This report was prepared for the Trilateral Commission and is released under its auspices. It was discussed at the Trilateral Commission meeting in Madrid on May 17-19, 1986. The authors, who are experts from Western Europe, North America and Japan, have been free to present their own views; and the opinions expressed are put forth in a personal capacity and do not purport to represent those of the Commission or of any organization with which the authors are associated. The Commission is making this report available for wider distribution as a contribution to informed discussion and handling of the issues treated.
Prospects for East-West Relations

A Task Force Report to
The Trilateral Commission

Authors: William G. Hyland
Editor, Foreign Affairs

Karl Kaiser
Director, The Research Institute of the
German Society for Foreign Affairs;
Professor of Political Science,
Cologne University

Hiroshi Kimura
Professor and Director, The Slavic
Research Center of Hokkaido University
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.

© Copyright, 1986. The Trilateral Commission

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Hyland, William G., 1929-
Prospects for East-West relations.
(The Triangle papers; 31)
II. Kimura, Hiroshi, 1936—III. Trilateral Commission. IV. Title. V. Series.
D849.H94 1986
327.47073
86-16051

Manufactured in the United States of America
The Authors

William G. Hyland is Editor of Foreign Affairs, the journal published by the Council on Foreign Relations in New York. He has pursued a long career both in the government and in academic life. He joined the Central Intelligence Agency in 1954; and moved to the National Security Council Staff at the White House in 1969, where he served on the Soviet and European affairs staff until 1973. He then became Director of Intelligence at the Department of State; and returned to the White House in 1975, as a deputy assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, until retiring in 1977. Thereafter Mr. Hyland joined the Georgetown Center for Strategic and International Studies and subsequently became a Senior Associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Effective June 1984, he became the Editor of Foreign Affairs. Mr. Hyland was educated at Washington University in St. Louis and the University of Missouri in Kansas City. He is the author of The Fall of Khrushchev and numerous monographs and articles, including “Soviet Perspectives on Security” (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1981) and “The Struggle for Europe: An American View” in Andrew J. Pierre, ed., Nuclear Weapons in Europe (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1984).

Karl Kaiser is Director of the Research Institute of the German Society for Foreign Affairs (Bonn) and Professor of Political Science at Cologne University. He studied at the Universities of Cologne, Grenoble and Oxford and holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Cologne. Dr. Kaiser was a Lecturer at Harvard University and a Research Associate at its University Center for International Affairs (1963-1968). He taught at the Johns Hopkins University Bologna Center in Italy and at the Universities of Bonn and Saarbruecken between 1968 and 1973. He has been a Visiting Professor and a John Fitzgerald Kennedy Memorial Fellow at Harvard University. He was a Member of the Council of Environmental Advisors of the Federal Republic of Germany (1972-1978) and a Member of the Government Commission on Reform of the Structure of the Armed Services (1970-1971). Among Dr. Kaiser’s numerous publications are EWG und Freihandelszone (1963), German Foreign Policy in Transition (1969), Britain and Germany (Editor, 1971), Germany and the United States (1973), Kernenergie und internationale Politik (Editor, 1975), Deutsch-Arabische Beziehungen (Editor, 1981), Weltpolitik (Coeditor, 1985), and a task force report to the Trilateral Commission, Towards a Renovated International System (1977, with Richard Cooper and Masataka Kosaka).
The Trilateral Process

The report which follows is the joint responsibility of the three authors, with William G. Hyland serving as principal author.

The authors met first on August 8-9, 1985, to discuss the general approach of their report. William G. Hyland had prepared a general outline, and Hiroshi Kimura and Karl Kaiser had each prepared brief notes. William G. Hyland finished the first draft of the report at the end of October and then met with Hiroshi Kimura on November 8 and Karl Kaiser on December 4. Mr. Hyland finished the second draft at the end of January 1986. After receiving comments, he completed the third draft in early April, which was discussed at the annual plenary meeting of the Trilateral Commission in mid-May. Immediately following the Madrid discussion of the draft on May 19, Mr. Hyland worked with Messrs. Kimura and Kaiser to produce this final version of the report.

Although only the authors are responsible for the analysis and conclusions, they have been aided by a number of others in the course of their work. On the North American side, William G. Hyland consulted informally with several others. On the European side, Karl Kaiser discussed the project with British members and experts in London on October 10, 1985; and with European members at their regional meeting in Paris on October 25-27, 1985. In early 1986, Dr. Kaiser met with French members and experts in Paris on February 27 and with Italian members and experts in Rome on March 11. On the Japanese side, Hiroshi Kimura met on three occasions with a consultative group composed of government officials, academics and journalists drawn together for the project.
Table of Contents

Introduction 1

I. The Setting 3
   A. The United States 3
   B. The Balance of Relations 5
   C. The New Soviet Leadership 9
   D. Trilateral Relations 13

II. Major Issues 17
    A. Strategic Policy and Arms Control 17
    B. The Political Relationship 28
       1. Eastern Europe 29
       2. Asia 35
       3. The Third World 37
    C. Economic Relations 42

III. Summary and Conclusions 47
INTRODUCTION

East-West relations remain uncertain. They did not become as bad as many observers had feared in early 1980, after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. For almost five years, however, there was a steady deterioration in relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. The structure of superpower relations that had been created during the 1970s was almost completely dismantled. At first Europe was less affected, but as the crisis over the Euromissiles intensified, East-West relations in Europe also suffered from the worsening of U.S.-Soviet relations. For the past two years, however, there has been some easing of tensions, and the trend toward a thaw between the two superpowers has continued through the first superpower summit meeting in over six years.

Nevertheless, the prospects for a significant improvement in East-West relations remain unclear. The major issues dividing the two superpowers—arms control and Third World conflicts—have become even more complicated, and a durable improvement in East-West relations will be extraordinarily difficult to achieve and to sustain.
I. The Setting

Most of the global trends over the past several years have been favorable to the free world countries and unfavorable to the Soviet Union. This has been especially true of the relationship between the superpowers; the United States has taken a number of steps to rebuild its power and to redress the nuclear weapons balance, as well as the psychological balance. From the low point of the Iranian hostage crisis, the United States seems to have gone a long way toward restoring a greater sense of national self-confidence. This is due in some measure to the fact that a steady military buildup has reduced concern over a Soviet strategic superiority. The greater national assertiveness also reflects the fact that some of the worst fears about the Soviet-American competition were not realized after the Afghan invasion. Finally, it has become more and more apparent that the Soviet Union is caught up in a time of troubles.

A. The United States

At the outset, the Reagan Administration made it clear that it would break sharply with the "soft" approach to East-West relations practiced by its predecessors. Its most telling phrase was that America needed to end a decade of "neglect... of weakness and self-doubt." The Administration blamed détente, with all of its enervating illusions, for the decline of American power. A centerpiece of the illusion of "détente," the Administration argued, was a misplaced trust in arms control—not merely the "fatally flawed" SALT II treaty, but the whole concept of incremental arms limitations with the Soviet Union. According to the Reagan Administration, these agreements not only failed to reduce weapons but, worse, created unverifiable arrangements that invited cheating and misled the public into believing that the process was reducing tensions when in fact it clearly was not.

This line of analysis led the Administration to inaugurate a major rearmament program designed to create a "position of strength." Until this was achieved there could be only limited room for negotiations. Moreover, it was argued, the Soviet Union would have to earn its entry into a new political process by improving its international behavior. Thus, at the time (1981), the new Secretary of State, Alexander M. Haig,
concluded there was nothing to negotiate until the U.S.S.R. began to behave responsibly: "The time was not right to give the Soviets something they wanted as passionately as they wanted a treaty on strategic arms."1

This approach reflected a deep conviction that America had become seriously weakened while the Soviet Union had built up its position. This approach also broke with the previous political strategy of using arms control as a means of rallying bipartisan support for a defense program. The Reagan Administration turned this around, arguing that a major buildup of American power was necessary to regain strategic parity, and thus was a prerequisite for negotiations. This was the essence of American policy until early 1984.

In early 1984, despite the crisis over the shooting down of the Korean airliner, the Reagan Administration adopted a more conciliatory public posture toward the U.S.S.R. In a public address in January the President suggested that 1984 could be a turning point if the Soviets showed an interest in a more normal relationship. In retrospect, it seems that the Administration, having successfully deployed the first American missiles in Europe and anticipating the change in the Soviet leadership, decided that the objective circumstances offered a chance to probe the Soviet position. No doubt this decision was also influenced by two domestic facts: the upcoming presidential election of 1984 and, consequently, the need to strike a public posture that was less negative and less defensive than in 1980.

Whatever its precise motives, the Administration from that point seemed determined to put forward a more conciliatory public posture. And as the change in Moscow from Yuri Andropov to Konstantin Chernenko was completed, there were signs that the Soviet Union, too, was prepared to move away from its broad hostility toward the Reagan Administration.

To be sure, there was no immediate change in superpower relations; indeed, they seemed to worsen after the U.S.S.R. withdrew from the Los Angeles Olympic Games in May 1984. But Soviet policy was also changing, as soon became apparent. It must have been clear to the Kremlin that Ronald Reagan would almost certainly be re-elected and that Moscow would have to deal with him for four more years. Moreover, the anticipated split that the Soviets hoped for between the United States and Europe from the Euromissile crisis had not occurred, despite Soviet threats of countermeasures and Moscow's withdrawal from the arms control negotiations. Finally, there were the pressures of

---

"Star Wars" (SDI). It had been immediately attacked and denounced by Andropov, but had grown in seriousness. The Soviet Union found that giving up arms control talks as a means of putting pressure on this issue was no longer effective. A better strategy was to isolate SDI as the chief obstacle to progress in arms control. This meant resuming negotiations and adding some flexibility to Soviet positions. Thus, in September 1984 Gromyko was dispatched to meet with the President; and as a result of a further meeting between Secretary of State George Shultz and Gromyko in January 1985, the Geneva arms control talks were reinstated. The agenda was expanded to include strategic weaponry, intermediate-range missiles and space defense. All of this, it is worth noting, occurred before Gorbachev took power.

The Geneva summit in late 1985 reconfirmed certain general principles that had been the basis for the East-West dialogue during the 1970s: the special responsibility of both superpowers for nuclear peace, the reconstitution of parity as a central principle of the nuclear age, the recognition of equality between the superpowers (which the Soviets had suspected the United States had withdrawn), talks on new approaches to conflict management (through establishing a crisis center), and perhaps most important, the agreement to establish an orderly dialogue—a "process"—on a broad range of issues.

Thus, five to six years after the breakdown of superpower relations, the process of restoring them had begun. In the West there is a feeling that diplomacy can once again be undertaken from a position of greater strength and confidence. In the East there is a similar feeling, but motivated by a quite different perception: i.e., that diplomacy should be undertaken to compensate for what seems to be a growing weakness and vulnerability. In short, there is once again a coincidence of interests. But in the interim, East-West relations underwent some significant changes.

B. THE BALANCE OF RELATIONS

One consequence of this interim (1980-84) was that the Soviet Union seemed to recognize that its chances of gaining a significant strategic or geopolitical advantage over the United States had receded (though not disappeared). To be sure, the United States also had not achieved a margin of superiority as a result of its armament programs. The overall situation seems to be a broad strategic stalemate in which neither side can press its relative advantages without running unacceptably high risks.
This has been the growing perception in the United States, reflecting a considerable change from the mood of 1979-80 when there was an apprehension that the West would soon be confronted with a new Soviet offensive thrust toward the Persian Gulf. Indeed, one of the important new trends has been that the Soviet Union, despite advances in strategic weaponry, is no longer perceived in America as having a decisive edge. This is reflected in numerous samplings of U.S. public opinion.

It must be emphasized, however, that the picture is seen differently in Western Europe. Soviet advantages in Europe—both conventional and nuclear—have grown and Europeans stress that, given the central importance of Europe to Western security, such developments significantly affect the overall balance. Though both NATO and the Warsaw Pact have modernized their weapons during the last two decades, the inequalities in most of the important systems significantly favor the East. The Warsaw Pact is superior in critical categories, e.g., in battle tanks and artillery, where the trend of Pact procurement is roughly twice that of NATO. The mobility and firepower of its forces have increased, decreasing the warning time for NATO. Consequently, the Pact’s capacity for quick surgical moves has improved. Moreover, its posture remains inherently offensive in Europe.

In the field of nuclear weapons, the modernization of the Warsaw Pact has dramatically changed the balance. A new arsenal of mobile intermediate-range nuclear missiles—the SS-20, 21, 22 and 23—has been added to the older systems, thus creating superiority of weapons and options for the Pact. This begins to challenge the very basis of NATO’s doctrine of flexible response. The Soviet Union is beginning to acquire the option to wage a conventional war—through sufficient and mobile conventional forces—while using its nuclear superiority to deny the West the option of using its limited tactical nuclear weaponry to offset Eastern conventional superiority.

