

give the impression that our preoccupation with certain parts of the Final Act calls into question our equal commitment to all of its provisions.

Above all, it seems to me important that we do not lose sight of the wood for the trees. The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe was an important staging point in the *détente* process but it does not, of course, exhaust *détente*. If we agree, as we do, that *détente* is a process, we shall have to be careful how we go about measuring it. Almost certainly, two years is too short a period in which to make judgments about success or failure. In our view, the leaven of Helsinki is working and we must give it time. That is not a prescription for complacency at Belgrade. I do think, however, that we would be wrong to do our sums too precipitately. I also think that we must be careful to conduct our review of what has and what has not been accomplished in such a way as not to impair the prospects for *détente* itself, which remains our ultimate objective.

The key issue in that respect will undoubtedly be that of human rights. I do not think it has come as a surprise to any of us that respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is deficient in all the countries of Eastern Europe in greater or lesser degree. We all know what happened, almost a decade ago, when one of the governments of Eastern Europe propounded the possibility of "socialism with a human face". We also know that a good part of the doctrinal dispute between the governing Communist parties in Eastern Europe and some of their fraternal parties in Western Europe is precisely about the extent to which Communism and the observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms can be mutually reconciled. For the time being, at any rate, it is fair to assume that most of the governments of Eastern Europe see the human-rights issue as going right to the roots of their social system.

Nevertheless, the human-rights situation in Eastern Europe is not wholly static. It is different today from what it was, say, 20 or even ten years ago. The Final Act is not without exerting an influence on the situation. But there are also other pressures at work and these may be expected to continue as the countries of Eastern Europe come to grips with the problem of managing a modern society. In general, I believe that human rights and fundamental freedoms in Eastern Europe stand a better chance of being observed in an international climate of *détente* than they would if the Soviet Union and the other countries of the area felt their system to be in jeopardy.

What is our best course in these circumstances? It is, I think, to continue to proclaim our own deep commitment to the cause of human rights; to make it clear that the responsibility for ensuring respect for human rights is a responsibility that devolves, in the first instance, on each government on its own territory in accordance with the obligations to which it has freely subscribed; to hold governments to those obligations and to maintain the general right of their own citizens to do so; and, finally, to lay stress, as we did at Helsinki, on the relevance of respect for human rights to "the peace, justice and well-being necessary to ensure the development of friendly relations and co-operation" among the states parties to the Final Act.

The discussion of human rights at Belgrade will be a delicate exercise. There are ex-