

be able to maintain 4¾ divisions, 25 air squadrons and a two-carrier fleet in Europe. Moreover, as all sensible Europeans recognize, the present balance of resources is an inequitable one by any standard. The present structure of forces in NATO could probably absorb a reduction of one American division without a radical reorganization of its strategy, but anything further would necessitate a complete rethinking of the whole force structure, at least in Central Europe.

Nor do I think there will be any easy alternative to a solution whereby Europe contributes a greater share of the over-all forces required for deterrence and *detente* in Europe. I am a firm believer in the principle of arms control, namely that two adversaries or groups of adversaries can identify and control certain common interests or dangers without changing their political relations. So far it has proved the most effective way of educating the Soviet leadership from its crude perception of the use of power into more civilized attitudes. But force levels in Europe have never been a promising field for such negotiations, by reason of the geographical asymmetry of the two super-powers and for other reasons. I do not hold out much hope for MBFR, though the two governments that have the most direct interest in the question, the American and the German, may come up with more successful formulas than it has been possible to work out so far.

By the same token a European conference on co-operation and security holds for me very little promise. For one thing, a conference of 30 states varying in size and interests from Malta and Cyprus to the Soviet Union and the United States seems to me a hopeless forum for serious negotiation. For another, the conference is clearly going to have three elements: a Soviet-inspired initiative to get formal recognition of the *status quo* in Europe, which the West may be ready to concede but which will excite the strong opposition of Romania and Yugoslavia, which want the formal abrogation of the Brezhnev Doctrine; a Western initiative to liberalize contacts between East and West, which the Soviet Union will resist; and a negotiation on technological co-operation, which Eastern Europe badly needs. The difficulty is that the three questions are so dissimilar that there are no necessary trade-offs between them. And, though I have sympathy with the view that the Western governments cannot appear merely to be sitting on their bottoms, simply in terms of credibility with their own electorates, if the first major European conference in more than 40 years were to produce no concrete result, the last effect might be worse than the first.

Western Europe's framework

This gives a new urgency to the political construction of Western Europe, which has hardly started, for today, despite its size and wealth, it has the institutions not of a super-power but of a supermarket. History has in a sense caught Europe unawares, its leaders assuming until last year that they had a longer time ahead of them in which to create a monetary and economic union on the one hand and on the other to expand the Rome Treaty to facilitate a common exercise of sovereignty in foreign and defence policy than is in effect proving to be the case. The difficulty will be to generate the political will-power to tackle these two immensely complicated fields simultaneously — par-

ticularly in an atmosphere where the younger generation, nearly half the voting population, never knew what George Steiner has called Europe's "season in hell", at a time when central bureaucracies are increasingly distrusted, and when industrial integration is complicated by the otherwise quite proper emphasis on social objectives.

These factors emphasize the importance not of the central bureaucracy, the Commission, but the Council of Ministers, men who come out of the political process in their own countries, as well as the rapid development of an effective European parliament. But, even in the most favourable circumstances, it will be some time before Marseilles, Manchester and Munich, Sicily, Scotland and Seinenferieur develop a real and permanent sense of community. I think it will take most of the decade to achieve a monetary and a true economic union.

I am inclined to doubt whether we shall have got much beyond co-operation by 1980, more effective than today one hopes, in the field of European defence. For one thing, military power lies nearer to the heart of what the man in the street calls sovereignty than economic power or money; the European central bankers have been co-operating closely since the 1920s, their chiefs of staff have not. However, at some point in the near future the road forks — toward achieving the best form of European co-operation that is possible without France and within NATO or toward the development of more specifically European forms of defence and political co-operation. It will be a very difficult choice despite the greater flexibility in French policy.

Moreover, despite Mr. Brezhnev's recent public acceptance of the EEC, one must reckon on continuous Soviet opposition to a European political and defence union. In addition, every step will have to be taken in a fashion that does not alienate American interests in Europe, for I hold firmly to the view that there is no substitute, nothing that the British and French can do jointly or separately, to replace American strategic power in such a way that it is fully credible in Soviet eyes.

To this difficult process I believe that Britain, which I judge to be just emerging from a period of low morale, had much to contribute. Britain, I think, will feel less than odd-man-out in the developed world in the 1970s than in the 1960s; industrial growth rates elsewhere are likely to be more comparable to its own; the problems of both decolonization and of the reorientation of its interests are substantially completed; it is no longer dogged by balance-of-payments deficits; its military force structure is likely to give less trouble than that of other countries.

Internal changes

The change in the relations of the major powers is complicated by an equally rapid pace of change in the internal preoccupations of their societies, including the erosion in the developed world of our faith in the traditional idea of progress through economic growth and scientific innovation.

Not only are we wrestling with a new type of inflation, which is not amenable to Keynesian techniques of control; not only are we concerned about spiritual, social and ecological effects of the prosperity we have achieved; we cannot even be sure that the political and material foundations of