancellor Schmidt, is being betrayed? Is the diffused power structure which we witness today something essentially undesirable? Do we want to see America regain the dominant role she used to play, assuming that is possible? If we look back in perspective at the history of nation states, we will find that there is nothing unusual about one particular state being unable to monopolize the dominating position in world affairs. Nor is there anything basically undesirable about a diffused structure of power relations among states. The crucial issue is not the power structure as such but whether states can cooperate among themselves to share the responsibility for maintaining a stable political order and for undertaking sound management of the world economy in the absence of a single dominant power. And this is the central question on which the attention of the industrialized democracies must be focused today.

America in the 1970s began to assume a more modest role in global political and economic issues, compared with the role she played in the preceding decades, in order to adapt herself to the new circumstances brought about by the structural change in international power relations. In doing so, it was only natural for America to ask her alliance partners of Western Europe and Japan to take up that part of responsibility which she now felt neither able nor appropriate to shoulder. As America’s role diminished, a corresponding increase in the responsibility of the allies became imperative if a drastic change in the existing international order detrimental to our interest was to be avoided. For the allies, however, this was an entirely new kind of challenge which was by no means easy to cope with. I am not so presumptuous as to think that I could speak with any confidence about the European reaction to this challenge. Insofar as the Japanese were concerned, however, they were far from being ready to assume their share of global responsibility. Although Japan became increasingly conscious of the need to play a larger role in the international economy and made considerable efforts to do so, her actual performance, it must be admitted, fell short of what was to be expected from the second largest economic power among the industrialized democracies. And she was much less prepared psychologically to shoulder even a modest burden of global responsibility in the political field inasmuch as she had become accustomed to enjoying the benefits of peace under the American security umbrella. When foreign observers referred to Japan as a “political dwarf,” the Japanese reaction was that this was nothing to be particularly ashamed of. The Japanese have only recently become aware of the fact that a major economic power cannot shun a certain degree of political responsibility. We witness now in Japan a steady growth of public opinion in support of self-defense efforts and our security ties with America. And yet no national consensus exists on the need for a steady and substantial improvement in the nation’s defense capabilities. There is still little public awareness that Japan should participate in the concerted efforts of
America and her alliance partners to maintain a global military balance in order to defend our basic values of freedom and democracy.

It takes two to form an alliance. Without mutual commitments to the common objective based on a fair mutual sharing of the common responsibility, no alliance can be effective. The vital importance of this recognition cannot be overemphasized in today’s world with its new power structure, for the danger of the alliance relationship among the industrialized democracies in the coming decade is what may be termed as an “imbalance between power and responsibility.” If Europe and Japan are unwilling to share the global responsibility with America in a way commensurate with their respective powers because their conceptual understanding of their own roles remains local or, at best, regional, the alliance will not be able to serve its threefold objective which I defined at the outset of my remarks. In this regard, let me briefly quote a distinguished former British diplomat who recently wrote:

“... the most disturbing aspect of European attitudes toward the relationship with America was the degree to which American involvement in Europe is taken for granted. There is little appreciation that in the long run the political roots of America’s commitment have to be nurtured by a comparable European commitment to collective security, open economic exchange, a cooperative monetary system and some degree of broad understanding of and support for America’s global responsibilities.”

I can only say that no advice could be more relevant than this observation to current Japan-U.S. relations. Yet to the extent that these words sound to my European colleagues as well-considered advice rather than unfair criticism, the danger of an “imbalance between power and responsibility” may be regarded as real not only across the Pacific but across the Atlantic as well.

The industrialized democracies have accumulated considerable experience over the past two decades in sharing the common responsibility for dealing with the global economic issues of trade, finance, development and energy, though the present state of the world economy acutely reminds us of the need for further efforts in terms of conceptual adjustments, stronger commitments and better coordination. In the political and security fields, however, Europe and Japan had had little experience in undertaking a joint enterprise with America on an issue of a global nature until the armed Soviet intervention in Afghanistan took place. In spite of the fact that the crisis has occurred in a region far away from both Europe and Japan, its geopolitical implications are such that a concerted response of the entire free world is called for. Thus, the Afghanistan problem has turned out to be the first global issue on which the effectiveness of the alliance relationship among the industrialized democracies in the politico-security field is being tested. And it is in this sense a novel experience for both America and her partners.

Whether or not we succeed in this untied and yet crucial undertaking—that is to say, to initiate concerted efforts to establish an effective political deterrence against a further Soviet expansion into the region where all of us have vital stakes for obvious reasons—will depend, in my view, on four factors.

First is what I have just talked about—namely, the willingness of Western Europe and Japan to perceive the global implications of the Afghanistan issue and to assume accordingly the respective shares of the common global responsibility with America. The European and Japanese responses to the challenge so far have been on the whole encouraging in this respect, but not without some disturbing notes, which probably signify that further conceptual adjustments are required among us.

This leads me in turn to the second factor on which the success of our joint undertaking hinges—that is conscious efforts by the European partners and Japan to redefine what they consider to be their own national interests. Every country, large or small, has its own interests to promote or defend for good and justifiable reasons. And yet, it is also true that there are occasions on which national interests defined solely from the limited viewpoints of the individual countries militate against cooperative action. If the alliance relationship of the industrialized democracies is to be meaningful in relation to global issues, we must surely be ready to redefine our respective national interests in terms of our global responsibility not so much as to have one identical interest, which is beyond the realm of the possible, but as to have mutually compatible interests, under which we can submerge differences of secondary importance for the sake of our common objectives. This, I realize, is by no means easy since it calls for a great deal of skillful political leadership to create domestic support for making immediate and tangible sacrifices in exchange for longer-term gains which are often not apparent. Nevertheless, it must be done if we all agree that we should act together to meet the challenge of our times.

The third factor, which is related to the second, is the need for America to acknowledge the plurality of interests of her allies and accept its consequences. When America alone carried the burden of global responsibility, her partners willingly let her define the interests of the alliance. If, however, America recognizes, as she does, the need for sharing responsibility with her allies in a manner reflecting the existing power relations, then the definition of the interests of the alliance on any issue has to become a collective exercise. And, given the various factors which determine the interests of the individual members of the alliance, this collective exercise should
aim, as I said a few minutes ago, not at an unachievable goal of defining an identical interest but at reaching a common position based on mutually compatible interests which will enable America and her partners to work in concert toward the shared objectives. America's leadership remains essential and will continue to be so in the future. But the nature and the modality of her leadership must evolve as the circumstances in which such leadership is exercised change.

Finally, the foregoing factors lead me to conclude that consultation and coordination must become an integral part of the established working relationship among the industrialized democracies, particularly in regard to such political and security-related issues as the Afghanistan problem. Compared with our experience in the economic field, in which consultation and coordination have been institutionalized to a considerable extent, we have had no similar experience on political issues except for some ad hoc arrangements which are far from adequate for our purpose. Moreover, there has been a woeful lack of communication between Europe and Japan. Consultation and coordination do require a certain amount of patience and tolerance to recognize the importance of the process of consensus-building, though it often seems excessively painstaking and time-consuming, especially when quick action is considered essential. The process, however, is something that should not and cannot be avoided in order to maintain the solidarity of the alliance relationship, without which we cannot succeed in our joint endeavor.

