

Moreover, while there is not an excessively romantic response to Mr. Gorbachev's evocation of a "Common European House" and there is a general alertness against any possible ploys to divide Western Europe from its North American allies, there is also a spirit of assertive European self-confidence in the air, verging at times on a kind of European chauvinism. There is now talk, although not in any official circles, as much about an American "push-out" from Europe as any American "pull-out." Neither phenomenon is in fact very likely, but it is in the interests of international stability – and also very much in the Canadian interest – to help manage all these multifarious shifting relationships with as much mutual consultation and sensitivity as possible.

One idea, that has been pursued especially by a member of this Institute, John Toogood, and subsequently in other international discussions, is for the institutionalization of the 35 nation Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). A related idea has now been put forward at the highest official level in President Gorbachev's call for an accelerated Helsinki Summit of leaders of these 35 European and North American countries. These suggestions are based on the benefits of having at least one broad forum where all the relevant countries are brought together to provide for basic political communication at the same time that other, more specific negotiations proceed in specialized arenas. While Mr. Gorbachev's objectives in the single 35 nation summit are not entirely clear – except, perhaps, the formal endorsement of a new Conventional Forces Agreement – a goal of institutionalizing regular meetings of the 35 at official or ministerial levels would be to keep the channels open. Such sessions would not necessarily be limited to the same "baskets" as the earlier talks, but should be able to range over the gamut of political, military, economic and social concerns among these countries. There would, of course, be difficulties and dangers in formalizing the CSCE process on a continuing basis, but the dangers of fragmentation, poor communications or instability during this exhilarating but challenging period of transition would seem even greater.

Other countries must also be drawn into the improved international climate emanating from Europe. It will be particularly important, from several points of view, to encourage improved relations between Japan, the Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries. Few Westerners are aware that relations between the Soviets and the Japanese have undergone little of the improvement experienced by Western Europeans and North Americans. Confrontational military