As for the two superpowers over the past six years, they have both come to face some of the same general constraints. Both face domestic restrictions that obviously incline them toward strategies of accommodation, even if only temporarily.

The Soviet Union obviously needs to shift more resources into the modernization of the civilian economy, and this remains a pressure on foreign policy, especially in light of the ambitious growth targets adopted at the 27th Party Congress. Obtaining access to modern technology in the outside world must be one of the most compelling
elements in the conduct of Soviet foreign policy. Many observers believe the weakness of the Soviet economy is the strongest factor driving Soviet policy toward a détente, especially with Europe and perhaps with Japan as well.

Since 1984 the United States, of course, has also had to face its own domestic constraints—huge budget and trade deficits that jeopardize economic prosperity at home and threaten international stability. This accumulation of constraints has already led to the first serious reduction in the growth rate of defense spending since the mid-1970s. Because of new U.S. legislation, further defense cuts—perhaps even large ones—are probable. Similarly, the American reluctance to spend more for defense encourages U.S. allies to prefer an East-West accommodation; and among the East Europeans in the Warsaw Pact, growing Soviet economic exploitation reinforces a similar desire for an expansion of East-West economic relations and, consequently, a reduction of tensions.

A further constraint is the weakening of the two superpowers' predominance within their respective alliance systems. While a long-term historical trend, it has recently accelerated because nationalism continues to grow in Western Europe, in the United States and Canada, in Japan, in Eastern Europe and, in a broad sense, even in the U.S.S.R. itself. The strategic significance of this revival of nationalism is that neither the United States nor the Soviet Union can automatically dictate policies to their respective allies (if they ever could). Both must pay more attention to European views. East-West relations have thus continued the trend toward a greater multipolarity that began with the German Eastern treaties of 1970 and the Nixon opening to China in 1972.

The most dramatic demonstration of this trend toward multipolarity, of course, was the crisis over the emergence of Solidarity in Poland in 1980. But it has also been manifested in relations between Moscow and other East Europeans. There have been recurring and sometimes sharp differences—for example, the quarrel between the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia on the one hand and East Germany and Hungary on the other, centered on the East German desire to insulate German relations from the tensions between the superpowers, which Moscow vigorously rejected. Of course, disputes within the Warsaw Pact have been contained primarily by sharp Soviet reactions, threats and crackdowns. The Soviets want to contain such conflicts to avoid costly reactions inside the Eastern countries, as well as in the West. Moreover, the East European countries remain dependent on the Soviet Union as
a market and supplier of critical materials. On balance, however, centrifugal tendencies have been strengthened.

Moreover, growing troubles have beset the Soviet Union since the Afghan invasion. What appeared in the 1970s to be an inexorable Soviet advance has not only slowed, but the geopolitical gains of that period have already begun to show signs of deterioration. The much feared Soviet advance into the Persian Gulf has not occurred—or has been thwarted in Afghanistan. Indeed, the war in Afghanistan begins to resemble America’s plight in Vietnam: Moscow can neither win it nor end it. To win would require a greater commitment of resources and a stronger base of indigenous support, and perhaps involve some risks of escalation by encroaching on Pakistani territory. But Moscow cannot end the war without making some significant political concessions.

The Soviet Union’s “extended empire”—a term that came into vogue to describe the U.S.S.R.’s predominance in such remote outposts as Aden, Addis Ababa, Hanoi and Kabul—has brought certain liabilities as well as offered certain strategic assets to the Soviet state. The cost to the Soviet Union of its empire is growing: some observers estimate an increase from approximately $18 billion annually to over $40 billion annually between 1971 and 1980. This price is certainly not beyond Soviet resources, but the burden of empire still imposes a cost on a society and economy that is already stretched thin and on a country that desperately needs to resume its own economic progress.

In this connection it is also worth noting a widening of the gap between the societies of the trilateral countries and the Soviet bloc. There is no longer talk of convergence because the trend is, in fact, toward greater divergence. As the West becomes more prosperous, more technologically advanced and diverse, and more democratic, the Soviet Union severely suffers in comparison. This is a source of frustration, resentment and even hostility in East-West relations. Whereas it was once believed that there might be a mellowing of the Soviet Union as its society “matured,” the social malaise there may in fact increase East-West tensions, and could even lead to a more belligerent policy to divert domestic discontent.

There has been a potentially important change of a different sort in the East: the reduction of tension between China and the Soviet Union. While both Beijing and Moscow seem concerned that their rapprochement not be cast in terms of the old ideological-strategic alliance, the change has nevertheless been distinct: both sides seem to want to gain some freedom of maneuver and are promoting a change in at-

---

mospherics, buttressed by an increase in economic intercourse and bilateral contacts.

Thus far, the Soviets have made no concessions; although the Chinese have retreated somewhat from their demands as preconditions for normalization, they continue to assert their validity. On balance, no Sino-Soviet rapprochement on the order of 1950 is likely. But Washington no longer has the wide possibilities to "play" the China card; neither can the Soviet Union threaten a China option with much credibility. It is Beijing that now seems best situated; but here too uncertainty predominates. What will China's foreign policy be after Deng Xiaoping?

In sum, the two superpowers seem to have lost some of their freedom of action.

The nature of the superpower relationship may be changing in other aspects as well. Despite some strident rhetoric in several crises (including military conflicts in Lebanon and the Falkland Islands), neither the United States nor the Soviet Union has sought to confront or otherwise intervene vis-à-vis the other. This restraint may have been simple Soviet prudence, in light of the limited operational opportunities and accompanying problems that intervention would have presented. It also may reflect a longer-term trend in superpower relations: namely, that the competition is losing some of its automaticity and is less propelled by ideological preconceptions. Some observers believe that certain rules of prudence have been tacitly adopted by both sides; these rules suggest cautious behavior when armed forces are in proximity (i.e., Lebanon and Syria), and a degree of respect for spheres of influence (Afghanistan and Nicaragua). Finally, both the United States and Soviet Union appear to be tempering their policies in the Third World because of a preoccupation with domestic priorities. This may prove to be a temporary phase subject to reversal, especially if Soviet inaction in the early 1980s only reflected a moribund leadership. The new party program and statements at the 27th Party Congress, however, suggest it was not a passing phase. The fact remains that the political deterioration of 1980-84 did not lead to a serious confrontation, which was not true of the 1950s and 1960s.

C. THE NEW SOVIET LEADERSHIP

The policies of the new Soviet leadership are in themselves a source of some uncertainty. Even as Gorbachev's general policies are spelled out, there is always the caveat that a new Soviet leader adopts policies as
expedients, while concealing his longer-term intentions. No doubt his style of conducting foreign policy is more daring and innovative than that of his predecessors and consequently poses more complex challenges to the West, but the substantive goals of his policies do not appear to differ significantly from those of previous leaders. Indeed the accident at Chernobyl, the recourse to secrecy, and Gorbachev’s general defensiveness raised questions as to whether his style is all that different from that of his predecessors. Since Gorbachev may remain in power for a considerable period, it may be prudent to distinguish his intermediate aims from his longer-term objectives.

It seems likely that the Gorbachev era will offer the West some near-term opportunities but pose some longer-term dangers. The bulk of the evidence suggests that Gorbachev will pursue flexible tactics to buy time so that the U.S.S.R. can embark on a major rebuilding of Soviet power in all its aspects—domestic and foreign, economic, political and social, as well as strategic. If so, this will shape Gorbachev’s foreign policy to a significant degree, even though his longer-term strategy will be more uncertain. Thus his effort to overcome domestic stagnation should lead him to seek a certain amount of technological assistance from the trilateral countries. And as Gorbachev suggested to *Time* magazine, this implies a certain type of foreign policy. Yet for strategic reasons he will not want to be too dependent on the United States, lest he open himself to future geopolitical blackmail and a repetition of the fiasco surrounding the Jackson-Vanik legislation. In his meeting with American businessmen after the Geneva summit, Gorbachev made it clear that the United States would have to make several concessions if it wanted better relations, including repeal of the Jackson-Vanik restrictions on most-favored-nation treatment, extensions of credits, and easing of restraints on technology transfer.

It is doubtful that Gorbachev expects such a major reversal of American policy at any early date. Thus, he seems to be excluding a broad cooperation with the United States—except for arms control—and the thrust of his policy will be to strengthen economic relations with both Western Europe and Japan. Of course, there remain sharp political limits on pursuing such a policy of differentiation. The United States, Europe, and Japan are experienced in countering Soviet efforts to play one against the other; but for the present that seems to be one characteristic of Gorbachev’s approach.

Moreover, there seems to be a Soviet decision to return to a greater emphasis on self-reliance, even approaching autarky. At this stage, Gorbachev probably does not wish to become too deeply involved in political bargains for greater trade or technology transfer—bargains of
The Setting

the kind that eventually enmeshed Brezhnev and backfired on him in the mid-1970s, when the United States withdrew its trade concessions. Thus, Gorbachev's policy vis-a-vis Europe is likely to be directed toward separating any Western links between economics and political/military issues. At the same time, the Soviets will resort to their own linkage: holding out favorable prospects for East-West trade if the United States lifts its political and strategic conditions (e.g., in the Geneva talks). This too plays to the general interests in Western Europe in avoiding "linkage."

Gorbachev may make an effort to deemphasize the centrality of relations with the United States. He and some of his key advisers are already on record complaining that "the world is not limited to that country," and that Soviet policy should not be seen through the U.S. "prism." But the recent party congress provides strong evidence of the Soviet leadership's preoccupation with the United States. Both Gorbachev and Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze dwelled on the United States, scarcely mentioning other countries or regions of the world. And the Geneva summit gave a momentum to U.S.-Soviet relations that continues. Of course, Gorbachev probably still intends to try to split the United States and Europe on major security issues, especially concerning arms control. Such a strategy was evident in approaches to the United Kingdom and France for separate nuclear negotiations, in new offers to eliminate INF in Europe and European Russia, and in such obvious ploys as guaranteeing the security of those European countries that give up all nuclear weapons. And this approach was also reflected in the Gorbachev proposal to reduce conventional forces between the Atlantic and the Urals.

An increasingly propagandistic approach is thus becoming more prominent (e.g., the test ban moratorium). The discrepancy between apparently innovative Soviet proposals made to the public and Soviet behavior at the negotiating table is growing. Neither at the negotiations on troop reduction in Vienna, at the Stockholm Conference, nor at the Geneva strategic arms limitation talks has there been any translation into action or negotiating position of what Gorbachev has said so far.

A pointed Soviet approach toward Japan is also likely; its initial aim would be to improve relations for economic gains, but it would also be aimed at creating a split with Washington. It is already clear that Gorbachev will direct a greater effort to improve relations with Tokyo. But this encounters the problem of the Japanese Northern Territories. While it would seem a shrewd Soviet policy to return these islands, or at least two, to Japan, such a major break with past policies may be more than a new leader would wish to risk. And the islands do have a
strategic value to the U.S.S.R. Thus, any thaw in Soviet-Japanese relations will be limited.

In sum, in both Europe and Japan nationalism will be a source for Soviet exploitation, with the dual aim of gaining some economic concessions and influencing American strategy.

As for the Third World; the initial evidence suggests a somewhat more skeptical Soviet view of the near-term possibilities than in the 1970s. The main theme seems to be maintenance of existing commitments rather than extending more far-reaching new commitments. It may well be that as the Soviets view their opportunities they do not see openings for major new advances. Certainly their economic and social model has no attractiveness for Third World countries. And they are uncertain of the significance of Third World trends toward mixed economies and nonalignment. Moreover, gains in the Third World may seriously jeopardize relations with the West. Here, too, pragmatism seems the near-term watchword for Soviet policy.

An exception may be Africa, especially southern Africa. Outside of the Middle East (including Libya), it is the region most vulnerable to Soviet exploitation by orthodox means: political and propaganda support, and military assistance programs. Moscow has some leverage in Africa by virtue of the Cuban presence in Angola and in Ethiopia. In South Africa the Soviets have a history of support for the African National Congress. While the Soviets will be concerned about the implications for their own ideology of a conflict that is purely or overwhelmingly racial, they will be tempted toward more involvement by the strategic advantages of maneuvering the United States into increasingly painful positions in choosing whether or not to support the existing regime in South Africa.

In general, shifts in Soviet tactics or short-term strategy can be expected, perhaps more so under Gorbachev. More fundamental changes in Soviet foreign policy are not likely, at least not in the initial phase of Gorbachev's political consolidation. The Soviet system does not encourage radical departures in foreign affairs, and, given the Gorbachev regime's limited experience in foreign affairs, it will probably act prudently. The new leaders will continue to base their basic policies on the preservation of a strategic parity: "both our countries will have to grow accustomed to strategic parity as a natural state," Gorbachev reported to the Supreme Soviet after the Geneva summit. They will regard the United States as the "main enemy." And in this sense, there is not likely to be a return to the assumptions of the period of détente of the 1970s, i.e., that a more cooperative relationship with America could be developed. Improvements in relations with the
United States are thus likely to be more limited, more pragmatic and come much more slowly.