I believe that the subject I have taken up today is an area in which the Trilateral Commission can make invaluable contributions, because we in the Commission have successfully developed the habit of working together on matters of common interest, and, after all, it is this habit that is urgently needed today not only among our governments but at all levels. Let us hope that the industrialized democracies will demonstrate to the world their wisdom, imagination and skill to make our alliance relationship truly responsive to the needs of the 1980s.
Lord Carrington

On March 24, 1980, Lord Carrington, Britain's Foreign Secretary, hosted a dinner at Lancaster House for the participants in the London plenary meeting of the Trilateral Commission. In his address, the Foreign Secretary emphasized the need for concerted action between the trilateral countries on both economic and political problems. Stressing the "limited room for economic maneuver enjoyed by any country acting alone in the present global climate of slow growth, persistent inflation and rising unemployment," he noted that "we must, together, find ways forward: It is a question not of mutual advantage but of common survival."

"Similar considerations," Lord Carrington added, "apply in the political sphere." Following are excerpts from his remarks on some of today's chief international sources of concern—East-West relations, the situation in Southeast Asia, and the Middle East.

The idea of a simple East-West divide ignores the majority of the world community, the non-aligned countries, which rightly reject the importation of bloc rivalry into their affairs.

And it ignores areas of common ground and common interest which exist between East and West and which, I believe, we must continue to explore. That task, however, which has been complicated throughout the last decade by the relentless accrual of Soviet military power and by their restless ambitions in the Third World, has been sharply set back by their invasion and occupation of a non-aligned country—Afghanistan; and by their active connivance in Vietnam's occupation of another—Cambodia.

I need not reemphasize the alarm and anger of the vast majority of the international community at those events and at the atrocities which continue in both countries.

The 75,000 troops in Afghanistan are engaged in a bloody war against the population of a developing country which posed—and poses—no conceivable threat to the Soviet Union. They are deploying the full modern technology of death—from fighter aircraft and tanks to helicopter gunships. And, as in Southeast Asia, refugees pour into neighboring countries in the hundreds of thousands. These situations are, quite simply, intolerable to the world community. There is much which the countries represented here this evening can do and are doing, together, to help to frame peaceful political solutions.

The challenge, however, is not to the West alone, but to us all; to Islam; to non-aligned countries; to the most basic principles of accepted international behavior. The first step in any solution must be the total withdrawal of the aggressors. That much is clear. Thereafter lasting peace must involve respect for the wishes of the people of Cambodia and Afghanistan themselves; for their traditional neutrality; and for their independence.

As regards Cambodia, I hope that the partnership between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the European Community, which was sealed barely two weeks ago in Kuala Lumpur, will help lay a solid political and economic foundation for peace.

On Afghanistan, the initiative for neutrality and non-alignment is intended to provide the nucleus of a settlement. That settlement cannot be imposed by us or by anyone else. But the will of the international community for Soviet withdrawal and Afghan independence could not have been more clearly expressed. If our proposal helps to articulate that will in terms of constructive action, it will have served its purpose.

In the Middle East, too, we are witnessing the dangers and frustrations of entrenched patterns of thought. Again, the will of the international community for a lasting peace is clear. But there has been growing impatience that efforts over a long period have not yet produced a solution to the central problem of the Palestinians; and that impatience is reflected in attitudes to other major international problems. We do not underestimate the significance of the peace which has been achieved between Egypt and Israel. The current negotiations are immensely important and it would be premature to despair that they may yet provide a way forward. If they do not, however, additional efforts may be needed to pave the way for direct negotiations between those whose futures are at stake. We are discussing with our partners whether we may be able to contribute to those efforts in due course. We all accept the urgency of the search for a comprehensive settlement. We must match it with the imagination to help bring it about.
Security in the 1980s

As was noted at the outset of the London panel discussion on security, the more complex and diversified power relationships which characterize our world at the threshold of the 1980s make it "self-defeating" to lump all security developments under a single, "global" balance. We no longer live in the "simple" system of the *Pax Americana*, where the balance of power could be defined in terms of mere strategic "superiority" or "inferiority" between the two superpowers. The evolution of specific, regional balances—in Europe, in East Asia, in the Indian Ocean—has become a key factor for our security. Furthermore, the very notion of security has taken on a new, much broader dimension with the growing instability of the Third World and the prevailing competition for raw materials and energy—in particular oil from the Persian Gulf region; these new threats to security escape purely military remedies, and they pose in turn a fundamental challenge to the traditional workings of our alliances.

The state of regional balances; the broader strategic and, above all, political trends likely to affect our security in the 1980s; and the consequences for trilateral alliances and cooperation: Such were the major themes of the debate among commissioners, which was introduced by Christoph Bertram, Director of the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London; Kiichi Saeki, President of the Nomura Research Institute in Tokyo; and Robert Ellsworth, former U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defense and former Ambassador to NATO. (We reproduce, opposite, the "theses for discussion" prepared by Dr. Bertram and circulated in advance to the participants.)

The Regional Balances

As a European speaker, echoed by many others, noted at the outset of the discussion of the specific balances which make up today's global security outlook, "if there is any lesson to be drawn from 30 years of the nuclear age, it is the extreme difficulty of relating specific imbalances to specific consequences in terms of deterrence, the nuclear factor being an equalizer in many respects." "I find it difficult," he added, "to share the view that the temporary vulnerability of part of the American strategic forces—namely, the land-based forces—can cause deterrence itself to disappear." Similarly, in the European theater, the thesis that Soviet numerical advantage in part of the nuclear spectrum—the medium-range delivery systems—leads to a substantial erosion of deterrence, "is not necessarily plausible in the nuclear age." As some noted, NATO's current nuclear modernization program is necessary not because of an alleged breakdown in deterrence due to Soviet advances in medium-range nuclear weapons, but because without such modernization the alliance could not continue with its doctrine of "flexible response"—it would not be capable of counting on nuclear delivery systems to be actually *there* when they are needed.

When discussing current trends in the military balance in Europe, a leading British expert emphasized, "we tend often to underestimate the manpower prob-

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The Global Security Balance

by Christoph Bertram

Theses for Discussion*

1. There is no such thing as a global security balance. What we do have is a network of East-West military competitions which are closely intertwined: in the nuclear-strategic field between the United States and the Soviet Union; in Europe both conventional and non-conventional forces; in East Asia, and in potential crisis points in the Third World.

2. In the nuclear strategic field, a rough balance of forces in the sense of providing adequate deterrence against major nuclear and conventional attack in vital areas exists. There are, no doubt, asymmetries between the Soviet and the American strategic efforts. These would tend, in the first years of the decade, to give to the Soviet Union certain theoretical advantages through the vulnerability of American land-based intercontinental missiles in the second half of the decade, however, new U.S. strategic programs if they are implemented will not only neutralize that Soviet advantage but actually provide the United States with a clear measure of strategic advantage over the Soviet Union.

3. Yet none of these changes will materially alter the basis on which East-West security in the regions defined by America's alliances has depended. A functioning, mutually effective nuclear deterrent will be maintained. It may well be that in a more distant future, the trend toward the vulnerability of all strategic delivery systems will undermine the periphery of deterrence as we have known it, namely the credibility of extending America's nuclear "guarantee" to allies. But this point has not yet been reached, and there is time to adjust to such change if it were to materialize.

