

along the way, and despite recurrent deadlocks, especially in the earlier stages of the negotiations. If one remembers how far the two sides were apart, even on basic principle, this was indeed an accomplishment.

For instance, Moscow's understanding of what are "offensive strategic weapons" differed sharply from Washington's; the Russians wanted to include in this category every type of weapon that could reach the territory of the U.S.S.R., that is, among others, the so-called "forward-based systems" (FBS) — in essence, American tactical airplanes based in Europe or on aircraft carriers. This would have weighted the scales in favour of the Soviet Union, which has no FBS and would thus have been able to offset these weapon systems of rather limited value with additional, fully effective ICBMs or SLBMs. When the Americans, naturally enough, demurred, the Russians proposed that the issue of offensive weapons be dropped from the agenda altogether. It took infinite patience, an unconscionable amount of time, and above all readiness, on both sides, to compromise, before problems like this one were got out of the way.

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SALT I, however meagre the results, was thus for the two super-powers at least a good exercise in dealing with one another in concrete terms (as distinct from the sweeping pronouncements and totally unrealistic proposals for complete disarmament in which the Soviets, particularly, indulge in the United Nations) on matters of arms control. It is to be hoped that this will have a beneficial effect on other negotiations that are forthcoming, on mutual and balanced force reductions in Europe (MBFR), on a comprehensive nuclear-test ban, and, of course, on the continuation of the strategic-arms limitation talks, SALT II. It would be just as wrong to underestimate this particular intangible result of SALT I as to overestimate it. The two delegations, and in particular the delegation chiefs, Gerard Smith for the United States and V. S. Semenov for the Soviet Union, who have faced one another across the conference table for more than two and a half years, have reportedly established a certain *rapprochement*. This, too, is an imponderable, which one of these days could be of importance.

#### **Effect on NPT**

Nor should the effect SALT I may have on the fortunes of the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) be overlooked. It has been called discriminatory by the non-nuclear weapon states, and so it is, at least for the present. Still, there is Article

VI of the treaty to act as a palliative. It binds the nuclear-weapon states, the "haves" so to speak, to "pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear-arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament . . .". This is, in fact, the essence of the NPT. It asks the "have-nots" to refrain from aggravating the problem by rushing to get nuclear weapons too, while the "haves" attempt to bring about nuclear disarmament.

At any rate, this is the idea. One can — indeed one must — be sceptical about its ever being translated into practice. Still, even if Article VI did nothing but assure the non-nuclear weapon states that the military superiority the nuclear powers have over them at present will not get greater still, it would achieve much of its purpose. On the other hand, if the three nuclear powers that have acceded to the NPT did not even show that they were trying to comply with Article VI, the floodgates of nuclear proliferation would be bound to burst open eventually. After all, a number of countries that would be capable of providing themselves with nuclear weapons have not signed, or have signed but not ratified, the treaty. For the present, they are still on the fence. Their decision will no doubt, at least in part, depend on whether the nuclear powers uphold *their* side of the bargain, and to what extent.

This is why both Moscow agreements make a point of stating that they represent only a first step on the road to nuclear-arms control. Thus Article XI of the Treaty on Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems says: "Each of the parties undertakes to continue active negotiations for limitations on strategic offensive arms." And Article VII of the Interim Agreement on Strategic Offensive Missiles states: "The parties undertake to continue active negotiations for limitations of strategic offensive arms. The obligations provided for in this interim agreement shall not prejudice the scope of terms of the limitations on strategic offensive arms which may be worked out in the course of further negotiations."

The vital interest both the United States and the Soviet Union have in keeping the NPT operative — and making it universal, if this were only possible — enhances the chances of SALT II, which is now certain to follow SALT I (and may be under way by the time this magazine is in the reader's hands). Such success will admittedly be more difficult to achieve than in the case of SALT I. In the latter, the objective perhaps not from the beginning but certainly from the time the two sides came down