Evaluating longer-term Soviet strategy is more difficult, because in large part Soviet aims will be determined by the success or failure of Moscow's near-term tactics, which, in turn, are shaped by Western responses. It is a reasonable assumption, based on a long history, that if the correlation of forces can be altered in the Soviet Union's favor, Gorbachev will then be encouraged, if not compelled, to resume a geopolitical offensive. It is in this sense that there seem to be near-term opportunities and longer-term dangers for the West.

The policy implications of this general setting appear to be twofold: (1) in the current phase the West may have the chance to negotiate a price for the "breather" that Gorbachev is seeking, and, in this way, to turn the current improvement in the balance of power to the West's longer-term advantage; (2) how the trilateral countries handle this opportunity will decisively affect the longer-term Soviet offensive: if the current phase is mishandled, genuine new strategic opportunities for the U.S.S.R. could arise in the 1990s. In sum, Western policy needs a strategy that is geared to creating obstacles to Soviet advances as well as political and economic incentives for Soviet restraint; the aim is to make it unfeasible for the U.S.S.R. to simply wait for a long interval while it regains its inherent strengths. In other words, the United States and its allies should take the initiative, lest this opportunity pass.

D. TRILATERAL RELATIONS

The Western Alliance, of course, has not been free from its own troubles. The most worrisome have been disagreements over security issues: the dispute over Polish sanctions and the Soviet gas pipeline, the internal divisions in Europe over the deployment of American missiles, the debates over no-first-use of nuclear weapons and, most recently, the question of the nature and degree of NATO and Japanese support for the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative.

In addition, there have been quarrels over economic policies: the concern over the impact of the continuing large American budget deficits, the strength of the U.S. dollar (and more recently, its steep decline), and trade frictions on several fronts. These are not trivial issues. In some cases they strike at the very heart of the trilateral relationship and could threaten the common view of security and economic interests. Obviously, economic issues, if not dealt with judiciously, could become life threatening for trilateralism. But even in
these contentious areas there have been some signs of progress, such as the September 1985 agreement of the Group of Five to realign currencies and the agreement to begin the preparations of another round of multilateral trade talks.

On balance, the dominant long-term trend has been a strengthening of trilateral cohesion.

The most serious test of the Atlantic Alliance was the confrontation with the Soviet Union over the deployment of U.S. Pershing II and cruise missiles. This contest revealed a strong underlying Western unity despite some severe domestic clashes within individual Western European countries. And the outcome of this confrontation constituted a severe setback for the Soviet Union. It probably played a role in persuading the new Soviet leaders to return to a more traditional mix of conflict and conciliation.

However, in some countries—namely West Germany, Great Britain and the Netherlands—the controversy left deep political scars and wide splits between the major parties. In West Germany the broad consensus on defense and Alliance policy, in effect since 1960, was shattered. In Great Britain, the Labour Party carved out anti-nuclear and anti-American positions that threaten a major reversal of British foreign and defense policy, should Labour come to power. (Whether it would pursue such policies once in power is a different issue, of course.) Thus while the missile crisis was an undeniable success, it was not an unqualified one. It left Europe less united, subject to more domestic conflicts, and thus more vulnerable to Soviet exploitation than in the 1970s.

On the other hand, there have been particularly encouraging events. One was the Spanish referendum that affirmed the desire of the people for Spain to remain in the Atlantic Alliance. This was especially significant, given the original opposition of the governing party and the prime minister himself. The continuing strength of democratic institutions was also demonstrated in the transition in Portugal from a military to a civilian president (Mario Soares). And in France it was demonstrated in the relatively smooth transition from a socialist government to a conservative coalition, while President François Mitterrand remains in office.

One of the most significant by-products of the Euromissile crisis was that it provided an issue that bridged Asian and European concerns and thus became a common platform for the first broad expression of trilateral security interests. This new dimension to trilateral relations was demonstrated at the Williamsburg summit in May 1983 where, for the first time, Japan associated itself with a political-security declaration on NATO-centered issues.
The Setting

This reflects changes in Japanese attitudes: Japan has clearly begun to identify the Soviet military buildup in the Far East as the primary challenge to its security. Because of the incremental nature of this perceptual change, it is difficult to pinpoint exactly when it took place. But the period from 1978 to 1980 marked an important turning point. In 1978-79, after the 1950 Sino-Soviet treaty of friendship and alliance identifying Japan as a common enemy was abrogated, Japan ceased to view China as a potential threat. In a complete reversal of policy, Beijing not only avidly endorsed the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, but began to defend vigorously the need for a rapid Japanese military buildup in response to Soviet "hegemonism."

During this same period the Japanese learned that the Soviet Union had embarked for the first time upon the deployment of its military forces to the Northern Territories. The psychological impact of this action on the Japanese, who continue to regard these islands as an integral part of Japan, has been great indeed. Moreover, Moscow's invasion of Afghanistan reinforced the Japanese sense of a threat from the U.S.S.R.

Other aspects of Soviet behavior since 1980 have also served to strengthen the Japanese perception of the Soviet Union as the main security threat. In 1983 Andropov and Gromyko were reported as having said that the Soviet Union would redeploy to the Soviet Far East some of the SS-20s that might exceed the agreed-upon quota for the European zone in the INF negotiation at Geneva, in order to "counter the American military build-up around Japan." (The SS-20 mobile intermediate-range ballistic missile is believed to have enough range to target almost any point in Japan from the Soviet Far East, where approximately one-third of the SS-20s in the Soviet arsenal have been deployed.) More recently, the Soviets proposed a total ban of INF missiles in Europe but preservation of their Far East deployment, pitting Europe against Japan.

Recent Japanese governments have stressed more and more the necessity for Japan to strengthen cooperative ties with the United States and the NATO countries in order to counter the Soviet threat. Former Prime Minister Masayoshi Ohira declared that Japan would undertake sacrifices for the "Western Community." Mr. Ohira's successor, Zenko Suzuki, went one step further toward what can be called the "globalization" of Japanese security interests. In a communiqué issued jointly with President Reagan in May 1981, Suzuki indicated that Japan would take steps to bolster its military capabilities and would protect its own sea lanes 1,000 miles from shore.

Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone has been strenuously trying to accelerate the process of Japan's "globalization." He has repeatedly
stated that “the fundamental principle of Japanese diplomacy” lies in making efforts “to promote solidarity with the Western countries, particularly with the United States,” and “to fulfill her [Japan’s] obligations as a member of the Western Community.” Nakasone not only confirmed that relations between Japan and the United States are indeed a military “alliance,” but during his January 1983 visit to Washington he further described those relations as unmei kyodotai (a community bound together with a common destiny). Nakasone’s actions can be interpreted as a shift in policy orientation from the postwar Japanese policy of “genuine self-defense” to a more active commitment and a larger Japanese role in security on a global scale.

The crisis over Libya and the U.S. air strike of April 1986 provoked serious differences between the United States, Western Europe and Japan. It illustrated that there are continuing and underlying disagreements on how to deal with out-of-area issues in NATO. Nevertheless, at the Tokyo summit (May 1986) some measure of trilateral agreement was achieved on terrorism. It may also be that the differences over the U.S. action have had a sobering effect on both the European Allies and the United States, and that they have pinpointed the need for better management of these disagreements before these issues have a negative effect on the conduct of East-West relations.

* * *

**Summing up:** The period marked by the decline of relations after Afghanistan has ended; a new phase is developing, especially with the change of leadership in Moscow and the Gorbachev-Reagan summit. For Western policymakers, the issues will in large measure be the familiar ones. But because of sharper Soviet tactics and the accumulation of new uncertainties in the West, it may be more and more difficult to develop effective responses to the expected Soviet initiatives. As has been the rule for decades, the art of compromise will have to be applied as much within Western policy councils as between East and West.
II. MAJOR ISSUES

A. STRATEGIC POLICY AND ARMS CONTROL

The invasion of Afghanistan ended détente and ushered in a period of tension and uncertainty. For the trilateral countries this period involved new challenges to security policy—challenges that were successfully met. As a consequence, the West put itself in a stronger position to conduct the current phase of revived negotiations.

The basic question was the continuing concern about the validity of Western nuclear strategy in an era of strategic parity. Having achieved strategic parity with the United States in the 1970s, the Soviet Union, in effect, became the champion of its version of the status quo. Moscow was generally satisfied with the position it had achieved: strategic parity, conventional superiority, and a virtual nuclear monopoly in Europe. Thus, Soviet rhetoric seemed to favor détente, while the West was abandoning it. The Soviets insisted on preserving the gains of SALT II, while it was under assault in the West. Moscow insisted that its definition of parity ruled out the development and deployment of most new American strategic weapons intended to redress the imbalances that had grown up in the period of the SALT I agreements. And, of course, the Soviet Union argued that its own weapons programs were merely modernization.

When this bias was resisted, especially as it concerned the SS-20s in European Russia, Moscow switched arguments; it then claimed that its SS-20 deployments were compensation for the British and French nuclear systems and did not affect the balance. It continued to argue that its own new ICBM programs were merely modernization, but that MX missiles in almost any mode of deployment were a threat to strategic stability. And Moscow pressed hard for continuing the SALT II regime.

After 1979, the United States took an almost completely opposite approach. Under the Reagan Administration, the United States argued that the status quo was unacceptable, that a major revision in the power relationship with the Soviet Union was the prerequisite to any accommodation. In arms control terms this was translated, first, into delays over the beginning of negotiations, and then into sweeping proposals, such as the zero option for eliminating Euromissiles or proposals for
vast reductions in strategic missile warheads. Such approaches were viewed with increasing skepticism, especially in Europe. In fact, the Reagan approach to East-West relations and to negotiated arms control began to clash with European realities, where the new strategic issues that concerned Europeans were not only matters of ideology or psychology, but the very real imbalances between the superpowers in intermediate-range nuclear weaponry in and around Europe and in conventional weaponry.

As the 1980s began, it was apparent that neither reciprocal restraints nor negotiated agreements could be relied upon to solve the serious challenge to the strategy of the Atlantic Alliance posed by the erosion of the credibility of the U.S. nuclear guarantee. The growing concern over the gap between Soviet and Allied forces in theater nuclear weapons had been evident as early as the fall of 1977, reflected in a now famous speech by Chancellor Helmut Schmidt in which he pointed to the growing importance of the Euromissile imbalance. This concern led eventually to the NATO decision to deploy American cruise and ballistic missiles in Western Europe. The Soviet attack against this decision turned the contest into a test of the Atlantic Alliance. U.S.-Soviet negotiations did not halt the actual deployments of American missiles, which then prompted the Soviet walkout from the negotiations. Coming shortly after the Korean airliner crisis (September 1983), the Soviet withdrawal made it seem that East-West relations might be indefinitely frozen.

In addition, a European fear emerged in this period that events were leading to a new situation in which a nuclear war could conceivably be confined to Europe. This, in turn, reflected fears that the new American Pershing missiles would become prime targets at an early stage of any conflict and that the existence of sizable theater forces might permit the United States to escape its nuclear dilemma by restricting the war to Europe.

These concerns were related to a second, broader doctrinal issue: namely, whether the nuclear component of NATO's doctrine of flexible response could, or should be, sustained in the era of superpower parity. Prominent American strategists argued that the old doctrine of threatening to respond to a conventional attack by the first use of nuclear weapons should be formally abandoned, partly to reduce the inherent risks of the doctrine, and partly to stimulate a buildup of conventional defense forces. This provoked official denials and unofficial rebuttals, especially from Europeans who feared a move away from the U.S. guarantee of Europe. The unofficial outcome was a new consensus. Without so stating it, the Alliance was decreasing its
dependence on nuclear weapons by adopting a doctrine of no “early” first use of nuclear weapons—the first significant departure in Allied strategy since the formulation of flexible response. It may well be that some modification along this line was the inevitable companion to the more tangible fact that for the first time since the early 1960s, American missiles were stationed within quick striking distance of the Soviet Union.

In sum, by the mid-1980s the United States and its European allies had taken two important steps that successfully dealt with some of the most immediate consequences for Europe of strategic nuclear parity, by adjusting unofficial Alliance doctrine on nuclear use and by redressing in some measure the theater balance.