4. As long as deterrence remains effective, the deficiencies of Western conventional and theater nuclear forces can partly be offset. But the strains are already visible in Europe, in the vulnerability of theater nuclear forces to preemptive strikes which has made NATO's modernization decision of last December necessary. In Europe also, the manpower and equipment problems of some allied forces, including those of the United States, in the Far East, the growing imbalance caused by the increasing Soviet naval investment around Japan. These deficiencies could become even more marked if Third World contingencies require the United States to deploy forces earmarked for Europe or Japan elsewhere.

5. There is no, or cannot be, a military balance in the sense of mutually offsetting forces in Third World conflict areas. Even if the United States were able - and this remains the most critical element in her long-term interventional capabilities - to recruit and maintain the personnel needed, in order to project military power credibly into the Gulf or South Asia, she could not balance Soviet geographic and infrastructural advantages there just as the Soviet Union cannot offset the military advantages of the United States in Central America and the Caribbean. Rather than seeking isolated balances of military force or a general stance of military containment of Soviet power wherever it cannot be...
used, the deployment of outside military force in distant regions should be defined by the specific task it has to perform.

6. This task is much more difficult than public discussion sometimes suggests. The largest armada of American carrier task groups in the Arabian Sea did not lead to a release of the American diplomat from the terrorist siege of the Teheran Embassy. Nor are 100,000 well-trained Soviet soldiers sufficient to impose the Soviet notion of law and order on Afghanistan. Anyone who has analysed the problems involved by the attempt to assure the production of oil through military force against a hostile population will, at best, see some value in the threat of occupying oil fields in the Gulf, but very little in the implementation. The effectiveness of outside military force in Third World crises remains highly unassessed.

7. This does not mean that it is without effects. These can be:

- to deter a defined, clear-cut military aggression against an ally such as Saudi Arabia;
- to reassure through visible security commitments the leadership of countries in the region;
- to demonstrate a vital interest to the Soviet Union;
- to protect personal and physical national assets in case of upheaval and turbulence.

In each case, however, commitments will only be credible if there are the means and the will to back them up. One means, that of local military bases, will be increasingly difficult to obtain. The costs of projecting effective power abroad will thus be higher than they have been in the past, and commitments will have to be made in that knowledge. Moreover, the main brunt of demonstrated force will have to be borne by naval rather than ground forces.

Given the geostrategic disadvantages of the West, as compared to the Soviet Union, in the Gulf and in South Asia as well as the potential brittleness of many regimes in the area, commitments to be credible cannot be over-extended, and there will be a risk that the demonstration of military force, if not clearly defined in its purpose, may, in the event, amount to a demonstration of military impotence.

8. Balance is never merely the aggregate of different components of military power. Military developments can only partially indicate the direction of major trends in international security, and they must in turn be assessed against this background. What are these trends?

(a) The frequency of conflicts in the Third World is likely to increase, for reasons other than East-West antagonisms; but to what extent will East-West security considerations overshadow these conflicts, and East-West competition be sharpened by them?

(b) The Soviet Union is faced in the 1980s with a series of adverse trends: a weak economic base, increased U.S. strategic power, China's development, potential turbulence at its periphery, both in Eastern Europe and along its borders with the Third World. Will it react to this by searching to improve the dividends of its role in East-West cooperation, of its economic, technological and arms control fields? Or will it react by a "fortress" strategy, implying greater rigidity at home and in the socialist camp, a further increase in the emphasis on military power to shore up its expansive notion of national security, and an exploitation of Third World crises to damage the Western interests and of gaps in Western cohesion by seeking to separate America from her allies through pressure and promises?

(c) The United States seems to have found a new consensus for its international role in the 1980s, emphasizing military effort, assertiveness and nationalism, even if the means of usable military power, i.e., conventional forces, will take time to bring up to the state required by this new mood. But how durable is this consensus? How will it affect relations with the Soviet Union and with America's allies?

(d) America's allies - in Europe and in the Far East still seem to be ill-prepared for the change that America's new stance implies for the respective alliances. Will Western European governments and Japan respond by taking a more active role - politically and, perhaps, militarily - in shoring up the alliances, or will they instead pursue, in their turn, more nationalist policies too?
lem." Stagnating birth-rates on the continent, coupled with the consequences of an economic recession and the soaring costs of modern equipment “could affect dramatically our posture” and jeopardize in time the sustained modernization effort which our nations have to pursue.

Turning to the Pacific theater, this speaker noted that the Soviet Union’s “considerable military, economic and political investment in East Asia” was likely to make this region “the most dynamic one in the overall East-West security contest”; and that Japan, as a result, would “find itself much less on the periphery of the international security scene than in the past.” He was echoed by a Japanese defense specialist who described the “great impact” on Japanese security of the Soviet buildup in the Far East, particularly in Northeast Asia. The current military balance in the Pacific, in his words, “is still favorable to the U.S. and Japan; but if the U.S. is forced to shift permanently some of its Pacific forces to other areas such as the Indian Ocean, the balance in East Asia will change dramatically at a great risk for Japan.” Hence the need for Japan “to realize the importance of a greater security effort of its own,” to be undertaken in close cooperation with the United States, in the spirit of the 1979 U.S.-Japan military cooperation guidelines.

As it was pointed out early in the debate, our security in the 1980s depends less on “specific deficits in parts of the strategic and regional balances” than on a new set of broader military and political trends. In this respect, three central questions emerged from the discussion—the direction of Soviet policies; volatility and conflict in the Third World, particularly in Southwest Asia and the Persian Gulf region; and the reorientation of U.S. policies and “leadership”—which pose, in turn, as many new challenges to the workings of our alliances.

**The Soviet Union on the March?**

The participants offered diverse estimates of the strategic posture and long-term policies of the Soviet Union. Some noted that, in the words of a former high U.S. defense official, “there has been a ten-year march of Soviet foreign military expansion both direct and indirect: in the Caribbean, Southeast Asia, West Africa, East Africa, the Arabian peninsula, and now in Afghanistan...” Detailing the relentless efforts of the Soviet Union in the last ten years to strengthen its forces across the board and enhance its capacity to “project, protect and intimidate all over the world,” this speaker stressed that “such Soviet military capabilities, together with the Kremlin’s willingness to use them, create an aura that makes other international instabilities extremely dangerous.” As he concluded, “although U.S. defense efforts in real terms began to rise gradually as early as 1976, it is only now that a sense is emerging in Washington of how much and what is required to make up for our ten years of relaxation.”

Similarly, at the strategic level, this speaker’s concern over “the serious problem of land-based missile vulnerability” was echoed by several other participants. To be sure, they recognized that, as a result of recent improvements in operational effectiveness, “the U.S. strategic umbrella is in much better shape than it was three short years ago”; and they welcomed, in the words of a top French defense analyst, the U.S. decision to deploy the MX mobile missile and the new assessment of the Soviet threat by the U.S. government, which, together with continued modernization within NATO, should allow us by the mid-1980s “to reverse today’s unfavorable trends.” In the meantime, however, many warned that the Soviets are likely to use their improved strategic position “for political ends.”

A number of participants, on the other hand, took a much less alarming view of Soviet strength and world policies. For a British participant who emphasized Soviet setbacks in recent years (particularly in the Middle East and Africa), the Soviet Union’s power and influence “proved more rampant in the 1960s than it has been during the last decade.” For a German scholar, “things are clearly not moving in favor of the Soviet Union,” which is likely to find itself “in a much less advantageous position by the end of the 1980s”: Strategically, the vulnerability of land-based forces “will hit the Soviets harder, if later”; and its international position is doomed to be adversely affected by the strengthened U.S.-China relationship, growing shortages of domestic oil, and the difficulties of controlling “increasingly restless allies” in Eastern Europe. In this speaker’s view, our greatest concern for the years ahead should be that “a cornered superpower is likely to behave much more dangerously.”

