

ference — involves the general relationship between the Western countries with their market economies and the more centralized, state-controlled economies of the Eastern European countries. It involves the role and membership in economic institutions such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the International Monetary Fund and the Economic Commission for Europe. It might also include attempts by the enlarged European Economic Community and the Eastern European countries to evolve special arrangements.

Canada is sensitive to possibilities of trade negotiations between blocs which could result in discriminatory arrangements adversely affecting export opportunities for third countries such as Canada. In its statement at Helsinki, Canada suggested, for example, that "whatever new forms of economic co-operation are developed among countries at the conference should be outward-looking in their orientation and would be of a kind which would also benefit the developing states. In this context, we believe that the principles to be applied should include those underlying the GATT, Bretton Woods and related agreements — namely non-discrimination, uniform standards, common regulations, stability of markets and modification by consultations". In other words, Canada, in this forum as in others, will put the emphasis on a multilateral approach toward trade liberalization.

In the field of cultural relations, a European conference could use the present network of bilateral agreements as a starting-point for improved communications between East and West. Canada favours more imaginative approaches in terms of cultural exchanges — an attempt to go beyond the traditional fields of literature, music, fine arts and theatre to encompass study of national ways of life and such subjects as sociology, urbanism, health and social welfare.

Freer movement of people

On the question of freer movement of people, ideas and information, Canada has underlined this issue as an important item on the conference agenda — and Mr. Sharp drew special attention to it in his remarks to the North Atlantic Council in Brussels on December 7. In a press briefing later on the same day, the Secretary of State for External Affairs said Canada considered freer movement of people, information and ideas one of the major objectives of the West: "If we don't achieve something in this direction — including the basic freedom of families to reunite — then the

conference will have failed to achieve one of the most desirable goals." The North Atlantic Council communiqué issued on December 8 said the alliance attached particular importance to freer movement of people, ideas and information as an objective and elaborated on this in a specific reference to the conference. The NAC said the conference should "bring about closer, more open and freer relationships between all people in Europe" and "stimulate a wider flow of information and ideas".

Apart from subject areas for the proposed conference, there have been questions of organization: the form any conference should take and what — if any — permanent machinery should be established to carry on the work of the conference.

Canada has given its support to the so-called three-stage pattern of organization for a conference, a plan initially put forward by France. This would involve:

A formal opening session of foreign ministers, which would delegate subject areas to a number of commissions and sub-commissions of officials;

sessions of these commissions over a period to work out an agreed position on agenda items;

a final-stage conference of ministers to confirm the work of the commissions.

Some countries, including the U.S.S.R., would like the final meeting to be at the heads-of-government level.

Mandates as guide

Participants in the Helsinki talks are considering whether "mandates" should be given to each of the commissions. These would be lists of subjects which would be examined by the commission and would serve as a guide to the production of draft resolutions or declarations for the final ministerial session.

Canada approved this format, asserting at Helsinki that the participants should try to provide mandates "which would, in effect, be an elaboration of the agenda items, setting out in a general and, if possible, non-controversial way the various points the proposed commissions would consider at the conference. These points would then be debated, amended, accepted or rejected in the commissions or by the conference itself". Canada suggested that, in drawing up these mandates, it would become evident whether sufficient areas of common ground could be found to ensure success at the conference.

There have been proposals from Soviet-bloc countries for creation of permanent arrangements or a permanent body on

Mandates designed to determine common ground for conference