Paralleling these developments was an important shift in the American perception of the strategic relationship with the Soviet Union—the decline of American concern over the vulnerability of its strategic forces. For a decade American strategists had been preoccupied with the danger that the U.S.S.R. would achieve the combination of missile accuracy and numbers of warheads that would permit Soviet strategists to contemplate with high confidence a first strike that would eliminate a large percentage of American ICBMs. Such a serious strategic vulnerability provoked a series of schemes to protect ICBMs by deploying them in different modes: some of the ideas were quite strange, and none gained strong Congressional or public support. Support did grow for a new ICBM, and the MX finally gained a slender majority support in both houses of Congress. But in the process, fears about the original scenario of vulnerability seemed to fade. The window of vulnerability concept (which had already been discredited by Secretary Weinberger’s decision to deploy the MX in the vulnerable fixed ICBM silos that housed the Minuteman missile, and the report of the Scowcroft Panel in 1983) was completely discredited when serious doubts were raised about the plausibility of what was becoming an increasingly farfetched strategic scenario of a Soviet attack on U.S. ICBMs. More important, the Scowcroft Panel shifted attention to the longer-term perspective and the overriding issue of how to achieve strategic stability while protecting strategic forces and pursuing arms control. Specifically, the Panel report endorsed the MX as an interim measure, but urged a smaller, mobile single-warhead missile (christened the Midgetman, unfortunately). The overall thrust was to downgrade the threat.

Preserving the credibility of the U.S. deterrent was also the underlying issue addressed by the most far-reaching new American proposal, the Strategic Defense Initiative. It is important to understand that this
initiative did not grow out of a technical exercise (as the ABM did), even though it was influenced by the promise of new technologies. Rather, it reflected a groping for a solution to the nuclear dilemma that would rest on a more moral basis than assured retaliation. In his now famous speech of March 1983, President Reagan described the moral and strategic problems that confronted the United States: (1) since the advent of nuclear weapons the United States had taken steps to counter the Soviet threat by increasing reliance on deterrence through the promise of retaliation; (2) U.S. strategists had recognized the necessity of breaking out of a future that relied solely on offensive retaliation for security; (3) one option, therefore, was to try to stabilize the nuclear balance through major reductions of strategic weapons; (4) but even so, the prospect would be for a continuing dependence on the specter of mutual threat—a “sad commentary on the human condition,” Mr. Reagan said.

This melancholy prospect was the rationale for embarking on a research program to counter the awesome Soviet missile threat with measures that would be “defensive.” The escape from the inevitability of mutual destruction as a strategy (or policy) appealed to strategists; but it was the prospect of a reliable defense against missiles that attracted immediate and significant public support in the United States, despite a storm of critical attacks that the system would not work.

The impact of this initiative in Europe and Japan, however, was quite different. Western Europe was just going through a highly divisive debate on the double-track decision, intended to preserve the basic prerequisites of flexible response, when, without consultations, the announcement came from the United States of a new strategy of “Mutual Assured Security” through SDI that was intended to replace flexible response. Moreover, the governing political parties, which were fighting an anti-nuclear protest movement that challenged the alleged immorality of nuclear deterrence, were jolted and outraged by what they construed as President Reagan’s attack on the immorality of nuclear deterrence as the driving motive behind his new initiative. Both in Europe and Japan, SDI was seen by many as further evidence that the United States intended, despite its disavowals, to move toward a “fortress America” concept. Some observers in Europe even saw SDI as a major threat to the Alliance. Europe remained committed to the earlier doctrines of deterrence based on assured retaliation; Europe had a vested interest in the process of détente and arms control; and, finally, Europe had its own nuclear interests, especially the forces of the United Kingdom and France, which were drastically threatened by SDI.
In sum, there was a fear that America's allies would find themselves confronted by Soviet conventional and nuclear superiority while, for the first time, the United States could avoid its responsibilities for Western defense if it chose to do so, because its defensive shield created that strategic option. And even if Europe could in some part be covered by the defensive system of the United States, it was argued that geography would make Europe still vulnerable to a variety of attacks, while geography would be helpful to the United States.

Nonetheless, there was an ambivalence; there were expressions of official support and a widespread interest in some other trilateral countries in sharing in the technological largesse. The British and German governments signed technical cooperation agreements. Their support is confined to research and based on the assumption that any move toward testing or deployment of SDI systems requires Alliance consultation. Italy is moving toward a similar position. For many in Europe, however, SDI loomed as more of an obstacle to an arms control solution than as an alternative strategy for deterrence. Both in Europe and Japan there was concern that the rationale for SDI casts serious doubt on the effectiveness of the American nuclear deterrent, on which Western strategy would have to rest for many decades. In this view, SDI represented a subject for negotiations and perhaps an important element in resurrecting the process of incremental arms control with the Soviet Union.

Many of these same concerns were echoed in the debate in the United States. Was SDI a revolutionary change in strategy, as heralded by the Reagan Administration, or was it a shrewd raising of the ante in arms control negotiations? As one observer put it, SDI was the "quintessential" bargaining chip, but the Reagan Administration, at least through the first summit with Gorbachev, was loathe even to acknowledge that SDI might be negotiable. The President spent much of his summit effort in trying to persuade Gorbachev of the attractiveness of a transition to defense. Surprisingly, even Gorbachev seemed to admit that the President's faith in SDI was a personal and almost "religious" conviction.

Soviet rejection of "space strike weapons" had been instant and adamant. This opposition has continued almost unabated, because it reflects several basic Soviet concerns. First of all, it is a major technological challenge. Even if Moscow were completely persuaded that SDI would fail, the technological effort by the United States and its allies, and the impact on conventional armaments as well as the civilian sector, could not be ignored. Moscow would have to compete in some degree. But there are also sound military and strategic reasons for
Soviet concerns. For example, the Soviet leaders have to assume a worst case, that SDI could be effective in some measure. Some American analysts suggest that a 60 percent effectiveness would be a critical threshold for Soviet strategic planners; thus the U.S.S.R. may well see SDI not as a strategic defense program, but as a major strategic initiative, especially since the Soviets make no sharp distinction between offense and defense. The Soviets would have to assume that failure to stop SDI would mean a strategic arms race, since no offensive limitations could be contemplated in the face of a growing American defense. At a minimum this would mean far greater military expenditures. The Soviets also had to fear the option of a first strike by the United States, since America would be shielded from effective retaliation by an SDI system. Some analysts suggest that a 60 percent effectiveness of SDI in such a contingency could compel the Soviet Union to adopt a launch-on-warning policy and, of course, to undertake extensive countermeasures to defeat the SDI.1

Despite their opposition to SDI, the Soviets continued in strategic arms negotiations until the end of 1983, nine months after the initial Reagan speech. And U.S. persistence in pursuing the SDI program is widely credited with pressuring the Soviets into returning to new negotiations. It remains the key to the future. As one observer put it:

Ironically, the best hope for breaking the stalemate and moving toward a far-reaching arms control regime may reside precisely in the development that also currently poses the greatest threat to the future of arms control: the prospect of revolutionary breakthroughs in ballistic missile defense technologies.2

There was a vague feeling during 1985 that the Soviets might be maneuvering for some compromise on the question of SDI. Gorbachev's cryptic acceptance of "fundamental research," for example, was never repudiated—or adequately explained, for that matter. There have been other hints that the Soviets, in the end, might settle for an expanded ABM system, but with a ban on weaponry in space; this would probably be geared to a phased schedule of offensive reductions. This is little more than speculation, but it reflects the fact that Gorbachev did not press the SDI issue to the point of a confrontation or breakdown at the first summit.


In the United States and in Western Europe a middle ground in the debate has also begun to emerge: it would involve some additional elements of strategic defense, but well short of the full-scale SDI. The general idea would be to deploy a partial ABM system that would strengthen retaliatory deterrence by protecting offensive forces (mainly ICBMs). This could be rationalized, for political and psychological purposes, as the first stage in reaching the full-scale SDI, but would also provide for some near-term insurance during the lengthy period it might take to create the later stages of a layered SDI. A partial SDI is therefore conceivable as a final stage. But it must be based on a new East-West agreement, which would supersede the ABM Treaty. Such an East-West agreement could increase nuclear stability by affecting the calculation of risks in such a way that a first strike becomes even more improbable. Some observers suggest that such a partial defense might well find broader support as "...an achievable compromise, technically and politically, between deploying no defenses and embracing fully Reagan's ambitious and uncertain vision."3

In sum, the two superpowers have begun to define a new strategic framework. Despite some well-known differences between the United States and the Soviet Union over the definition of strategic forces, the two sides seem to be moving in parallel in approaching the limitation and reduction of offensive forces. Both seem to agree that a significant decrease is desirable. Both sides have suggested a reduction of 50 percent in a cluster of forces that might be called intercontinental (i.e., long-range missiles, submarine-launched missiles, heavy bombers and cruise missiles deployed on bombers). Both sides have suggested that within a general reduction there could be varying emphases to isolate certain weapons systems for preferential reductions; both have indicated that subceilings ought to result.

The Soviets have also proposed a separate agreement concerning intermediate-range missiles: the United States is to withdraw its Pershing II and cruise missiles from Europe, and the British and French are to freeze their intermediate-range missiles; the Soviet Union would in turn dismantle its force of SS-20s in European Russia, leaving, however, a force still deployed in the Asiatic U.S.S.R. The United States countered with a return to the "zero option," that is, the complete elimination of intermediate-range missiles, but phased over a three-year period, with different interim levels for different geographical areas.

On the third arms control issue there seems to be no common

ground. The Soviets insist that the United States renounce the development, testing and deployment of what the Soviets call "space strike weapons"; this demand is apparently a precondition for any agreement to reduce strategic offensive forces, but not a condition for an agreement on intermediate-range missiles. The United States continues to insist that an SDI research program, not precisely defined, must continue, with or without Soviet agreement.

The stalemate is obvious: the United States wants to begin reducing forces, while phasing in strategic defenses; the Soviet Union wants a clear block to strategic defense prior to any reduction. Agreement on intermediate forces, however, seems to have returned to the same broad issues that existed prior to U.S. deployment: Moscow wants to retain some numerical margin, while the United States withdraws completely from around the Soviet periphery.

The overall impact is that arms control—thought to be virtually dead—has enjoyed a revival: indeed, it has once again become the focal point of the superpower relationship. It was confirmed as such at the Reagan-Gorbachev summit in Geneva and by subsequent proposals.

The differences in substance between East and West have been put in sharper focus by the January 1986 proposals of Gorbachev on control of strategic and intermediate nuclear weapons. The specifics of his first steps could pose difficult problems for the West. By tying a 50 percent reduction in strategic weapons to a categoric halt to SDI, the proposal could create difficulties between America's eagerness to pursue SDI and its allies' interest in deep cuts. By tying an elimination of SS-20s (in Europe) and of Pershing II and cruise missiles to both an American agreement not to transfer technology and a freeze on modernization of British and French nuclear forces, the proposal is designed to create obvious problems between the United States and the two West European nuclear powers, between the non-nuclear powers and the nuclear powers in Europe, and between Japan and NATO members as well. Some important issues will have to be sorted out among the trilateral countries if arms control is to progress.

With regard to strategic weapons the Soviet proposals raise two problems in particular. First, the definition of strategic weapons as systems that can reach the territory of the opponent is hardly acceptable to the West since it includes American forward-based systems in Europe. Second, the link between deep cuts and a discontinuation of SDI creates a fundamental difference between the American and Soviet approaches. Only negotiations will show whether any middle ground can be found. No doubt the Soviet Union will try to exploit European
skepticism about SDI and continued interest in maintaining the ABM Treaty in order to create differences between the United States and its allies.

For the Europeans the issue of intermediate-range nuclear forces is of more immediate importance. Some Europeans even see an American temptation to focus all energies on these weapons systems because progress is not linked to SDI. The intensive consultation between the United States and its allies prior to President Reagan's reply to Gorbachev clearly brought out the particular interests of the partners of the United States. With regard to the Soviet request for a halt to modernization of the British and French nuclear forces, both of these European governments strongly objected, and their European partners supported this position to avoid intra-European differences and not to disturb the ongoing evolution of French thinking in the direction of an extended European role for the French nuclear forces. There is no likelihood—or desirability—that the united position on this item in the West is going to be undermined.

The Soviet attempt to confine an elimination of SS-20s only to Europe, leaving Asia aside, was naturally rejected by Japan, the United States and other NATO countries. An elimination of SS-20s that leaves out the Asian systems not only would continue to threaten Japan but would also threaten Western Europe since these systems can be moved westward. A parallel reduction of systems directed at Europe and Asia is therefore the prerequisite for a balanced approach that distributes the gains of security equally among the trilateral countries.

The Soviet demand to confine a zero solution to SS-20s, Pershing IIs and cruise missiles, while leaving all the other intermediate nuclear systems untouched until a later phase, remains totally unacceptable for the West. Such a zero solution would dramatically worsen the asymmetries in nuclear weapons to the disadvantage of the West: the two systems that can reach Soviet territory from Western Europe would be eliminated, whereas vast numbers of Soviet short-range systems that can attack Western Europe would remain unaffected. Consequently, President Reagan's position expresses a strongly felt consensus between the European governments and the United States, i.e., that parallel to a reduction of long-range INF the existing disparities of short-range INF must be eliminated.

