

Warsaw Pact proposals. One was Berlin. If the borders between the two Germanies were to be treated as inviolable, the same should apply to Berlin. But this was not mentioned. The second gap involved disarmament. The Bucharest declaration, no doubt at the insistence of the host government, had mentioned liquidation of foreign bases, the withdrawal of "all forces from foreign territories", the reduction of German forces, the establishment of nuclear-free zones and an end to flights by planes carrying nuclear weapons. However, the Karlovy Vary statement — to which Romania was not a party — backed away by saying simply that all proposals "deserve thorough examination".

The NATO ministers decided at their meeting in Reykjavik in June 1968 to explore arms control and issued a declaration on mutual force reductions. This was the first specific proposal for what has since become known as Mutual and Balanced Reduction of Forces (MBFR).

A third point requiring clarification was which countries would participate. The position of the United States and Canada — NATO's two non-European members — had been left ambiguous and statements from Moscow and other capitals in Eastern Europe frequently used the phrase "an all-European conference". Neither of the two North American countries could accept this and, in the ultimate understanding about a conference, it was agreed that they should take part.

In October 1969, the foreign ministers of the Warsaw Pact powers met in Prague, proposed two central questions for the agenda of an all-European conference and published draft declarations as a basis for implementing the objectives outlined in their proposals. The proposed agenda items were:

Ensuring of European security and renunciation of the use of force or threat of its use in the mutual relations among states in Europe;

expansion of trade, economic, scientific and technical relations on the principle of equal rights aimed at the development of political co-operation among European states.

In June 1970, the same ministers, after a meeting in Budapest, reiterated these proposals with two changes. They added cultural relations to the subjects listed in the second item and suggested a third item:

The creation at the all-European conference of a body to deal with questions of security and co-operation in Europe.

Although the phrase, "all-European conference" was still used, it was explicitly

stated that the United States and Canada would take part.

Two sets of issues

There are two groups of issues involved in European security. One reflects the end of the Second World War and is keyed to the future of Germany. It includes territorial questions such as Poland's Western frontier along the Oder-Neisse Line and the status of the two Germanies and Berlin. It is these that the Soviet Union and its allies are anxious to see settled. The second group of issues stems from the cold war period. They include establishment of the two military alliances, the issue of nuclear weapons, freedom of movement throughout the continent and the Brezhnev Doctrine. It is these areas in which the Western powers want to see changes.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, to find that different countries have different motives for wanting a European security conference. They are more positive and pronounced for the nations of Eastern Europe. For example, the Soviet Union would like to see the withdrawal of U.S. troops; the GDR hopes for recognition; and Poland wants a settlement of its Western frontiers. The Western countries, put in the position of reacting to a proposal, have been more cautious and less certain of what they would like to achieve. Initially, they laid stress on MBFR, although France was strongly opposed and Britain lukewarm. When the Soviet Union indicated an interest in pursuing this line, it became apparent that NATO had not decided on how best to proceed.

Remembering the fruitless meetings of foreign ministers in the immediate post-war period, the West has shied away from what it feels would be meaningless results or propaganda accomplishments. Proposals for non-aggression treaties or agreements on the renunciation of the use of force are regarded as having little value. Yet this is not true for the East. Romania, for example, sets considerable store by these, believing they would be an answer to the Brezhnev Doctrine and prevent another Czechoslovakia.

Advantages for West

As time passed, certain positive advantages began to appear for the West. The United States, faced with growing pressure in Congress for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Europe, may find in CSCE and MBFR a convenient way of accomplishing this. Canada, too, might then withdraw its troops, a step some members of the Government would appear to favour

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