**Political Contingencies in the Third World**

Unanimously recognized as another major security concern for the years ahead was the multiplication of unpredictable conflicts in the Third World—and the inadequacy of traditional, military solutions to deal with them.

As a European expert observed, “the word balance becomes totally misleading” when applied to the uncertain regions of the Third World—particularly in those vast areas situated on the periphery of each superpower (Southwest Asia and the Caribbean, for instance). There, the imbalance in conventional means and accessibility is such that “a nuclear threat is the only recourse; but it can be made credible only if vital interests are at stake.” As a result, in this speaker’s words, “deterrence in the case of most Third World conflicts is very problematic.”

In addition, as it was repeatedly noted, the threat to security and stability in most of these areas—particularly
in those upon which the industrialized nations depend most for raw materials and energy—is not primarily of a military nature. It lies, rather, with a complex set of domestic political factors which cast doubt on the survivability and strength of the regimes currently in power. To be sure, consistency in the projection of military power and ready availability of forces remain essential—in this respect, a number of speakers applauded the U.S. decision to develop a Rapid Deployment Force. Yet, the answer to protecting security in these uncertain areas cannot be primarily military; it involves, instead, a complex process of conflict management to cope with the underlying problems of each region. A German expert cited the recent settlement in Zimbabwe-Rhodesia as a “hopeful symbol” of such conflict management; he also evoked, as a parallel, the importance of a settlement of the Palestinian problem if we are to go to the roots of instability in the Middle East/Persian Gulf region.

Events in the Gulf were singled out by a senior U.S. expert as “the biggest threat today” to the security of the trilateral countries. In his words: “The loss of all or even one half of our oil supplies from the Persian Gulf would have on the U.S. economy an impact comparable to that of the Great Depression, with a sudden loss of approximately one fourth of our GNP. In addition, a shortage of that size would send the market price of oil sky-rocketing, and preferential government-to-government deals could hardly be expected to hold. The loss to the Western economy as a whole would be enormously costly, even to those countries that were self-sufficient, like Norway and Great Britain. Thus we are all in this boat together. On the economic front, this speaker urged that the International Energy Agency be given by its member governments the political and economic support it needs “to become truly the NATO of energy” and to be able to coordinate a real strategy for energy security. On both diplomatic and military fronts, noting that “the profile of the United States is often too high to adequately handle certain issues,” he called for a new “division of labor” among the trilateral countries to secure collectively the security of this vital area.

From Leadership to Partnership

As many speakers argued, the new dimensions of security in the 1980s have profound implications for the workings of our alliances:

- Given the likelihood of growing instability in the Third World in general, a German defense analyst doubted that “making East-West relations dependent on unpredictable conflicts elsewhere would lead to greater restraint” on the part of the Soviet Union. “I am not sure,” he noted, “that jeopardizing the general context of East-West relations for the sake of demonstrating one’s annoyance at the Soviet Union’s actions in the Third World is truly a good strategy to avoid other Afghans in the future.” On the other hand, this expert noted, “the trilateral alliances cannot afford in the future a repeat of their rather dismal performances in the wake of recent events in Afghanistan and Iran.” He underlined “the real need and urgency” for the trilateral countries to “develop some degree of coordination for contingencies.” He also pointed at the desirability of an early, “global U.S.-Soviet review to get away from the restrictions of the 1979 Vienna summit and discuss the issues across the board.”

- Reflecting upon the Soviet “superiority in force-projection in the Middle East and West Asia,” a Japanese participant emphasized the need for the United States to have “a steady, consistent foreign policy” and to “avoid unilateralism”; allied cooperation—“indispensable if we are to deter further Afghans in vulnerable countries like Turkey, Pakistan or Saudi Arabia”—can only be effective if it is based on consultation beforehand and on a “comprehensive, clearly articulated long-term policy towards the Soviet Union.” This speaker’s emphasis on “steadiness” was echoed by a former British defense official who deplored the “greatly weakened credibility of the U.S. vis-à-vis its allies and the Soviet Union” resulting from the Administration’s failure to get the SALT II treaty ratified in time by the U.S. Congress. He expressed the belief that, “had SALT been delivered immediately after the Vienna summit, there would not have been an Afghanistan invasion,” and stressed that the West, in this instance, “had not been able to show to the Soviets sufficient advantages to motivate restraint on their part.”

- As many speakers finally observed, the end of the “international system of the Pax Americana” and the new surge of “nationalistic feelings” in the United States have great consequences for the very workings of our traditional alliances. From the clear, undisputed “leader of old,” the U.S. has become, in the words of a European participant, “more like the rest of us.” Both Europe and Japan, it was often emphasized, will have to assume “a greater share of our collective security burden,” and to “make up increasingly for the deficit in the ability to lead of the United States.” As a British speaker suggested, “the 1980s cannot be managed in the ways of the 1960s”; consultation itself is “no longer good enough.”—it leads to “too great a diversity of approaches within an alliance” and, judging from the events of recent months, “it opens up too many loopholes for the Soviet Union to exploit our differences.” In today’s circumstances, a number of key allies will have to be “not just consulted” but “actually involved” in a number of East-West negotiations which can no longer be bilateral, particularly with respect to disarmament. In short, it is our vital task in the 1980s to gradually build a new relationship within our alliances—to “move from leadership to partnership.”
The Middle East

A recurrent theme throughout the Commission's London debates, the Middle East was the subject of the last session of the conference, on March 25, 1980—an "open discussion" among the participants, introduced by Arrigo Levi, columnist for La Stampa of Turin and The Times of London. Previous sessions had emphasized some of the security-related aspects of the situation in the Middle East and the importance of closer trilateral cooperation in this vital area (see p. 11 and p. 3). On March 25, a number of the participants returned to these themes as they attempted to identify the multiple facets of the Middle East problem and to suggest possible answers. Five key factors quickly emerged as being at the root of the problem:

- The great instability of the nations of the area, currently involved in a sudden and rapid process of modernization which can cause considerable social and political turmoil (e.g., Iran).
- The perpetration of a bewildering pattern of deep national, religious and communal conflicts—the tragedy of Lebanon being just one example of such conflicts.
- The question of Israel and the Palestinians, two nationalities with conflicting rights. A number of participants stressed, in this respect, the West's sensitivity to the problems of the Jews, its "consciousness of acute historical guilt," and—in the words of a European—"the difficulty of being rational about all this, the sense that politics can at any moment turn into tragedy."
- Western dependence on Middle Eastern oil, which transforms the deep instabilities of the area into possible causes for global crises.
- The presence of "an empire at the door of the Middle East." As several speakers pointed out, the Soviet Union's growing military power, combined with its economic weaknesses—particularly its projected oil needs—"pose a concrete challenge to the stability and independence of the Middle East."

Some interventions in the debate were directed once again at those "areas for action" where trilateral policies should be made more effective: the reduction of our dependence on the Middle East; the need to coordinate Western actions more closely and to build stronger ties with the nations of the area; the importance of an improved military balance, both globally and in the region itself. However, the theme which clearly dominated this "open" discussion among commissioners was the central nature of the Palestinian issue in our efforts to move beyond the Camp David agreements, closer to a true settlement in the Middle East.

