

*European
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uses détente
as an excuse*

type of reasoning, as self-indulgent as it is naïve, which attempts to prove the feasibility of a unilateral reduction in American forces, fails to take into account the vital necessities of the Soviet Union's inherent expansionism.

Is it possible today to defend Europe almost in spite of itself? In other words, is it possible to hold the European front lines without the Europeans themselves sending in reinforcements?

Although it might seem surprising, it is quite clear that this apparent European disaffection, backed by a nationalistic spirit rarely denied in certain Western European countries that accepted American leadership only as a postwar economic necessity, is using *détente* as an excuse. In the midst of a world-wide economic crisis, in the midst of an energy crisis that has shaken most of the European countries, can we justify increased military spending while, at the same time, pretending to believe in *détente* and strategic-arms limitation?

The orchestrator of American policy, of whom it is said that he changes hats depending on the role he has to play, has thus been caught at his own game, which consists mainly of creating illusions. How can you be involved in painstaking negotiations to limit — qualitatively or quantitatively — the forces of the two camps in Europe and at the same time ask your allies for greater military investment? How can you talk simultaneously about the reality of *détente* and the feasibility of limited nuclear reprisals in the case of a Warsaw Pact attack on NATO? How can you claim that the CSCE is a historical landmark in that it shows promise of cooperation in a Europe without ideological boundaries while at the same time there are barriers going up behind which the Soviet Union seeks to keep a free hand? Finally, how can you claim that the Cold War is a thing of the past and then call for vigilance? Until recently, it was possible to exercise leadership by alternating the carrot and the stick, but now it is extremely difficult to distinguish the one from the other.

Danger point

Without denying the requirements of electioneering, which are just as valid in North America as they are on the other side of the Atlantic, we come to the conclusion that the danger-point has been reached. Involved in an exhausting constitutional debate with Congress — one more illustration of the interpenetration of the two levels of American policy — and, as a result, unable to forestall or contain the

adversary's advances, the American administration has adopted a policy of putting its European allies on their guard. We can see in this the beginnings of an Atlantic orthodoxy. It is a fact that the concern of the United States at seeing countries like Italy and France tempted by a popular front socialist-Communist alliance also implies an acknowledgment of the failure of Kissinger's illusion-mongering. The American reaffirmation of the rejection of the popular fronts at this particular time marks a shift that is all the more significant in that it takes place during the Bicentennial year. We should note in passing that none of the candidates for the Presidency in November has had a good word to say about *détente* — not even President Ford himself; on the contrary, almost all of them have attacked either this policy, "which has done nothing more than give Pepsi Cola a concession in Siberia", or the man whose name will forever be connected with this myth of "containment" tailored to suit economic complementarity.

But the tragedy is that the alliance system — set up when the partners and allies, ruined by the war, had no choice but to be yes-men to Washington — depends on the power of the United States in contrast to the docility of the Western European countries. In spite of attempts to reinvigorate or revitalize NATO, it can never be changed to such an extent that the United States is no longer clearly the leader; should that ever happen, it would no longer be NATO. Without commenting on the content of either of them, we can say that this pact is like its Communist counterpart; is it possible to imagine a collegial Warsaw Pact? Here is one case where a collegial structure is unquestionably the antithesis of efficiency. Compromises are possible between the partners in NATO — as opposed to the Warsaw Pact, in which there is one powerful state surrounded by satellites — but always with the strict limitation imposed by the fact that the red button is under the control of the Americans alone.

Can Washington today still impose its point of view on all its allies, most of which have reached, or think they have reached, the "age of reason"?

There is one fact that should not be overlooked: in their response to American diplomatic contacts with European politicians and to the various official warnings, the Europeans have rebelled primarily against the form of this interference in the internal affairs of France or Italy; others, and justly, have contested the right of General Haig