There is obviously considerable Soviet interest in a zero solution for SS-20, Pershing II and cruise missiles, the systems that can reach the Soviet Union. Moreover, the Soviet Union is eager to eliminate the Pershing II for the same reason NATO introduced it, namely for its coupling function. Soviet policy has always been attracted by solutions
that avoid risks to Soviet territory in an early phase of a nuclear conflict. After all, as Henry Kissinger reports in his memoirs, the Soviets did offer an agreement to the United States never to use nuclear weapons on each other's territories but only on third territories. A zero solution would more effectively bring into play Soviet conventional superiority; such an outcome would, of course, be reinforced in the case of a total de-nuclearization, though that appears to be a somewhat more remote possibility. For these reasons a parallel reduction of the Soviet superiority in shorter-range INF remains a prerequisite for moving toward a zero outcome on long-range INF.

It must be remembered that a zero solution on long-range INF—which both sides now claim as a goal, though under different conditions—resurrects a negotiating goal that the Western Alliance formulated in 1981. Despite several significant military shortcomings, the Alliance nevertheless chose a zero solution for political reasons. Thus, if the Alliance chooses again to support the zero solution, it must be justified for political reasons. If East and West could agree it would mean for the first time the elimination on both sides of a newly developed modern nuclear weapon system; and it would involve a breakthrough on an item that has prevented significant progress on disarmament for decades, namely effective measures of verification. After all, a zero solution is unthinkable unless the Soviet Union is willing to implement what the Gorbachev proposal of January 1986 promised: the destruction of weapons systems verified by effective measures on the site. If, therefore, a zero solution brings these results, the potentially negative aspects of such a solution may well be outweighed—if accompanied by measures of political recoupling between the United States and her allies in order to compensate for any military decoupling effect. In any case, if the West should refuse to pursue this approach, there would be a clear risk of losing public support for its arms control policy.

The revival of arms control negotiations, as well as the quicker pace of the exchanges, despite cool relations between Moscow and Washington, suggests that arms control without a broad détente, ironically, may be possible. Some would argue that such a situation—viable arms control agreements not dependent on the political climate—might even be preferable. But such fine distinctions probably cannot be drawn in operational policies. There is an implicit linkage among issues that cannot be set aside. The Geneva summit suggested that changes in the atmosphere continue to be important; but it also suggested that substantive progress has to follow.

Another serious arms control (and security) problem is the almost
total absence of progress in reducing and limiting conventional forces, especially in Central Europe. For years this has been a source of comfort rather than consternation to some—despite clear Soviet advantages. It has seemed as if neither side really wanted to tamper with the status quo; hence the ritualistic nature of the MBFR negotiations. There has also been an interest in, and concern over, stabilizing the conventional balance with confidence-building measures. But in this area there has also been no progress.

To sum up, the outlook for arms control agreements has improved but is still quite uncertain. Strategic defense in some form is not likely to be eliminated from consideration, either unilaterally or through negotiations (at least during the Reagan Administration). The size of future offensive forces, however, cannot be defined except in some relationship to the defense. And, to complete the circle, defensive forces cannot be evaluated for effectiveness without a clearer view of the limits, if any, on offensive forces. Even in the best of political circumstances this is an intricate, delicate and necessarily slow negotiation.

One possible outcome is some reductions in offensive forces and some moderate growth in defenses on both sides. A variant would be an agreement to permit "research" on defenses to continue for some fixed period. Research could be liberally defined. A haunting question is whether compromises in this direction would in fact ensure greater stability than the alternative of reducing offensive forces but severely limiting new strategic defenses. This is a major strategic issue for the Atlantic Alliance and the trilateral countries—perhaps the most important issue since the emergence of the doctrines of mutual assured destruction and flexible response.

Finally, there is the fact that the current phase of arms control negotiations differs in one significant respect from the earlier periods. Then, failure could be cushioned by deferring the issues—e.g., waiting for Brezhnev's successor or the American elections. Moreover, since 1972 there has been an existing framework of agreements that also cushioned lapses or setbacks in negotiations. But should there be a major collapse, say, in the next two years, the consequences could be far more dangerous. Current agreements—under attack in the United States—could be terminated, with the attendant political and psychological consequences. At that point the new set of Soviet leaders would face a potential long-term confrontation; and, unfortunately, the West might then be entering a period of political change in its top leaders. Reaching new agreements, therefore, has a sense of urgency that was not present in the 1970s.
The overall task for Western statesmanship is clear: to define an East-West strategic relationship that recognizes the Soviet insistence on equality but, in turn, insists on the reduction and elimination of peculiar Soviet advantages; and to combine unilateral Western defense programs with reciprocal measures and negotiated agreements so that this new strategic relationship, if it is achievable at all, will rest on a firm foundation of mutual commitments and interests.

B. THE POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP

It has been frequently observed that arms control alone cannot sustain East-West relations. It is too complex and progress is too slow. And the roots of the conflict are political. Some improvement in the political climate is required if arms control negotiations are to succeed.

But the degree of linkage between political relations and arms control has become more uncertain in the last several years and, in particular, more contentious in the trilateral countries. The Europeans are skeptical of the value of linking progress in a regional conflict to negotiations on strategic arms control. At two critical junctures—the invasion of Afghanistan and the imposition of martial law in Poland—the Europeans argued against retaliatory policies that would jeopardize arms control. The Reagan Administration has wobbled back and forth. It formally renounced a direct linkage in its first term. But more recently, especially before and during the Geneva summit, it has revived some elements of linkage.

It is worth noting, however, that arms control negotiations were resumed in 1985 even though the political climate did not change much in 1983-84. This suggests that in the future as well, the political relationship may have to be developed more on the merits of individual issues and less with an eye toward preparing the ground for arms control agreements.

Nevertheless, failure to make some progress in political relations will continue to pose a potential threat to progress in all other areas. This is especially true for Third World conflicts where the difficulties of establishing any modus vivendi between the superpowers has long been obvious. But it is also true that the nature of political relations in the two really vital areas—Europe and East Asia—remains central to the re-establishment of any durable East-West security arrangements, including arms control agreements between the United States and Soviet Union.
1. Eastern Europe

During the 1970s an accommodation was reached between the East and the West in Europe. In its broad outlines it came as close as was feasible to a postwar peace treaty and ushered in an era of better relations.

Given the nature of the division of Europe, any significant change in the status quo required West German initiative, Soviet agreement and American endorsement. This is largely what happened in 1969-71 as a result of the initiatives of the new Social Democratic/Liberal coalition in Bonn, led by Chancellor Willy Brandt. The results are well known and need not be rehearsed.

Suffice it to say Europe in the 1970s moved strongly in the direction of a détente. The change in intra-German relations, as well as the improvement in superpower relations, did not deal directly with the question of the role of Eastern Europe, except indirectly in confirming postwar borders. The Soviets made a massive effort to use these agreements to create the impression that the new détente was based on Western disinterest in the fate of Eastern Europe and that the West had already acquiesced in a form of the Brezhnev Doctrine.

In the West, and particularly in the United States, there was a growing concern that the Soviet claim might well have a kernel of truth: that the European settlement or the détente that was emerging consigned Eastern Europe permanently to the Soviet sphere as the price for Soviet conciliation in Berlin and in strategic arms control. It was this concern that motivated the Western powers to accept an old, shopworn Soviet project for a grand meeting on European security, with the aim of turning it into a vehicle for constructing some new measures of autonomy in Eastern Europe.

What turned out to be the Helsinki "process" was, as far as the West was concerned, a project to loosen Soviet dominance in Eastern Europe while formally confirming the territorial status quo. Of course this was by no means a new idea.

The assumptions behind Western policies were relatively straightforward. First, it was believed that an expansion of East-West relations in Europe would give the countries of the Warsaw Pact a stake in preserving a more conciliatory atmosphere, and thus they would act as a small brake on Soviet policy. Second, it was believed that an expansion of economic relations would improve standards of living in the East, open these societies to greater contacts with the West and to more moderate or liberal influences, and give the East Europeans greater freedom of action.

But this approach was not uniform in Western Europe and the United States. Washington tended to view Eastern Europe in a super-
power context. But in the capitals of Western Europe there were concerns over interests that dated back for decades, if not centuries. In Western Europe the rapprochement between East and West was viewed as a continuing process that would suffer setbacks, even serious ones, but would endure precisely because it was a “process.” Europeans thus concluded that, in a broad strategic sense, East-West relations in Europe had indeed been “Europeanized,” and to a degree stabilized. In this light, when the accommodation of the 1970s was challenged by the Polish crisis of 1980-81, it was perhaps inevitable that European reactions would split sharply from American reactions.

American policy toward Eastern Europe did not change much after the establishment of the Nixon policy of differentiation. This policy had two features: first, to single out for special encouragement and concessions those countries that seemed most independent of Moscow’s foreign policy dictates, regardless of the country’s internal order. Thus Romania became a focus of special American attention. The second aspect was to treat the countries of Eastern Europe in a sort of rank order, putting the least acceptable (e.g., Bulgaria) at the end of the line. The Carter Administration went beyond this approach and accepted the concept that those East European countries demonstrating more liberal internal policies should also be encouraged. Thus Hungary was given special attention and the idea of a rank ordering was softened to some degree.

The Reagan Administration would eventually adopt this same approach, though in 1981-83 there was a revival of an older refrain in American policy—that of putting pressure on the U.S.S.R. through Eastern Europe.

The Polish Crisis
The events in Poland in 1980-81 do not need to be reviewed. The emergence of Solidarity posed a particularly delicate dilemma. The West wanted to encourage Solidarity, but not to the point of provoking a Soviet intervention. However, the desire to avoid a Soviet intervention also implied a willingness to tolerate those Polish authorities that could placate Moscow’s demands, and this turned out to be General Wojciech Jaruzelski’s regime. The crisis also served as a reminder of the limits on Western action vis-à-vis Eastern Europe, especially after the imposition of martial law, when Western sanctions were debated.

The outcome in Poland was evaluated quite differently in Western Europe and the United States. In Western Europe, Jaruzelski's martial law seemed preferable to Soviet troops; European leaders therefore tended tacitly to support him, or at least not attack him. In the United
States Jaruzelski seemed little more than a Soviet puppet, to be opposed and punished by sanctions. The sanctions issue in fact led to a serious division within the West. It demonstrated that in the United States there was still an influential school of thought that believed a policy of economic warfare was justified to force the Soviet Union to accept the consequences of its policies, to bear the burden of the Polish economic crisis, and so forth. In other words, the United States decided to treat Eastern Europe as a means to influence Moscow policies, as an element in the superpower contest, not as a function of European détente policies.

Terminating the European-Soviet gas pipeline was the focal point for the American policy of imposing sanctions. Of course, it met with sharp resistance in Western Europe. The upshot was to raise serious questions about the validity and efficacy of economic sanctions as a Western policy toward Eastern Europe. Even the United States could not employ effective sanctions without the close cooperation of other trilateral nations. It may be ironic that what had always seemed to be the West’s strongest instrument—economic power—proved to be one of its weakest points when the occasions arose for working out a common policy. This issue is dormant, but unresolved.

Matters reached the point that even Solidarity’s leaders disavowed America’s limited sanctions and urged a more moderate American approach. But this left the question of what attitude to take toward a regime such as Jaruzelski’s: should the West encourage it to move toward autonomy, or ignore it until there was either a change or more acceptable policies? France chose to receive Jaruzelski. The choice is not easy. In Hungary and Czechoslovakia the opposition was crushed by Soviet intervention, but in Poland, Solidarity and other dissident and opposition groups survive. Should they be encouraged as a matter of official Western policy; or should Poland be left to work out its own fate? If help to Solidarity was (and is) desirable, what forms could it take so that it would not actually worsen the lot of the people and provoke new repressions? These difficult questions have no clear answers, and Western policy seems to have settled down to a set of ad hoc arrangements, varying from country to country.

Poland also served to raise doubts about the policy of differentiation. By the old standards, Poland should sink to the bottom of the list and be treated with neglect, if not hostility. But this begged the question of means and ends. How could a punitive policy be conducted against a people who had strong sentimental ties to the West? How could a punitive policy be imposed on a country that was suffering from the consequences of economic policies that had been so strongly encouraged by the West?
Poland thus raised serious questions about Western policies toward other East European countries. Was the effort at differentiation to become merely window dressing for older, cold war policies and pressures? If the treatment of Poland was to be the model for Western policies, how should a country such as Hungary behave if it should run into political difficulties and have to yield to Soviet pressures? Would the West decide to strike back at the Soviet Union through Hungary or Romania? All of this needs to be sorted out in Western policy circles.

In sum, the Polish crisis has been a watershed for Europe, much as Afghanistan had been for superpower relations. The West faces the task of carefully reconstructing a policy toward Eastern Europe that will serve the traditional objectives of encouraging independence in foreign policies and liberalization in domestic policy, without challenging the Soviet sphere, yet without endorsing it either.

Different ideas have emerged in the debate. One idea was to continue economic pressure on East European regimes to increase pressure on the Soviet Union. By 1984-85 this option had largely disappeared with the lifting of sanctions against Poland.