The following exchanges were typical of the very free, very intense and at times dissonant debate which marked this session:

- A Former High-Ranking U.S. Official: "It is my conviction that there is no way to resolve the other problems of the Middle East unless we solve the Palestinian issue first: It is the heart of the problems of that region. Its continuance is a destabilizing, radicalizing factor in the entire area; it inhibits us, among other things, from taking the necessary steps to build an effective defense for the Persian Gulf; it endangers the security of all the parties concerned here—including that of Israel itself. . . . Furthermore, on the moral issue, I would suggest that our strong sense of compassion for the
past ordeal of the Jewish people does not justify the perpetuation of injustice to the Palestinians: It does not justify 12 years of military occupation of 1,200,000 people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip...

"Obviously, what is necessary is to broaden the framework of the Camp David accords. In its past efforts, the U.S. had started very sensibly by searching for an overall solution in the Middle East; subsequently, we found ourselves caught up in the momentum created by the second Sinai disengagement and President Sadat’s dramatic visit to Jerusalem. The Camp David episode deflected attention from the fundamental issues and ended up polarizing the Arab world: It was based on the assumption that somehow we could solve extra-ordinarily complex problems by gnawing first at the periphery—and, in so doing, we have exhausted our diplomatic leverage on secondary issues...Camp David is a bilateral agreement between Israel and Egypt, but it is helpless in providing a framework for dealing with the problem of the West Bank and Gaza Strip because it is an agreement with the wrong parties. Unless the only acceptable spokesman for the Palestinians is brought into the dialogue, there is no possibility of progress...."

"In its dealings with the Middle East, the United States is subject to very special constraints which are built into the pattern of American politics and prevent us in many ways from acting as a free agent in those matters. It makes it all the more imperative for Western Europe and Japan to start taking initiatives towards a solution of the fundamental issues in the Middle East; I can understand the reluctance on the part of Western Europe and Japan to commit military power in that area, but I do not understand their reluctance to commit political efforts there. If the nations of Western Europe—through the European Community, for instance—were to undertake to bring about a realistic facing-up to the Palestinian issue, nothing could be more important in the end to the stability of the area and the security of all of us."

- A Former British Diplomat: "All of us have kept putting off for a long time that central, unavoidable issue of the Palestinians: it is now recognized as such in most of Europe. This issue—true one of a battle between two rights—will be hard to solve. Yet, here perhaps Europe can give a lead to America. I recognize that we exercise very little influence on Israel; on the other hand, we do not have as many domestic pressures upon us as the United States in the case of the Palestine question: If allowed, within existing consultation mechanisms, to 'do our own thing our own way,' we may be able to go a little bit further, and faster, than the U.S., and bring to bear more effectively the influence we have on other states of the region. We are, in fact, beginning now to use this influence rather more; in the same vein, we are trying to work on a European position to expand and reinforce U.N. Resolution 242 so that the Palestinians can see a concerted prospect for self-determination."

"I think it would be very foolish of the Israelis to assume that the Palestinians can never be brought to become neighbors. Our own experience of decolonization has often been that those who were our greatest enemies can turn out in time quite differently: Kenyatta, for example, once seen as the most terrible of the terrorists we ever had to deal with, became the archetype of a moderate Commonwealth statesman; we cannot guarantee that this will also happen in the case of Mugabe, but there are promising signs. One ardently wishes the Israelis could be brought at least to consider the same possibility....."

"As for the Palestinians, they have to decide what they really want; we cannot—and still less Israel—decide for them what they ought to want. Some have suggested that they ought to want a form of federation with Jordan, on the grounds that it would be far less dangerous to the security of Israel; I am not sure it would be so in the long run, and it might prove quite dangerous for Jordan! In the end, the decision has to be the Palestinians', and in time we will have to go along with it."

- An American Labor Leader: "The Palestinian issue certainly raises important moral questions; but I have heard no comment about the morality of terrorism, the morality of the means which the PLO has been content to use over the years.... Yassir Arafat is what he has demonstrated himself to be, he is what he has said he is—and not the kind of personality that may come across in some conversations with outside visitors who feel tillilitated by this encounter. That Kenyatta should have become entirely rational and even friendly is well and good; but let us remind ourselves that at no time did Kenya threaten the very existence of Great Britain, nor was it in any kind of contiguous relationship that could give credence to this type of threat..."

"A reasonable period of time will be necessary to work out some mechanisms capable of providing a degree of autonomy for the Palestinians. Perhaps the time will also come when the Israeli's abject fear of a radicalized, non-viable state bent on their destruction will pass. Moreover, nobody is saying that we must not speak to the Palestinians about the questions which concern them; as the President of the United States has clearly stated, on the day they agree no longer to seek the destruction of the State of Israel and renounce the use of violence against it, we will officially enter into discussions with them, leading hopefully to a real solution of the problem.

"In the meantime, we cannot forget that the Israelis' concerns and fears have some basis in reality: 1948—when Israel, on the very first day of its statehood, was invaded by each of its neighbors and the great powers stood idly by; 1956; 1967—when, with Nasser's troops poised on its borders, Israel turned to the great powers again and they were nowhere to be found; 1969—the war of attrition; and 1973—when, except for the United States, there was little or no other assistance for Israel to turn to. Those who feel that the Israelis' siege mentality is overdrawn should recall that they lived through this period.... Furthermore, I do not think it right
and proper to say that the relationship between the Western world and Israel evolved simply because of some guilty conscience related to the holocaust; if it were true, if what we are after is 'expiation,' then I doubt that a mere 35-year span could quite suffice to erase all the horror, all the trauma of that holocaust. More fundamentally, our relationship is based on the fact that Israel is a democracy, a nation trying to develop a social and economic order which has many affinities with our own aspirations. . . .Israel is a friend of the trilateral countries, a friend in the deepest sense of the word, sharing the highest values and hopes that all of us share. In assessing the situation in the Middle East, we should give due regard to these considerations—and give the benefit of the doubt to a people which fears for its very security for perfectly good and justified reasons . . . .”

A Prominent U.S. Expert: “Yes, the question of Palestine is a question of one right against another right: How are we to reconcile these rights and achieve justice and security for both sides? . . . First, I recognize this is one of the main roots of instability in the Middle East; but it is misleading to think that solving it will make the other sources of instability disappear, or that we cannot even start working on these other problems until the Palestinian issue is settled. Second, I support the “step-by-step” approach rather than the comprehensive approach where a solution to the easier issues is held up by the most difficult ones: Every attempt at a comprehensive settlement—e.g. the Rogers Plan under President Nixon, or the early initiatives of President Carter—has failed. The only approach to have succeeded to date has been the step-by-step approach—Kissinger’s shuttle diplomacy and President Carter’s momentous achievement at Camp David . . .

