

the fact that the Soviet Union was not going to budge on the human-rights issue and to get out of the meeting as gracefully as possible. (An earlier, 22-page Western draft, strongly reaffirming human-rights values, was summarily rejected by Mr Vorontsov, just as the West rejected a slightly-overdrawn Soviet draft expressing the readiness of delegates "to continue expansion of cooperation in humanitarian fields".

Until a few weeks before the meeting ended, Western delegations were emphasizing the importance of a comprehensive concluding document. The permanent head of the Canadian delegation, W.T. Delworth, told the conference on January 17 that it would be "in the interests of all of us to ensure that our concluding document is substantive and convincing, to avoid calling into question the usefulness of *détente* itself".

Fall-back

As it became more and more apparent that the hope of a substantive final document was misplaced, Western spokesmen adopted a fall-back position. They began arguing that the aims of the West were achieved in the first part of the conference, when the Helsinki accord was reviewed and the human-rights issue thoroughly discussed. Names were named in that period of relatively free-wheeling exchanges, and individual transgressions were cited. Canada, for example, singled out human-rights violations by both the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia.

The very fact that human-rights issues were discussed in the presence of Soviet-Bloc delegates was an achievement, Western delegates claimed. The point, or some variant on it, must have commended itself to the Soviet delegation since the concluding document was allowed to contain this passage:

It was recognized that the exchange of views constitutes in itself a valuable contribution towards the achievement of the aims set by the CSCE, although different views were expressed as to the degree of implementation of the Final Act reached so far.

The point was underscored by a sentence in Mr Cafik's text, to the effect that the Belgrade review had confirmed that humanitarian questions were "a legitimate subject of multilateral discussion".

It is questionable whether the statesmen and diplomats responsible for getting the West involved in the CSCE affair really thought that it would substantially influence Soviet policy over the short term. They felt that it was sufficient for the time being to ensure that human rights were irre-

versibly inscribed on the agenda of East-West dialogues.

Eventually, the alchemy would work, Communism would start to wear a more human face, with beneficial consequences for people living in Eastern Europe and presumably also for East-West relations. It was Mr Cafik who pointed out at Belgrade that "relations between states cannot remain unaffected where respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is seen to be deficient".

The Canadian Government has been at some pains to reinforce this particular brand of linkage. In a statement to a closed meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Brussels in December (subsequently released to the press), External Affairs Minister Jamieson warned Moscow of the consequences of putting members of Helsinki-monitoring groups on trial. Such action could serve to undo "much of what has been achieved" under the Final Act.

Mr Cafik pursued the matter in a discussion with Mr Vorontsov at Belgrade. He complained particularly about the treatment of the Soviet dissident Anatoly Shcharansky, and reiterated Canada's previously-expressed readiness to accept him as an immigrant. He drew the Soviet delegate's attention to Canadian Parliamentary resolutions on human rights, including a House of Commons one, unanimously passed a month earlier, expressing "deep disappointment" at Moscow's failure to respond to the Canadian offer respecting Mr Shcharansky and at the treatment of Soviet citizens who had attempted to exercise their rights as embodied in the Helsinki Final Act. Mr Vorontsov replied that Mr Shcharansky - who at that point had been a year in jail - was to be tried as a spy and not as a dissenter.

Soviet strategy

Soviet strategy appears to be based largely on the expectation that the West will ultimately recognize the futility of the human-rights battle and lose interest in it. For the Kremlin, it is just a matter of waiting - something the Kremlin is good at. The genie that was let out of the bottle at Helsinki, and did some running around, can then be stuffed back in and human rights will not be heard of again, at least in this particular forum.

In the meantime, the Soviet Union will be pursuing, with due patience and care, the goal of shaping CSCE to its own trans-European, and possibly more global, interests. It has become something that Westerners cannot afford to lose interest in, even though many may wish at times that there were a way to turn it off.

*Discussion
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