

Europe, there is always the same rivalry between what Peking calls the two "hegemonies". We could say, perhaps somewhat arbitrarily, that, given the interactive nature of these various seats of conflict, the balance of power sought today by both Washington and Moscow suggests a great split from one corner of the earth to the other — a wound that must heal along the boundaries of the two blocs in Europe.

This means that the priority in the American alliance system is given to the Atlantic Alliance (NATO); if yesterday the American super-power was born at the cost of the blood shed on the beaches of Normandy, the crux of the problem still lies in Europe. Of course, there are some regional alliance systems, like the Organization of American States (OAS), that are still in operation, while others, such as ASEAN, have been crippled by the fall of governments. But, as even President Ford and Dr. Kissinger have admitted, the keystone of United States foreign policy is the Atlantic Alliance. Assuming that this is true, the obvious corollary is that the future of NATO is also that of American world leadership. It is also a fact that all the major problems of the day are related through this key alliance: the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSC), which came to such a dramatic close in Helsinki just a year ago; the Conference on the Mutual Reduction of Forces in Central Europe — the one-time MBFR, which, in losing its "B", has also lost its meaning; the very conceptions of "containment" yesterday, *détente* today, which take on their full meanings in Europe where NATO and the Warsaw Pact come face to face. In this context it is easier to understand — now that the word *détente* itself (has this word, in fact, ever been anything but a euphemism — even a square?) is being repudiated, together with what it conveys — Washington's increasingly explicit warnings to its Western European allies that are tempted (or threatened) into a socialist alliance with the Communists.

Linguistic clarification

The first clarification to be made is of a linguistic nature, and as Europe becomes increasingly integrated this problem will assume great proportions. In seeking to revitalize the Atlantic Alliance, which some members (such as Canada), stressing the perpetuation of democratic values, now see as something more than a strictly military pact, the United States has created serious tension within the European Economic Community (EEC): it is no secret

that the policy of De Gaulle's France was to unite Europe against American power, while the German partner has always favoured the Atlantic connection over the European one. It was inevitable that this problem would be reflected in the choice of words; what exactly is this "partnership" proposed by Washington to its grown-up European allies, which comes out in French as "association"? The semantic dispute, which reached a climax during the Year of Europe and aroused the ire of the then French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Michel Jobert, against Henry Kissinger, touches on the central issue of the debate: association with the United States means for Europeans that this super-power, which some of them are even now seeking to keep in check, is party to the agreement and that, as a result, Washington has a say in Europe's progress towards a presumed integration.

The paradox is that the United States, in offering "partnership", and therefore a more flexible and non-restrictive operating framework, is basically seeking exactly what some Europeans reproach it for in the French term "association" — a right of prior inspection that, from the strictly European point of view, would be an alienation of rights.

The United States can be criticized for a power drive that is encouraged by the passiveness of its allies, but it cannot be accused of cheating about its intentions, for, without making any value judgment, can we deny the fact that these European countries are also, first and foremost, partners in the Atlantic Alliance? If anyone is trying to be equivocal, it is certainly not the Americans.

Defence in Europe

Accordingly, we have to acknowledge that the American troops stationed in Europe — and Dr. Kissinger finally admitted it publicly in March, in answer to Senators Percy and Ribicoff — are there first of all to defend American interests. We shall not deal here with the strictly military problem, either its bookkeeping aspect or its concern with the interchangeability of armaments (that headache of NATO commanders). Our purpose is simply to show the other side of the coin — by defending American interests in Europe, the troops deployed against the Warsaw Pact forces are at the same time defending Europe. It is misleading, not to say futile, to argue that, if there is a threat in Europe, it is because the Americans are there and that the Warsaw Pact forces exist because the NATO forces exist. This

United States cannot be accused of cheating about intentions