“I agree, however, that progress is indispensable on the West Bank and Gaza, as well as on the Syrian front and Jerusalem. In view of the Israeli government’s provocative policy on settlements, a good deal of pressure on Israel will be required—not only for the sake of human justice for the Palestinians, but also for Israel’s best long-term interests and security. But an independent Palestinian state may not be the best solution (and I am not sure Saudi Arabia and many other states of the region would view it as such). . . . Finally, I would not encourage our European and Japanese friends to take isolated diplomatic initiatives: They certainly can press the United States to be more forceful, but independent initiatives by our allies will only put strains on the alliance: Europe and Japan cannot deliver Israel—only the United States can; and we would get into a very unhealthy and dangerous situation where the Europeans and the Japanese would be the vocalists for the Arabs, and the U.S. would be forced to be the sole advocate for Israel. If Europe and Japan do get into the diplomatic game, I would hope that they would pressure the PLO to rescind its commitment to the destruction of Israel and to accept U.N. resolutions, as well as pressuring Israel to be more forthcoming on the Palestine issue.”

Among other issues raised during the discussion:

The trilateral countries’ dependence on oil from the Persian Gulf: A German energy specialist described it as being more an “addiction” than a “vital dependence” and stressed the degree of flexibility of our economies, greater in his view than is usually assumed, and “the unlikelihood of our ever being deprived of all of our oil from the Gulf”; he stressed the need for our countries to go beyond the targets of the 1979 Tokyo summit and reduce further their oil consumption and import needs. Others, however, reemphasized the “dramatic consequences of an oil embargo” for each of our countries and for the international economy as a whole. Some dwelled on the vulnerability of the Gulf’s oil wells and sea lanes to terrorism and called for a new, more flexible policy in our dealings with the states of the area, instead of “a systematic backing of installed, often precarious regimes.” Others stressed the absence of any possible trade-off between the oil issue and the problem of Palestine—in the words of an American scholar, “delivering Jerusalem or the West Bank for X number of barrels a day would not solve our oil-dependence problem—it would make us more dependent on those imports: The issue of oil is clearly exacerbated by the Palestinian problem; but solving one of these issues would in no way remove the other.”

The role of the Soviet Union: A European participant suggested that “Russia has a legitimate interest in the Middle East and Persian Gulf region”—and although it is unlikely to be helpful on the road to a settlement of the central issues in the region, it can also be extremely unhelpful.” This speaker stressed the need for an improvement in the general climate of East-West relations, leading to closer long-term cooperation with the Soviet Union (particularly in the field of energy-related technology) if the necessary political restraint is to prevail in this volatile and vital region.

The need for closer trilateral consultation and cooperation: Several participants emphasized again the importance of a “fairer burden-sharing among the trilateral countries of the costs of their collective security,” and of a “more active political involvement of Europe and Japan” to move closer to a Middle East settlement. Finally, a number of speakers recalled the extraordinary nature of the current situation—characterized by the combination of our great oil-dependence; the assertiveness of Soviet policies worldwide; and the impact of inflation and economic stagnation on our political systems and on our ability to sustain the necessary security programs: In the words of a senior American scholar, what is required first of all is a “consensus” and a “shared sense of urgency” which “does not exist yet in our countries,” and “without which no adequate response can be mounted to today’s unprecedented challenges.”
Task Forces on North-South Trade, Labor Market Policies Report to the Commission

The draft reports of two trilateral task forces set up in 1979 were presented by their respective authors to the commissioners assembled in London. The first report, entitled "Trade in Manufactures with Developing Countries: Reinforcing North-South Partnership," was written by Albert FISHLow (principal drafter), Professor of Economics and Director of the Concilium on International and Area Studies at Yale University; Sueo SEKIGUCHI, Senior Staff Economist at the Japan Economic Research Center in Tokyo; and Jean CARRIERE, former Alternate Executive Director of the World Bank, and now Director-General of SEITA, the French National Tobacco Company.

As the authors of the North-South Task Force explained, their report focuses on trade in manufactures as "the most generalized type of trade relationship between developing and developed countries, and clearly the most dynamic one in recent years." The report points to the "substantial shift in comparative advantage which is underway on a global basis" as industrialization efforts take hold in the South. To insure an adequate response to this shift on the part of the trilateral countries and improve thereby the trade and overall economic relationship between North and South, the report's chief recommendations are directed at 1) restoring growth in the trilateral countries themselves; 2) maintaining the necessary flows of capital to enable the South to meet current account deficits and service debt; 3) formulating positive adjustment policies, that will facilitate rather than stifle trade; 4) specific trade and institutional measures to counter the new protectionism which has emerged in recent years, a protectionism which "escapes traditional means of international surveillance" and has dangerous economic and political implications for both the developing and the industrialized countries.

Among the principal issues raised during the discussion of the report were: adjustment and employment problems in the trilateral countries in the face of growing imports from the South; challenges to traditional world trade philosophy as a result of rampant inflation and enormous oil import bills; the roles in North-South trade of the newly-industrializing countries (NICs), of China, and of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe; the working of GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade); and the advisability and practicality of some new institutional arrangements.

The second task force report presented in London is entitled "Labor Market Problems and Policies in Modern Trilateral Societies: Reducing Unemployment and Smoothing Adaptation"; it was written by Heinz MARKMANN (principal drafter), Director of the Economics and Social Sciences Institute of the German Federation of Trade Unions (DGB); Tadashi HANAMI, Dean of the Faculty of Law of Sophia University in Tokyo; and Richard R. NELSON, Professor of Economics at Yale University.

This report stresses the need for more active labor market (or "manpower") policies in the trilateral regions. There are three types of labor market problems which the authors stress in particular in setting the context for labor market policy. First and foremost are the dramatic increases in unemployment rates in most trilateral countries in the 1970s, combined with a worsened macroeconomic climate. Inflation inhibits our govern-
ments from enacting traditional macroeconomic measures to expand aggregate demand in order to fight unemployment. The second problem is that our societies are likely to continue to experience shifts in the sectoral and industry composition of jobs, a reallocation that is made more difficult with lower growth and higher unemployment. Third are rigidities in labor markets created to some extent by quite legitimate social advances. The authors review past labor market policies in the three regions, often developed in a rather different context than that of the late 1970s. They advance several recommendations for adapting our labor markets and labor forces. Stressing the shared responsibility of the various agents of our economic systems, the authors conclude that “active manpower policies combined with industrial policies have a chance of working to facilitate reasonably rapid growth of productivity and real incomes, and a relatively smooth shifting of labor and capital resources to expanding industries and regions.”

Particular aspects which received much attention in the discussion of the task force report include: the characteristics, and possible remedies for, today’s inflation; the importance of private investment and growth in productivity for fighting unemployment effectively; social and economic protection of labor as a new priority in our societies; the possible lessons to be drawn from Japan’s experience in harmonizing social fairness and workers’ protection on the one hand, and efficiency on the other; and the need for better labor market information and data as a basis for effective policies.

As is the case for all trilateral task forces, the two draft reports presented in London were the result of an intensive “trilateral process” involving teamwork among the three authors and consultations with a broad range of experts. Subsequent to the London discussion, both reports are being revised; they will be forwarded to our subscribers when they appear in their final form, later this year.
Beyond Trilateralism:

A Time for Global Political Action

Sir Shridath S. Ramphal
Commonwealth Secretary-General

Following is Shridath Ramphal’s March 25, 1980 address to the Trilateral Commission:

To speak with the Trilateral Commission is an opportunity that has quite literally brought me back from the ends of the earth. It is a privilege to be here because you are prominent among those who influence decisions in major centers of economic strength and in major capitals: To do so over lunch is a bonus! And to speak following the discussion of the paper on “Trade in Manufactures” prepared by Fishlow, Sekiguchi and Carriere adds pleasure to privilege because the paper argues so compellingly some of the major elements of the case I would myself wish to advance.

