

Moreover it seems, that a large proportion of these crises will arise in the undeveloped areas of the world, where the West has provided no set of arrangements to protect its own interests such as those between North America and Japan or Western Europe. We would be well advised, therefore, to ascertain what are the means at our disposal to meet crises everywhere and especially in Third World countries, where the interest of the western world would be at stake.

As far as Europe, the principal theatre of confrontation between East and West, is concerned, we are in a position today to reply to this question with more confidence than we were a year ago. This is not due so much to a lack of tension in Europe, but rather to the fact that at least the political consultation process with the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) allies has greatly improved to meet the challenges of the future. The willingness of the allies to develop a concerted strategy to deal with East/West relations in Europe has increased. The policy of reinforcing NATO defence preparedness, while proposing again to the Soviet Union to negotiate the arms-limitation agreements, is supported by the whole Organization, as confirmed by a recent meeting of NATO ministers. Thus, NATO remains an indispensable instrument to the maintenance of cohesion and strength which ensure stability and balance in Europe, which is clearly in the interest of the West. And the Soviet Union, in spite of its open criticism of the Organization, would undoubtedly concede that stability and balance in Europe rank among its higher priorities.

It is more difficult to feel confident about emergency arrangements made for situations that arise outside Europe. Neither East nor West are on their own territory there. The rules of the game have not been established. While a few firm lines have been drawn, such as in the Gulf area, the situation remains ambiguous, and this ambiguity can be dangerous. Western leaders must continue to ask themselves what is the best way to protect western interests in these areas while respecting the sovereignty of the countries involved. East and West must try to redefine a mutually acceptable code of behaviour for international relationships, but before this can be done, an answer must be found to the crisis in Afghanistan, whose invasion goes against everything that the western world as well as the Third World considers acceptable.

Arms limitation

The Ottawa summit should provide the opportunity for western leaders to bring into line their general views on this matter. This is undeniably a concern which should come foremost on the agenda of any meeting on international affairs. The prospect of a new arms race when billions of people are starving to death is truly shocking. If we decided to use for peaceful purposes the amounts we spend in two weeks for military purposes, we could provide drinking water and basic health care to the population of the entire world. However, people feel the need for even more protection, and an increase in our military spending to offset the increased amounts allocated to armaments by the U.S.S.R. seems inevitable for the moment. It is up to the western world to find an answer to this serious problem, if possible in consultation with the Soviet Union.

Moreover, SALT (Strategic Arms-Limitation Talks) negotiations should resume as soon as both parties have enough confidence in each other to conduct such talks