

The full reality of the nuclear stalemate between the super-powers, as it affected localized clashes of interest, became apparent in the Cuba crisis in 1962. The necessity which was subsequently recognized of pursuing a safer course towards some accommodation of interests led to the partial test-ban treaty of 1963 and related agreements. The Sino-Soviet dispute and the manifestations within the Communist nations closely associated with the Soviet Union of a slightly more independent course in domestic and external affairs have changed the situation to some extent within the Communist world. These developments have, of course, scarcely altered the fundamental political coherence and unity of action within either the Soviet or the Chinese sectors of world Communism.

The members of NATO are genuinely sovereign states accustomed to stating different points of view within the general framework of the alliance which they have created to serve common interests. The changes in world relations are leading to reassessments on their part of the role and structure of the alliance.

In general, it may be said that, as a result of these world trends, there are separate and continuing debates going on in different spheres about the advantages of collective action or of individual assertions of interest or initiatives. We are too much involved in these questions to pass judgments; we can only ask some questions. Is the restiveness among some nations a sign of recurring nationalism or of desire to work towards new alignments or new arrangements within groups to correspond to changing world situations? Can we distinguish in practical terms between the different types of motivation for regional and other collective arrangements that have grown up in the past 20 years - immediate defence needs, long-term advantages of pooling some resources and efforts, the trend towards supranational organization, the search for world collective security?

France

At this point, I turn to the second of the two nations with which you have been particularly concerned in the Seminar, and which happens to be our second mother country. French attitudes towards world problems, including questions of the type I have mentioned, have been of particular interest to other nations.

France has long held, and still holds in many respects, the position of a great power, closely influencing the course of events in Europe and in other continents. It has been one of the great colonial powers, and the nations in Africa and elsewhere which were French colonies retain very close economic and cultural links with France and have close political contacts. As a Permanent Member of the Security Council, for example, and as one of the four Occupying Powers in Berlin, France has been at the centre of the major developments in world affairs and in European developments following the conclusion of the Second World War. As a founding member of NATO, occupying a central position in Western European security arrangements, and as a major force in Western European economic co-operation, France has helped greatly to lead that continent back to security and prosperity.