

Institutions without forms

and scientific areas in Basket II that are advantageous to the Soviets and East Europeans. As well, the ability to meet in regular forums with all European countries is important to the Soviet leadership. The need for acceptance in the European political arena is worth adherence to the agreement. The continued assertion by the Soviets that they are fulfilling all of their Helsinki obligations is another use of their offensive style in the international arena.

The "survival" theme encompasses five different points, four of which were met. The only area where the Soviets may have "lost" was in confirming the precedent of discussing human rights violations in member states. Although discussion in this area had occurred at previous meetings, beginning with Belgrade, the Soviet agreement by participation was finally confirmed in Ottawa. The Soviets can no longer claim non-interference in internal affairs now that they have soiled their hands with accusations. The other four areas of "survival" have been maintained. The first is the adamant Soviet view that the meetings remain closed, which they are except for the opening and closing statements. The resistance to concessions in final documents has also been maintained, with the result that there have been no concluding documents for the last three meetings. The Soviets have also been able to maintain bloc unity, in that there were no exclusively independent actions taken, except for activities by the Romanian delegation which has come to be expected. The final and most important element of "survival" is resisting a call for any kind of follow-up meeting on human rights and human contacts.

Cost to the USSR

The Soviet losses are not major, yet in the era of public relations and Mikhail Gorbachev, they are still losses. The most significant loss, which may not be readily felt by the Soviets, is the alienation of the Neutral and Non-aligned members of the CSCE. The Soviet actions in the recent meetings have been seen as spoiling and have alienated the hardworking and sincere neutrals. They are often the saviors of CSCE meetings, and both the East and West rely upon them. The fact that the Soviets would not "rally to the consensus" in the CSCE tradition, can only be viewed by all participants as debilitating. Another loss from the Soviet point of view was the fact that the East European countries carried on forms of bilateral negotiations with the West during the meetings, undermining some aspects of unity. As well, the non-official meetings of the delegates broke some barriers that would have otherwise been maintained. The fact that the Soviets agreed in Ottawa to examine human rights in other countries must also be considered as a precedent for the future meetings of the CSCE. Finally, although there have been no concluding documents, the proposals put forth by all delegations remain on the CSCE record. These proposals have already been declared by the Western participants to be the basis of future discussions as well as for reference at the Vienna Review Meeting.

CSCE achievements

According to US Ambassador Richard Schifter the West sees CSCE meetings to be valuable for six main reasons:

1. The positive impact on Warsaw Pact countries;
2. CSCE meetings encourage dissidents;
3. The Soviet leadership is sensitive to adverse publicity;
4. The Western bloc can be united in their presentation and conclusion;
5. The Western bloc is often allied with the Neutrals against the East; and,
6. The Soviets have not succeeded in diluting human rights provisions in the Final Act and have agreed to the principle of examination in participating states.

Thus, Western victories have been the direct counterpart of Soviet losses. This may be a bad omen for future CSCE activities with these opposite benefits being accentuated. In fact, the future of the CSCE is certainly under scrutiny from both sides, and despite the equality of all states through the provisions of consensus, the life of the CSCE is very much determined by the enthusiasm of its two main actors, the United States and the Soviet Union. The fate of the CSCE, although it is generally looked upon optimistically by the lesser actors, will undoubtedly be decided by the larger machinations of East-West relations. Countries such as Canada should continue to support the CSCE fully. Despite the fact that there are many unfulfilled commitments, it still serves as an opportunity for Canadian participation in European affairs.

Gorbachev has declared his full support for the process and it is unlikely to be discarded as a remnant of the Brezhnev era. The Soviet leadership is unlikely to retreat on any of the principles which it views as useful. The CSCE is still regarded by the leadership as an important forum for discourse with the European countries. The fact that the Soviet Union has been able to continue its participation in the CSCE process, despite the violations of certain aspects, and suffer only minimal losses, makes it likely that the process will continue to be exploited and looked upon favorably. In continuing, the Soviets may be able to claim in the future that the nature of the CSCE has become intrinsically absorbed in international law through the force of peaceful coexistence, and thus is no longer useful or necessary. This, however, will be contingent upon the Vienna meeting. Vienna will culminate more than a decade of unfulfilled Western hopes. The American position will undoubtedly be based on the "summiteering" atmosphere of Reagan and Gorbachev which could still change a number of times as the meeting unfolds. Western frustration over the failures of Helsinki must give way to new initiatives and not simply relegate the Final Act to the ash heap of history.