First let me enlarge objectivity by expunging bias. It probably will not surprise you that for many in the South the image of the Trilateral Commission is that of a self-ordained Trinity committed to ordering human affairs in furtherance of triadic primacy. I am sure that image is a distortion of your highest purposes; but, it is one that persists. It needs to be dispelled if your purposes are to be fulfilled or, at least, if the rest of the world—and not only the South—is to look to you for those dispassionate contributions to global causes that your attributes uniquely equip you to make. Already, your Triangle Papers on North-South relations have made an important contribution to the dialogue’s literature. Your adoption and promotion of many of their ideas could be as significant in ensuring that the dialogue has practical results. I, in fact, take that potential as my point of reference, and my confidence in your resolve to fulfill it as the basis of the thoughts I shall try to share with you. Indeed, I have persuaded myself that your invitation is itself acknowledgment of areas of relevance beyond triangular cooperation.

But I hope that awareness goes further. I hope it signifies acceptance that, as we begin the 1980s, we have actually moved from a world of dominance and power to one of interdependence and shared responsibility! One, therefore, in which global affairs are shaped not merely by status and strength but by consensus and contract. I hope it implies recognition by the Commission that quintessentially the twenty-first century will confirm important limits to the power that so much of the twentieth century was concerned with accumulating. Cuba, Suez, Vietnam, were all testimony to these limits; and are not the Soviets hearing the same message from the roof of the world in Afghanistan?

More and more today, the essential effect of nuclear rivalry is to force the potential enemy to disgorge at least as large a measure of financial and human resources on developing and stockpiling matching unusable power. It is at least arguable that it is in fact not an accumulation of military power at all but a compulsive misallocation of economic resources in an unending quest for balance. And limits to crude power are also appearing in economic relations. Mutual dependence arising, for example, from the need for unimpeded expansion of world trade, from the prospect of mineral shortages and, more specifically, of oil depletion, are now imposing compulsions for global consensus on new arrangements that assume the proportions of a program for survival. And the imperative of global agreement in areas of the envi-
ronment like the future of the forests and the life-sustaining qualities of the seas and the atmosphere defy all notions of "going it alone"—or even as a threesome!

My point is to register hope that the Trilateral Commission proceeds on the assumption that we have indeed entered the era that Alistair Buchan foresaw as the "era of negotiations"—an era in which the old premises of power will no longer suffice as the touchstone of human destiny; indeed, I would add, in which the old premises of sovereignty will no longer be adequate to the tasks of human organization.

If we have, indeed, entered such an era, we shall have to do better in the 1980s than we did in the 1970s. It is easy to forget, for example, that in 1974 the West turned down OPEC's offer of a price regime for oil based on indexation—rejecting it as a rejection and condemning it as heresy. The "Chicago School" actually predicted that the price of oil would be back to $3 per barrel within the year. In effect, it was rejection of an offer of contract in this critical area of energy—a rejection that relied on old-fashioned notions of power—economic, political and military—while ignoring the reality that its dispersal had already occurred. And today, of course, the reality is not the avoidance of indexation—for it is applied unilaterally, if convulsively, by OPEC; what was missed was the chance to apply it in a consensual and well-ordered manner. Behind the lost chance was a failure of political perception—failure to allow the glimpse of interdependence that had been offered to influence Northern responses to the events of 1974. We are living with the results—and still not blaming ourselves but others, and other factors.

We cannot go on in this way giving lip service to interdependence but believing that it requires obligations only of others. It derives from mutual needs and imposes mutual obligations. At its heart is sharing of power and responsibilities, and the question for us all in the 1980s is really not "whether" but "how" that sharing is to take place. Comanagement of the world economy is surely the concomitant of interdependence. Irrespective of preferences for economic theories is a palpable need for shared management of the world economy; excessive dependence on uncoordinated national choices will only make the global crisis worse. If dominance is out and comanagement is declined, the alternative can only be conflict, disorder and chaos. We could hardly then indulge the excuse that they have overtaken and overwhelmed us. For all our enlightenment, we will have chosen that way—backwards!

The way forward must be, therefore, a way that goes beyond strict trilateralism. Despite continuing, indeed constantly enlarging, world poverty, important centers of political and economic power are developing in the South: OPEC, ASEAN, the "newly industrializing countries" of the Group of '77 and the special examples of India, Nigeria, Brazil, Korea, Mexico. They cannot either be ignored or suffered until they can be overborne. Their reality underlines the need for more democratic relations with the South—not as a fourth partner in the expansion of trilateralism but through equitable linkages between North and South generally.

The answer surely is not to make ad hoc adjustments to accommodate the few who "graduate," and to do so grudgingly and with resentment; but to develop a new internationalism which sees positive and mutual value in accelerating the development of the South in general and which therefore prepares and provides for the countries of the South a place in the world economy away from its periphery. Trilateralism must not be the enemy of internationalism; it should be its enlightened friend, itself changing with that enlightenment.

The process of positive, anticipatory adjustment is not unknown to trilateralists. It is the same movement that made Western societies more equal and more just; national experience which surely confirms that, in the end, despite all the fears and traumas, the society as a whole becomes more prosperous and secure and all its elements more assured of a worthwhile life. It is no different with the society of nations.

Yet now, in antithesis to adjustment in the North, developing countries face what they regard as frontal assaults on their efforts to produce and earn—euphemistically described as protectionism; and this despite an annual trade balance in manufactures of nearly $100 billion in favor of the developed countries and a supply pattern that allows the Third World less than 2 percent, and even in clothing and textiles less than 8 percent, of the market for manufactures in most of the main industrialized countries. Your discussion paper has revealed the injustice involved in thus nipping industrialization and development in the bud; but it is not even an injury to the poor that helps the rich. As the Brandt Commission's Report demonstrates: "The very protectionism that the recession encourages could itself be one of the greatest enemies of recovery." It will almost certainly further threaten the recycling process by affecting the export earnings of the poor countries and therefore their capacity to borrow and to buy—a threat which has dangers for the whole international financial system. Protectionists seem to have a blind faith in the capacity and willingness of others to import despite their own refusal to do so. They may face a harsh reality; and the social and political even if not the economic costs of the resulting depression could be several times more disastrous for the rich countries than for the poor.

And there are also other reasons why Southern progress is a Northern interest. We can agree, I assume, that it would be doubly dangerous were North-South problems to increase East-West tensions—were poverty to threaten détente. There was a time when "cold war" rivalries offered temptation to Third World countries to encourage competition for favors. That temptation is
now marginal, both because the superpowers are no longer easily lured into such competition and because the Third World has found the rewards in any event rarely worth the effort and the risks. The situation now is more serious from both a Third World and a global viewpoint, for it underscores the degree to which poverty makes a poor country a hostage to fortune and a pawn in the struggle of the strong. When I hear lofty words today about the need to help the brave people of Afghanistan—about the moral duty of the free world to prevent their going under the weight of oppression—I am tempted to recall the record of recent years in Western support for those very people. For the period 1975-1978, bilateral aid to Afghanistan from DAC countries ranged between 27.6 to 34.8 million dollars a year. These figures compare sadly not only with actual needs but with the 400 million dollars offered Pakistan overnight by one DAC country and the billions committed to enlarged military expenditure by many in the context of the Afghan crisis.