A variant, but with a different aim, was the repudiation theory: namely, that in order to encourage a Europeanization of relations, it was necessary to repudiate the old Yalta divisions and reaffirm the Helsinki process in its place. This idea caused some consternation in Western Europe, where it seemed to foreshadow a lessened American role at a time when other voices, for different reasons, were urging a reduction of American commitments and involvement in Europe. It must be noted, however, that the idea of “Europe for Europeans” also found expression in the views of some Europeans. But, on the whole, Europe has not embraced the notion that the West should work for a superpower-free Europe.

Even with regard to the German and Berlin questions—some of the most complex items on the East-West agenda—evolutionary stability has become a dominant characteristic. The four-power agreement on Berlin and the other agreements concerning the two German states of the 1970s have turned out to be a much more stable framework than many thought at the time. Although the anti-nuclear protest movement produced a great deal of conflict in West Germany and even some reaction in East Germany, it did not result in a major surge of neutralism, or threaten the Federal Republic’s Western commitment. Though a minority in West Germany today disagrees with the NATO-oriented security policy of the country, all parties except the Greens

endorse the Western Alliance. In fact, the cautious opening toward the East within the status quo that was initiated by the Social Democratic/Liberal coalition has been continued and developed further by the Christian Democratic/Liberal government. The East German posture, moreover, has become less orthodox and nearer to the Hungarian position, but without challenging the G.D.R.'s integration within the Eastern system.

The main trend is that Western policy, including the policy of the United States, has moved back toward the center, toward the traditional aims of seeking peaceful evolution through encouraging contacts with Eastern Europe. This has been most dramatically evident in the evolution of the policies of the Reagan Administration. From the early period, when the Reagan Administration insisted on pressures against Eastern Europe as part of a strategy to force changes in Moscow, the United States has moved to a reassertion of the Nixon policy of differentiation. This was expressed in a policy pronouncement by Vice President George Bush in Vienna in September 1983, and in West Berlin in 1985 by Secretary Shultz, who said about Eastern Europe: “We differentiate among them, and between them and the Soviet Union, to encourage more independent foreign policies, greater respect for human rights, and economic and social reforms. Governments that show such positive trends receive our reinforcing acknowledgement.”

**The Soviet Dilemma in Eastern Europe**

While Western policy has gradually resumed the outlines of the older, pre-Solidarity approach to Eastern Europe, Soviet policy faces its own dilemmas. In Poland, the Soviets succeeded in avoiding the worst case—a bloody Soviet military intervention. But the Polish solution did create some ominous precedents for the U.S.S.R. Bonapartism is scarcely a model that the Soviets would want to encourage.

At the time Moscow had no alternative in Poland, rebuilding the old Communist Party was a long-term solution, but of little immediate relevance in the crisis of 1981. Moreover, the Soviets found themselves supporting a regime that had already been discredited. The opposition in Poland was growing, taking subtle but significant forms—i.e., underground publishing and strong links between the Church and the opposition. And, finally, without the drastic gamble of martial law, the Soviets would have had to endure periodic unrest, violence and perhaps revolution.

There has been continuing evidence that Soviet policy toward Eastern Europe is far from settled. This is evidenced by the debate
concerning East Germany and Hungary, on the one hand, and Czechoslovakia on the other, and the question of whether the East Europeans could play any role in mediating the confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union. This reached the point of a blatant Soviet intervention to call off the visit of Erich Honecker to West Germany and to denounce any East European autonomy. But the reiteration of this line against East European autonomy in Pravda in June 1985 was challenged in the authoritative Soviet journal, Kommunist, suggesting a policy debate in the Kremlin. This is not to say that autonomy in foreign affairs for Eastern Europe was being advocated, but that the harshest version of Soviet interventionism was being softened.

It now appears that the Soviets will tolerate a continuing economic relationship between Eastern Europe and outside countries, but will insist on strict Eastern European loyalty in matters of Soviet policy and security issues, as is evident in East Germany’s attack on Bonn’s support for SDI research. Nevertheless, the Soviets still face the problem that almost none of the regimes of Eastern Europe has deep roots 40 years after the end of World War II, that further crises seem almost certain, and that the Soviets have still not found a formula for consolidating their position in their European empire.

Prospects

Europe’s line of division created by the Yalta agreements or, depending on one’s perspective, by their non-implementation will remain for a long time, even if the strengthening of human rights or of the autonomy of Eastern Europe’s nations remains the West’s ardent wish and policy. There is a bitter lesson in the many postwar attempts to increase autonomy within the Soviet bloc, thus challenging the Soviet requirement of security: they end in a bloodbath or political repression.

A policy that violates essential Soviet interests is likely to be blocked by Soviet resistance and, if necessary, by the Red Army. Thus, there are only two possible frameworks for change. The first involves some Soviet participation; the second involves, if not Soviet participation, at least not a total Soviet rejection. The Helsinki process is an example of the first approach, which involves Soviet participation. Economic cooperation is an example of the second approach. Both approaches have a chance of inducing an evolution toward more autonomy and human rights. In any case, a lower state of international tensions is a prerequisite, though no guarantee, for evolution within the Communist countries outside the Soviet Union. Finally, gradual evolution is the only kind of change likely to produce results desirable to the West.
A reduction of the American presence in Europe, as advocated by some, might possibly elicit a similar move by the Soviet Union in Central Europe—but it is doubtful. Given Soviet priorities, it is rather unlikely in fact. Schemes that advocate such Western unilateralism project onto the Soviet system Western values and behavior patterns that are partially alien to it. There are no majorities in Western Europe supporting the notion of an independent Europe with a dramatically reduced U.S. presence in order to induce the Soviet Union’s withdrawal from Central Europe. A neutral, reunited Germany is unfeasible since the Soviet Union is unlikely to relieve East Germany, and since the West Germans, except for a small minority, do not want to expose themselves to the hair-raising risks of such a course.

In sum, a policy of differentiation is still necessary vis-à-vis Eastern Europe. Discretion and subtlety are the prerequisites for movement. In light of the fact that the leaders of Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary and Romania are of advanced age, change is to be expected and will require careful Western attention. The same is true for Yugoslavia, in whose cohesion and independence the West continues to have a major stake. In this sense, Eastern Europe requires skillful Western policies. Such policies should include a reactivation of economic relations through Western loans to these countries backed by support from, if not guarantees by, Western governments.

It may be that the best course would be for the United States to allow the West Europeans to take the lead, since their interests are far more directly involved. What happens to Bulgaria is of no genuine importance to the United States except as a function of pan-European politics.

The old goal was to weaken the ties between Moscow and its Warsaw Pact allies. This is happening without direct Western involvement, though détente was a factor in bringing about the Polish crisis. What Western policy is likely to face in the future is a series of special situations that will require accommodating to gains as well as setbacks. The general posture ought to be one of benign interest and occasional assistance, even though at times this seems to be coincidental with Soviet interests.

It may not be too much of an exaggeration to say that developments in Eastern Europe may well have as far-reaching an effect on East-West relations as how many warheads are allowed on Soviet ICBMs.

2. Asia
Over the past several years there has been speculation that the focus of American foreign policy has been shifting toward the Pacific. At the
same time, there has been speculation that the Soviet Union will also give more attention to its Asian policies. In fact, Siberia is in effect the last frontier for the U.S.S.R.; major development projects are planned for this area. Moreover, it is in Asia that three powers—Japan, China and the United States—join together in what the Soviets can only regard as a hostile encirclement. Consequently, we expect even more Soviet activism in Asia in the next several years than in the past. Gorbachev clearly intends to pursue a more realistic policy toward both Japan and China.

As this occurs, China's position becomes ever more pivotal. The Soviets will hope to entice the Chinese into a policy of equidistance. The United States will to some extent be forced to compete for influence in Beijing. Japan's position will be increasingly important in the formulation of American policy, especially in a period when the Soviets may well be more conciliatory toward Tokyo. In other words, the situation in Asia will be more fluid than in the past, when Soviet policy was rigidly hostile toward both Japan and China.

The United States cannot afford to make China the subject of any dialogue with the Soviet Union. On the other hand, developments in Sino-American relations do have an important bearing on U.S.-Soviet relations, and the present order in East Asia is based on a Sino-American rapprochement. The degree of Sino-U.S. military cooperation is thus of major importance. A prudent policy is clearly in order. The United States should not shy away from developing a military relationship with China for fear of the Soviet reaction, but such a relationship should be limited, motivated by American self-interest and by a desire to maintain a common front with U.S. allies. Europe will not support an aggressive opening to China in order to put Moscow under pressure, and Japan opposes U.S. military assistance to China. Thus there are strong arguments against a concerted Western effort to pursue a military relationship, as opposed to limiting assistance to the development of the Chinese economy.

The degree of trilateral political accommodation with China ought to be developed carefully, in any case. Beyond opposition to Moscow, the trilateral democracies have as yet little in common with the Chinese Communist regime. Internal political developments could bring China closer to North America and Japan, and even Europe. But meanwhile, legitimate Soviet concerns about the growth of Chinese power must be kept in mind by Western policymakers. A balanced triangular relationship remains the best Western option.

The basic configuration of global power in the postwar world also determines the alliance between Japan and the United States. The
Soviet Union appears to have few options for affecting this fundamental reality. The benefits it could obtain from Tokyo in exchange for returning the disputed Northern Territories would of course be substantial. If Moscow gave the islands back to Japan, certainly Japanese views of the Soviet Union would improve. But Soviet leaders are reluctant to take risks for such an intangible, unreliable thing as Japanese public opinion. The military-strategic value of the islands may continue to outweigh in the Soviets' minds improving Japanese national opinion. Since the death of Chernenko, however, there seems to be some movement in Soviet policy toward Japan. At this point, Moscow has probably not gone as far as to determine the price it might ask for a compromise on the Northern Territories.

Some past Soviet mistakes in dealing with Japan have involved heavy-handed, clumsy and inflexible behavior, which has frequently proved to be self-defeating. If the Soviet leaders were to adopt a more flexible attitude, even if this were only tactical, they might promote a more favorable Japanese attitude. Thus there are some grounds for speculating on future Soviet policy. As the Gorbachev regime consolidates its internal power position, we may witness some new tactics in the Far East, vis-à-vis both Japan and China.

Note must be taken of recent events in the Philippines. The remarkably smooth and violence-free transition from Ferdinand Marcos to Corazon Aquino is an encouraging sign that the collapse of authoritarian regimes need not always lead to chaos and radical left-wing rule. Of course, much remains to be done in the Philippines; it also remains to be seen whether the new government can halt and reverse the growth of the Communist insurgency.

The Philippines serves as an example to other governments in Asia of the need to arrange for smooth transitions of power. The authoritarian governments in the region, many of which have produced spectacular economic success in the last decade, need to help their societies graduate to a more institutionalized pluralism.

3. The Third World
Perhaps the most difficult question for Western foreign-policymakers is how to deal with the recurrent superpower clashes in the Third World. Recalling Zbigniew Brzezinski's epigram that SALT II was buried in the sands of the Ogaden, one cannot easily dismiss the Third World as an area of secondary or transient competition. In many respects it is the heart of the matter. It can be argued that the Soviets have strong vested interests in moderating relations in Europe or in Northeast Asia, or regulating their strategic weapons competition. But
in the Third World the situation is different: opportunities, combined with regional vulnerabilities, offer temptations that must seem irresistible to the Soviet leaders.

The East-West conflict in the Third World, however, has changed in important respects. First, there has been the emergence of the so-called Reagan Doctrine. Second, there has been some reassessment of policy in Moscow, especially since Brezhnev's departure.

Under the Reagan Doctrine, the United States is increasingly committed to, and involved with, anti-Communist insurgencies including military and economic support, and this is more and more openly acknowledged and declared. This commitment varies, of course; its principal focus is Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Cambodia and Angola. It has been proclaimed as both a "right" and a moral duty to support anti-Communist forces fighting Third-World Marxist regimes. The rationale is that these are uniformly "democratic" forces, but this characterization is the subject of sharp debate. The resources devoted to specific programs are not uniform. Though the avowed goal is to permit these various forces the chance to "win," the outlook is different for each area. Obviously some areas offer little chance for success (Cambodia), some areas are critical to the United States but not the Soviet Union (Central America), some are likely to become complicated and potentially risky confrontations (Angola), and one—Afghanistan—challenges Soviet vital interests.

For their part, the Soviets, having scored major gains in the late 1970s in the Third World, seem to have paused to consider some of the consequences. In particular, there seems to be a growing reluctance to expend scarce resources to support the economies of the newly acquired clients. In addition, there appears to be a skepticism about the political orthodoxy of the internal governing parties. Finally, there is some uncertainty about how to manage the conflict between supporting these new clients and negotiating with the United States—whether the two policies can in fact be reconciled.

