

of a wider negotiating process. The substantial gains I have noted in Central Europe have their foundation in the realistic "Ostpolitik" of Chancellor Brandt. But I wonder if they would have been achieved had the Conference idea not been accepted in principle and had NATO not made of the Berlin element an essential pre-condition for a Conference. It is not unusual in diplomacy that movement toward a certain goal, in this case the Conference, itself results in the resolution of long-standing problems. Similarly, it may well be that the Conference will set in train further movement toward easing of tensions.

On MBFR, the Alliance noted with regret the lack of a Soviet response to the offer to send an explorer, in the person of Mr. Brosio, former Secretary-General of NATO, to Moscow. This was a proposal made by Canada at the June meeting. In the course of the past ten days both Mr. Brezhnev and Mr. Kosygin have renewed expressions of Soviet interest in force reductions but confined themselves to generalities. If the Soviets would receive the explorer, progress could be made positively and quickly toward substantive negotiations. That they have not done so, I believe, reflects the fact that the Soviets and their friends have not yet worked out either their procedural or their substantive position on MBFR and are having real difficulty in deciding how to respond.

The Alliance is not making negotiations on MBFR a pre-condition to the holding of a Conference, but Ministers noted that if a Conference was to address itself effectively to the problems of security in Europe, it should deal in a suitable manner with measures to reduce the military confrontation.

Ministers took note of the strains imposed upon the Alliance by continuing monetary and trading problems affecting member nations. At Canada's suggestion, it was agreed that these problems should be kept under continuing review.

My discussions with Mr. Malfatti, President of the European Economic Commission, Mr. Mansholt, Vice-President, and other senior officials came at a particularly apposite time, on the eve of the Council of Ministers' consideration of American proposals for resolution of the monetary and trading problems now facing us. I told Mr. Malfatti, as I had told Mr. Rogers in Washington a week earlier, that Canada is willing to make its contribution to a general settlement but does not regard bilateral negotiation of the removal of the surcharge as either feasible or desirable.

I stressed to the Commission Canada's interest in eventual movement towards freer trade and expressed the hope