Western responses to Soviet intervention in Afghanistan are, of course, understandable and, if they do not miscarry, could be important to the peace of the world and the preservation of the independence of smaller countries. But they have little to do with a moral stand on the side of the people of the mountain passes. They have to do with the balance of power in the world. But how much more might not have been accomplished, even in that cause, had Afghanistan—one of the world’s least developed countries, where people subsist on the margins of existence at per capita income levels of 220 dollars per annum—been helped in straightforward ways to stand on its feet economically, to grow as a nation with economic, social and political institutions stabilized against the erosions of poverty and so against pressures from without.

Threats to détente do not, of course, derive only from conditions within Third World countries; but those conditions must be made more propitious to détente or they will assuredly and increasingly threaten it. This is not a plea for spheres of influence that are economically strong; it is a plea for recognition that genuine non-alignment is a great bulwark of détente and that persistent poverty and underdevelopment impair it. The failure to relieve North-South problems is almost bound to intensify East-West tensions. Widening disparities in wealth and poverty between nations bear on the peace of the world, just as such disparities within nations have shaken societies to their foundations.

The trouble is that we find it difficult—even the most enlightened of us—to sustain consciousness of the world as an interlocked community. As Barbara Ward reminds us: “The vision of ‘earth rise’ seen by human beings standing on the moon had its impact. Planet earth is a small place.” For the most part, however, we are like village yokels preoccupied with our neighborhood concerns and banishing thoughts of problems beyond our own. Yet the world has, indeed, become a global village and those problems are all village problems now.

How do we escape the old image of a world of separate, scattered, unlike communities whose fortunes can be disengaged and whose misfortunes need not impair the prosperity or tranquility of the more favored? Perceptions of one world and an inseparable humanity do not easily dissolve the image of several separate worlds that centuries of the sovereignty syndrome have imprinted on our consciousness.

But I wonder if another approach may make it easier to overcome this malfunctioning of our political vision and see the tragedy that confronts our global village. Imagine, if you will, our world’s total area scaled down to the rough dimensions of Western Europe. In broad dimensional terms and without attempting to replicate locational patterns, all of the United States will be Britain, and the whole of Western Europe, including the EEC, will be Portugal. Japan will be Northern Ireland and Canada, Germany. Africa will be all of France, the Benelux countries, Denmark and Switzerland. Latin America will be Spain. The USSR, both Sweden and Finland, while China and Australia will cover Norway and Iceland. India will be Ireland; the rest of Asia, Italy; and Eastern Europe, Austria.

Londoners will boast annual incomes of nearly $7,000; and in Lisbon they will be $5,750. But Dublin and Oslo will be centers of great poverty with annual subsistence incomes of $142 and $400. And similar income disparities will exist elsewhere: In Bonn annual incomes will be $7,400, while in Paris they will be $420.

In Paris, Brussels and Geneva, out of every 1,000 children born, 150 will die before the age of I; whereas in Bonn and Lisbon and in London the figure would be no more than 14.

The population of the whole of our shrunken world will increase by over 50 percent by the end of the century. But while in Portugal and Britain population increases will be 10 percent and 18 percent respectively, in Ireland the increase will be 60 percent and in France 100 percent—explosions of poverty as well as of population.

More than half of all the oil-based energy produced will be consumed by people living in Britain, Portugal and Germany. Those three countries alone will have about 60 percent of the income and 64 percent of the industrial production of the world. The average person in Britain will consume 11,500 units of energy each year (measured in kilograms of coal) and in Portugal 4,200 units; but in France the average dweller will consume 397 units of energy, and in Ireland merely 218.

Throughout the poverty belt of the Benelux countries, Denmark, France and Switzerland, and in Ireland and Italy also, most people will subsist on one meal a day.

* Development Assistance Committee of the OECD.
with life expectancy below 50 years, and only about one in three will be literate. In Germany and Portugal, most families will have a car and three meals a day and life expectancy over 70 years, and literacy will be almost 100 percent.

And these are only a few of the disparities in the human condition that will exist just across national borders. Some 20 billion dollars will be spent each year in the name of development and in the hope of narrowing these disparities, but with little effect. Meanwhile, some 450 billion dollars annually will be devoted to military expenditure, with nuclear weapons constantly aimed from Britain and Portugal over the heads of rich and poor alike towards Scandinavia, and from Sweden and Finland in reverse.

This picture of the world distorts geography—but very little else; for the truth is that technological achievements are already effecting the transformation, with developments in air travel and telecommunications bringing us all every day closer. The picture is not, therefore, far-fetched. It is more accurate than a cartographer’s view of our global realities. It can help us to see ourselves as we really are and to understand our nearness to disaster and oblivion.

It is not, of course, a picture of a trilateral world. But that the Commission should be grappling with issues like North-South trade—and I hope North-South problems more generally—is a glow of hope on the dark horizon. Solutions to the world’s problems will only emerge out of political vision; and vision needs perception and practicality melded by talents such as yours. I stress political vision because if there is one contention above all I would wish to urge upon you, it is the insufficiency of the bureaucratic and technocratic process and the essentiality of the political in responding to the great challenges before us. In North-South issues we have made a fetish of the former; it is time the North, in particular, committed its political leadership to the search for solutions.

Recent experience has strengthened my own faith in the effectiveness of the political process for conflict resolution. The Commonwealth’s achievement in bringing Zimbabwe to freedom is one of the very few major successes for peace by negotiation in post-war times. It is a Commonwealth achievement because while many contributed and while major roles fell, of course, to the parties to the conflict and to the British Government, it was a Commonwealth political process involving personally the leaders of many countries that made it possible. At its center was Commonwealth summity at Lusaka. Zimbabwe’s independence under majority rule which we will inaugurate in Salisbury in a few weeks time was made possible because of the direct involvement of Commonwealth Presidents and Prime Ministers generally. At Lusaka six of them and a hovering Secretary-General met together twice in Kenneth Kaunda’s study over a weekend break between conference sessions. They had a political discussion that was intimate and frank but free of polemics, and at its end they resolved that the war in Rhodesia that had raged for seven years had to end, that majority rule must be installed and independence granted to a new government chosen through free and fair elections. Their colleagues endorsed their proposals and assisted in their implementation.

There were hard decisions there for everyone, and the journey became harder as we went along. There were temptations to deviate and crises of confidence; but the process held. It held because it had been cemented at the summit—and because throughout the long months after Lusaka, through the Lancaster House Conference and the election campaign, all six of the leaders remained personally active in ensuring that the process unfolded. During those months they probably spoke more often with each other on this matter than they would normally have done on all matters over a year.

Can we not do as much for our stricken world? We all know how little has come from the global negotiating “circuses” we have so lavishly staged. Worse still, we know that sometimes in the North this is not seen as failure but as justifiable expenditure of time and resources in maintaining the status quo. But this is just my point. If we know as we do, as I am sure you all do, that the status quo can no longer serve even those it has served best—perception, and courage, and wisdom, and vision must come together; and they must meet at the summit to make a reality of hope.

It is to this end that the Brandt Commission makes its plea for a resort to summity as an essential part of its “program for survival.” It is because we saw human survival as being at stake that we did not shrink from the difficulties implicit in the proposal. Can the Trilateral Commission close the book on trilateralism—or perhaps begin a new one—by proclaiming the message of this morning’s paper: that we must share on better terms, for all its people and nations have a mutual interest in urgent change to that end; and that it is political action alone that can ensure or, by its withholding, jeopardize human survival.