In any case, the contest in the Third World is by no means a zero-sum game. More and more, important areas seem to be gray zones, where the interests and policies of the East and the West are not clearly differentiated.

Ethiopia is an example. Clearly, the regime in Addis Ababa has been close to the Soviet Union and professes a brand of Leninism. Cuban troops remain stationed there. But when the massive famine struck in 1983-84 and world attention realized the magnitude of the disaster, it was Western aid that was predominant, and the United States government and private organizations that took a leading role. As far as can be
determined, the Soviets were only involved at the margin. The long-
term consequences of the Western assistance remain to be seen, but the
point is that the regime's Communist orientation was no bar to the
West.

The commitment implied in the Reagan Doctrine varies, of course;
and accordingly, challenges Soviet interests in varying degree. The
most dangerous clash is in Afghanistan, where U.S. support risks
Soviet retaliation against Pakistan.

But even the situation in Afghanistan is ambiguous. Both the United
States and Iran are assisting the rebels fighting the Soviet army. At the
same time, the Iranians, while consistently denouncing the United
States as the Great Satan, are negotiating with Moscow concerning the
delivery of Iranian gas to the U.S.S.R. The Soviets in turn make
occasional overtures to Teheran. Nevertheless, the Soviets continue to
arm Iraq in its war against Iran. The United States supports the Afghan
freedom fighters while maintaining an embassy in Kabul and, of
course, treats with the Soviet Union on other issues. And neither side
has linked Afghanistan to other issues.

Of course, old patterns of conflict persist even though new variants
appear from time to time. Thus, in the Middle East, the United States
and Soviet Union generally find themselves in opposition. In this area
it may be that the two superpowers find themselves in the position of
relinquishing too much control to second-level powers. The lack of firm
control over developments in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf is in
many respects the most dangerous aspect of the superpower competi-
tion. It could mean that crises have become inherent in the structure of
relations rather than arising from the merits of the issues or a conflict of
interest. This has been especially true since the Iran-Iraq war and the
war in Lebanon. Ironically, both superpowers find themselves the
subjects of terrorism—a new experience for the Soviet Union.

Another aspect of the East-West competition in the Third World is
the growing difference of views between the United States and its
NATO allies. This has been true for some time in the Middle East. But
the issue of terrorism exacerbates European-American differences.
Given the sensitivity and emotional reaction in the United States to
terrorism, consistent European refusal to take a forceful position will
erode Alliance relations. In some new areas, such as Central America,
there is a growing gap between the United States and other trilateral
countries in the analysis of the stakes, of what should be done, and of
the consequences of various courses of action. Inside Europe there are
sharp differences within certain countries, and even within political
parties, over how far the Europeans should go in supporting the
United States in Central America. Some Europeans argue that U.S. intervention in Nicaragua could even spell the end of NATO, while some Americans argue in response that Europe's failure to support Washington in Central America could lead to a change in attitude in America toward NATO.

Alliance differences over Third World issues are not new of course. One only needs to recall Suez. But the scope of the disagreement is expanding—in the Middle East, South Africa, Central America. That Europeans and Americans see matters differently is a fact of political life and must inevitably shape common policies toward East-West relations.

One result is that there is no unified strategy, and especially no linkage between Third World issues and the more central issues. Thus, one notable American authority on foreign policy recently proposed a linkage between settlements in Nicaragua and Afghanistan; this drew criticism in both the United States and Europe. Whatever the merits of this particular proposition, however, the concept of such linkage is clearly worth a more rigorous debate than has taken place thus far.\(^5\)

There has always been something of a lack of a unified Western policy in the Middle East, but over the past decade the gap has widened further as the oil crisis created different interests and, therefore, differing policy prescriptions between Europe and Japan, on the one hand, and the United States on the other. In general, the Europeans and Japanese favored political tranquility to ensure the flow of oil, while the United States had to contend with its commitments to Israel and, more recently, with the hostility of Iran. This drift from a common policy has been especially evident in whether and how to deal with the Palestine Liberation Organization. Europe and Japan tend to accept the PLO and believe that its participation is the only road to a durable settlement in the Middle East.

One reason that the Western consensus about Third World policy has frayed is that the Soviet offensive, so widely feared in 1979-80, has not transpired. If anything, the Soviets seem to have recoiled from the dual shock of the Afghan war and the Polish crisis, and then to have entered into a period of consolidation in Angola, Ethiopia, Afghanistan and Indochina. Or, as one observer put it, Moscow has begun a "general slowdown in the previously rapid multiplication of Soviet military and political footholds around the world."\(^6\)

Either out of choice or because of the nature of the issues, the Soviet

---


Union found itself largely excluded from the Falklands crisis and the Lebanese war and, perhaps more important, unable to influence decisively the Iran-Iraq war. This slowdown has contributed to the debate in the West about how seriously to take Soviet advances—which many argue are only temporary—and what to do about them in the interim.

It is difficult to draw conclusions about Soviet attitudes toward the Third World. On the one hand, there is evidence of Soviet disenchantment with its new, weaker clients, say in Yemen or Ethiopia and perhaps even in Angola. There is some evidence that the Soviets are concerned about the growing costs of their new empire. The poor economic performance of these clients suggests an indefinite burden on the Soviet Union. As Andropov said, it is one thing to proclaim socialism as one’s aim and quite another to build it.

On the other hand, there is also evidence that Gorbachev intends to take a more assertive stance in Third World areas. He is not likely to retreat from existing commitments, and he may be examining the possibility of new efforts with major Third World countries that are capitalist-oriented.

This leads to a paradox. On the one hand, the Reagan Administration has emphasized the ideological struggle in various areas. The Reagan Doctrine, in operational terms, has involved the lifting of the U.S. law prohibiting assistance to Angolan factions, a virtual open program of support for Afghan resistance and an acknowledged counterrevolutionary movement against the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua—all justified in the name of anti-Communism and the struggle for “democracy.” However, it remains the judgment of some qualified observers that the Soviet Union is not in fact in an expansionary phase. The contradictions between perception and reality had begun to erode the American consensus even before the Reagan-Gorbachev summit:

The slackening, since 1980, of the wave of Soviet advances has contrasted vividly with American official rhetoric, and thus has slowly eroded the broad consensus that had supported Mr. Carter’s new posture toward Moscow in his last year in office, and has gradually added to the pressure on the Reagan Administration to find ways of coming to agreement with Moscow.7

But even if there are now new pressures on Washington to come to agreement with Moscow on conflicts in the Third World, the issue remains: How to do so and on what terms?

7Gelman, op. cit., pp. 68–69.
One option is to agree on "rules of conduct" similar to the principles negotiated by Henry Kissinger in 1972. This no longer seems appropriate: what was worthwhile and perhaps necessary at the outset of a new relationship is not suited to the current stalemate.

A more effective approach may be to elaborate a U.S.-Soviet institutional framework, as indicated by the Geneva summit, to deal with regional issues. One objective would be to include mechanisms that would operate in a time of crisis. Another purpose would be to maintain contacts as a normal non-crisis means for keeping various issues under surveillance and discussion. This is roughly the proposal of President Reagan in his address to the United Nations on September 29, 1984, and reinforced a year later in the same forum. The idea seems to be gaining ground: following a number of ad hoc bilateral consultations, an institutional framework seemed to have been agreed at the Reagan-Gorbachev summit. These mechanisms could, therefore, be tied into the growing interest in periodic summits. It is better to treat the summit as the culmination of preparatory exchanges than as a vehicle for a supposed breakthrough.

Ordinarily, this could become simply another bureaucratic device destined to wither away. But if we are mindful of the repeated warnings that our situation may well be analogous to the pre-1914 period, then remaining in contact becomes imperative.

Admittedly, none of the foregoing procedural arrangements explains how to solve the contest in Central America, the Middle East or elsewhere. What should be emphasized is that a political dialogue must be sustained and preferably institutionalized. Crisis control centers are important; but non-crisis control or, more aptly, crisis prevention or preemption, is equally important. The two superpowers have in fact controlled major crises rather effectively; but they have been poor at foreseeing and forestalling crises.

C. ECONOMIC RELATIONS

There should be some economic component in the restructuring of East-West relations. The economies of East and West are too massive to be separated in an era of interdependence. The question is: What is the nature of economic relations? If arms control policy has suffered from a lack of focus, East-West economic policy is near chaos.

Western policy should have as its starting point an evaluation of the role in Soviet policy of economic relations with the outside world. The Soviet Union clearly seeks outside assistance, principally technology
and grain; it has become increasingly dependent on imported food grains from the West. Yet by global standards the Soviet Union is not a major trading partner of the West, and the pattern of Soviet trade varies widely. Japan’s exports to the Soviet Union, for example, were 1.5 percent of its total in 1984. Yet in 1983 the value of Japanese exports to all Communist bloc countries (excluding China) exceeded the value of U.S. exports.

Moreover, Soviet trading patterns reflect clear political priorities as well as the requirements of the Soviet economy. Thus the U.S.S.R. has run a surplus in hard currency trading, mainly through exports of energy-related products to Europe. It has used this surplus to purchase food: in 1984 the surplus from Western Europe was about $9 billion and the bill for food imports was about $7.6 billion. Soviet trade statistics also often reflect the course of major projects, such as the Urengoi gas pipeline. Soviet purchases of machinery in the West rose sharply in 1980-81 but declined in 1982-83 as the pipeline deliveries were completed. In turn, imports from the United States rose, reflecting another poor Soviet grain harvest. Ironically, the Soviet Union, as an exporter of oil, for which it is paid in dollars, benefitted from the high dollar. But it will now suffer severely from a drop in world oil prices. As far as trade is concerned, therefore, the Soviet Union remains vulnerable and, to a degree, dependent on the West.

In the early 1970s, when East-West economic relations were developing, it was widely believed that trade and credits were a major incentive that could be used by the West to advance its political objectives. Now it seems the relationship is stalemated, with advantages and vulnerabilities on both sides. If so, the use of trade as a lever against Soviet political performance may have become a double-edged sword.

There is also another change since the late 1960s, and that is the growing concern over technology transfer. Extensive research conducted by the United States government has concluded that, in effect, the United States and other Western nations are “subsidizing the Soviet military buildup” through the transfer of high technology—both legally and illegally. Moreover, the prospects for stemming the flow are only moderately promising, which undoubtedly poisons the political atmosphere, at least in the United States.

Thus, in terms of both trade and the transfer of technology, the Soviet Union remains highly dependent on access to Western economies, but it may be gaining the benefits without paying any political price.

Finally, the domestic Soviet economic situation is an important factor. There has been extensive speculation that the Soviet system is in
fact in a "crisis." This has major international implications: economic power is one of the underpinnings of the Soviet Union's power position. As the Chernobyl accident shows, Soviet inability to deal adequately with reactor safety damages not only the Soviet Union but its neighbors as well. In this field at least, there is strong incentive for East-West cooperation to transfer technology and to reach an agreement on advanced safety standards. Whatever the validity of the claims of a Soviet economic "crisis," there is no doubt that the Soviet economy suffers from technological backwardness and that the prospects for a significant increase in economic growth are tied in some measure to raising productivity through absorbing foreign technology from the West. The new Five-Year Plan (1986-1991) clearly indicates, however, that Gorbachev does not intend to allow his policies to become a hostage to the West, opening the Soviet Union to economic blackmail. In light of these generalities, what should be the main directions of Western policy?

One option is simply to permit the present muddle to continue. It has the virtue of placating various special interests: American and Canadian farmers, most Europeans, East and West, and probably even the Kremlin. But it seems obvious that this policy could be organized with a greater unity of Western purpose, especially since the economic relationship remains one of the focal points for a continuing debate on how to best influence the future course of the U.S.S.R. and even the United States has shown new interest in economic relations after the Geneva summit. The continuation of such an approach would be favored by a widespread school of thought in Western Europe (less common in the United States) according to which it is conducive to long-term stability to develop non-military relations in cooperative fields that produce regular interaction and mutually vested interests. Economic relations are obviously a well-suited field for such a purpose.

Another school vehemently argues that continued economic pressure will add to strains that, over time, will force major reforms in the Soviet Union. Among other things, this option would involve constant trilateral cooperation. Not only is it unlikely to succeed for lack of West European support, it could also cut against a policy of political conciliation toward Eastern Europeans. Past patterns suggest that it is very difficult to sustain a stringent crackdown (e.g., the U.S. grain embargo). Above all, domestic politics intervene: Will the United States cut off hundreds of millions of dollars in grain sales? It probably will not, if the Reagan Administration's past policies are any model.
The third option is the older policy of using economics as an incentive to produce a more acceptable Soviet behavior. Thus a liberalization of trade, revival of credits, and so forth is an alternative to the current muddle. But the time for this policy has past. It is very doubtful that a broadly liberal economic policy toward the Soviet Union could gain domestic support in the United States. It is also based on a theory that is highly suspect—namely, that the Soviets can be bribed into changing their foreign policy or domestic system by economic inducements. It also overrates the leverage of the United States acting alone. Once a general relaxation is proposed, U.S. influence will be diluted because Western Europe and Japan will fill part of the Soviet demand. Only in the area of very high technology (and grain sales) would the United States still have leverage. And for the United States to compete by opening up the sale of technology of potential military value would eventually produce a domestic backlash.

The trilateral countries need to retain political control over their economic exchanges with the U.S.S.R. They need to protect those technologies that have special military importance. On the other hand, it is time to admit that this is often more therapeutic than punitive. Justifying economic controls in the name of stimulating long-term changes in Soviet internal structures and external behavior is not credible—particularly if, as is now asserted by the Reagan Administration, the Soviets can “keep their system.” If, however, the aim of economic policy is a more modest one of raising the price of Soviet military programs, then this should be an acceptable policy. Assuming an effective policy of controlling such high technology transfer—and this is a critical assumption—there is much to be said for allowing the market to operate and consigning East bloc trade to commercial interests.

There is still, however, a negative policy to be considered: the use of economic sanctions. The most recent two cases—martial law in Poland and the KAL 007 airliner disaster—suggest that a policy of economic sanctions will suffer from two defects: an American reluctance to use the full panoply of sanctions (again grain is the culprit) and a lack of Western consensus. This seems an additional argument for treating economic relations more as a commercial element than a source of political leverage.
III. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

We seem to be leaving behind the difficult phase of East-West relations that began with the invasion of Afghanistan. This period ended, symbolically, with the handshake between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev in Geneva.

What follows should be a gradual improvement in relations, especially when compared to the past five or six years. Yet, our overall conclusions are cautious.

—In the near term, we see the prospects for some improvement in relations between the United States and the Soviet Union and a parallel, if not greater improvement in relations between the Soviet Union and Europe and Japan; how far this improvement develops depends in large part on whether there is an agreement on intercontinental and intermediate-range weapons, as well as on strategic defense.

—Over a longer term, we see some new dangers for the West arising from a Soviet strategy that seeks to use an interval of relaxation to rebuild Soviet power and, probably, to resume a more offensive policy.

—Thus, we see the task of the trilateral countries as relatively straightforward: to use the present period to try to rebuild a more durable security relationship with the Soviet Union that rests on a foundation of mutual commitments and interests, that will deter the U.S.S.R. from launching a new offensive, but will also ensure domestic support in the West for the necessary defense effort regardless of the twists and turns in East-West relations. Western goals should encompass genuine reductions in nuclear weapons, progress in achieving a better conventional balance supplemented by effective confidence-building measures, and a breakthrough on verification.

The starting point for both East and West is recognition of the changes that have occurred since late 1979. There has been a growing sense of self-confidence in the United States. The revival of American confidence arises, in part, from the change in administrations in 1981 and the domestic and foreign policies of Ronald Reagan, especially the U.S. defense effort and the economic revival. In addition, there has been a waning of some of the earlier fears about the strategic weapons balance. Finally, there is an awareness that the worst fears about a Soviet geopolitical offensive after the Afghan invasion have proven
groundless. Indeed, there is a distinct perception in the United States (and to a lesser extent in Europe) that the Soviet Union has severe internal and external difficulties.

This change in the public mood and in the material balance led to a U.S. policy change in 1984: the Reagan Administration began to take more seriously the prospect of some relaxation with the Soviet Union, including more serious arms control negotiations. This new approach rested on the significant success of the Atlantic Alliance in resisting Soviet pressures and proceeding to implement the NATO decision to deploy American intermediate-range missiles in Europe. Thus, both Europe and the United States were once again moving along parallel, if not strictly unified, lines.

At some point the Soviets made the decision to soften their anti-American posture and open the door to a return to arms control negotiations and, inevitably, to a summit meeting. In our view this represented a more realistic appraisal of the Soviet situation by the new leaders who were rising to the top even under Andropov. It reflected a sensitivity to the Soviet domestic crises. This reappraisal must have raised the question of whether the hostility toward the United States and the growing coolness in relations with Europe really served Soviet interests. The conclusion seems to have been that a better Soviet posture was one of conciliation, at least toward Europe, possibly toward Japan as well, and perhaps even toward the United States.

The threat of SDI was surely an important factor in persuading the Soviets to re-enter arms control negotiations. But a more basic factor is that a new leadership in the Kremlin needed time to concentrate on internal priorities and, in this connection, to reorient foreign policy to gain some of the economic concessions in technology, credits and trade that were unlikely to be forthcoming under a harsh policy toward the major industrial countries.

Thus, the meeting in Geneva between the superpowers was not fortuitous, but the result of studied shifts in tactics, if not policies, in both Washington and Moscow.

We believe it is worth noting that this result illustrates a larger conclusion: despite the tensions of the post-Afghan period, both superpowers carefully avoided a major confrontation, even though the international scene offered opportunities in local conflicts and regional disputes. A significant element in this apparent restraint was the influence of the allies of the United States and the Soviet Union; both superpowers came under pressure to limit the damage to East-West relations. In addition, both superpowers have been subject to greater domestic constraints on their ability to mobilize resources for the
Summary and Conclusions

support of defense and foreign policies. Finally, the strategic situation is that neither the United States nor the Soviet Union is likely to be able to change the strategic or geopolitical balance in any brief period. There is a long-term stalemate in which neither side can press its relative advantages without running unacceptably high risks. Thus we believe that East-West relations will oscillate within a narrower range than in previous decades.

This does not mean there will be a steady or automatic improvement in East-West relations. It does mean that the opportunity to improve relations exists and arises from objective circumstances, not solely from the predilections of various key leaders.

In the forthcoming rounds of arms control negotiations the trilateral countries will have to make a considerable effort not to fall into the trap of having their differences exploited by the Soviet Union. With regard to SDI the trilateral countries should be guided by the simple truth that nuclear deterrence will remain the basic foundation of stability for decades to come. If SDI offers a chance to produce a new mix between offense and defense, however, it should receive the most serious consideration, not only bilaterally between the United States and the U.S.S.R. A final decision would clearly require intensive trilateral consultations and, hopefully, it would develop in a cooperative fashion between East and West.

In the field of intermediate nuclear forces, the “zero solution” on long-range INF offers a chance of producing genuine progress only on certain conditions: if the Asian SS-20s are removed simultaneously; if the superiority of the Soviet Union in short-range INF is reduced; and if Britain and France can maintain their nuclear forces, in an expanding European role. Finally and most important, the zero solution must be seen in a political context since its implementation presupposes not only the destruction of modern nuclear systems but effective verification. If both conditions were to be fulfilled a major step ahead would be achieved in disarmament that would justify certain military disadvantages associated with the zero solution for the West. It goes without saying that the final phase of a move toward a zero solution requires energetic efforts by East and West to reduce the inequality of options in the conventional field in Europe.

Rebuilding East-West relations will be a long-term affair, not confined to a single meeting or a single issue, even arms control. The cliché about East-West relations being a “process” is still valid (if much overworked). But this process will not unfold without a specific impetus from the West. Even if the West does take the initiative, there will be no guarantee of success without reciprocity from the East.
An additional word of caution is necessary concerning the degree of uncertainty in both East and West. In the United States domestic policy and politics are intruding more and more on the conduct of foreign affairs. This is a long-term trend, partly obscured by the great popularity of Mr. Reagan. The ability of the United States executive, no matter who occupies the White House, to conduct policy with an assurance of public and Congressional support has long since passed. The passage of the Gramm-Rudman bill, mandating a balanced budget, was symbolic of the end of the Reagan defense buildup, which has been central to the Administration's East-West strategy.

On the Soviet side there is also uncertainty. We are only at the very beginning of what may be a long era dominated by Mikhail Gorbachev. It would be risky to rest predictions about East-West relations on an expectation of his extended tenure. He might not last, but even if he does, his later policies may not necessarily be an extension of policies that he is adopting now when he must consolidate his power.

An equally significant uncertainty is involved in our projection of probable Soviet policy. We think that under Gorbachev the Soviet Union will seek a "breather" in East-West relations, using the interval for rebuilding Soviet power. But there are some important assumptions in this: namely, that such a strategy will work—that he will be able to solve some of his domestic problems and that there will in fact be a breather in foreign policy. Domestic problems may not be that easy to deal with successfully; some of the external issues, strategic defense or the situation in Eastern Europe for example, could wreck Gorbachev's calculations and lead to new tensions. In such a contingency we would be uneasy about what the Soviet foreign policy might be under a man of Gorbachev's dynamism and character.

On the whole, however, our judgment is that the West is currently in a favorable historical position, and with imagination and skill a better relationship with the Soviet Union can be reconstructed.

That reconstruction will have to include as a major element an agreement or understanding about arms control. Dealing with military relationships solely by unilateral actions is no longer politically or psychologically acceptable on either side. The Western public will not support the lack of a serious effort to control armaments; this is a lesson of the past several years. This is probably more true for European opinion than for American opinion, but it is still true for the United States. And this probably includes support for observance of existing arms control agreements (SALT II and the ABM Treaty).

What the nature of the arms control relationship will be cannot be predicted with any certainty. There are innumerable possibilities. But
it seems to us that the Reagan proposal for SDI will not fade away, and that some element of enhanced or strengthened defense may well become part of a new strategic equation.

We do not foresee a relationship of détente without arms control. But we are less certain of the opposite: progress in East-West arms control without an important degree of détente. To be sure, there has been a decline in linkage; Washington has formally abandoned it, at least in theory, and in the Korean airliner and Polish crises has not applied it in practice. There has been little support for linkage in Europe, Japan or Canada. Therefore, it could be that East-West relations will rise and fall mainly on arms control negotiations. This would make relations quite vulnerable and could lead to new shocks, such as Afghanistan in 1979-80.

Therefore we are inclined to believe that some progress on political issues is required if a change in East-West relations is to endure. There is no overriding issue, however, as was the case with Germany and Berlin in the 1960s. Indeed, one of the salient characteristics of East-West relations is that no issue is likely to blow up into a crisis, even though there are several serious regional conflicts.

We doubt that there can be a grand bargain about spheres of influence: i.e., Central America versus Afghanistan. But this is a direction that the relationship may eventually have to take if there are to be any regional settlements. Two important areas that are likely to be dangerous—the Middle East and South Africa—do not lend themselves to such informal understandings. They would most probably require tacit or open East-West cooperation, which is not very likely.

A plausible outcome, already partly foreshadowed by the Geneva summit, is for a growing institutionalization of the U.S.-Soviet dialogue on regional issues. This will not guarantee settlements, but should improve the crisis prevention mechanism, which has been sorely lacking in East-West relations. The accident at Chernobyl underlies the urgency of establishing such U.S.-Soviet crises control centers. This will require consultations and some Allied involvement.

Even if there is an improvement in relations, we do not foresee a radical change in economic intercourse. The Soviet Union, to be sure, wants more Western assistance in almost every field; but it seems that Gorbachev will be cautious about putting the Soviet Union in a position where it would be vulnerable to Western pressures. The Chernobyl accident, however, may increase his willingness to engage in technological cooperation with the West. The United States will continue to be reluctant to expand its economic relations on the grounds that it could help the Soviet military machine. This has become a stronger element
of American policy, compared to the early 1970s. And the fact remains that the volume of East-West trade remains small, for Europe, Japan, and Canada as well.

Nevertheless, the trilateral countries need to re-examine their economic policies and relations, in the expectation that there will be more attractive offers from Moscow. This is particularly true for Western Europe, where the tendency has been to be more favorable toward expanding economic relations, especially with Eastern Europe. Sanctions against the East look less and less likely as an element of concerted Western policy. The main problem is that Moscow will seek to gain much of what it wishes from Europe and Japan (plus grain from the United States and Canada) without paying much of a political price.

To sum up, the competitive dimension of East-West relations remains paramount and, given the sources of conflict, this dimension can only be reduced and softened in any near term. Nevertheless, the recent period has demonstrated that a hard core of mutual interests has survived a very hostile passage. Mutual interests have survived in Europe, East and West, and mutual interest in some form of arms control has also survived between the superpowers. East-West relations have, in fact, proved to be remarkably resilient.

Returning to our main conclusions, we thus see short-term opportunities as well as longer-term dangers. We are reasonably confident that relations cannot slide back to the worst cold war phase. But we are also persuaded that another "détente" is not in the offing. Indeed, the objective of the trilateral countries is not merely to seek a better atmosphere, but to create a more stable foundation for a relationship that is bound to remain highly competitive.
Recent Reports to
The Trilateral Commission

Authors: David Owen, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Saburo Okita

Authors: D. Gale Johnson, Kenzo Hemmi, Pierre Lardinois

30: East Asian Security and the Trilateral Countries (1985)
Author: Masashi Nishihara

32: Conditions for Partnership in International Economic Management (1986)
Authors: C. Fred Bergsten, Etienne Davignon, Isamu Miyazaki