

Trilateral Commission charts liberalization of ties with Russia

by Our Special Correspondent

Disarmament, East-West relations, international monetary and debt problems, and the status of France in Europe and the world were the issues debated at the yearly Trilateral Commission Plenum, held April 8-10 in Paris at the Intercontinental Hotel. The cast of characters is always the same: One could see Gianni Agnelli, elegant and perfumed, strutting up and down the plush carpet of the hotel; a rather lonely Robert McNamara looking grumpy and distraught crouched in a corner of the room; Henry Kissinger, still a bit overweight, like an aging movie star; newcomer Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, visibly happy to be associating once again with *les grands de ce monde*; Raymond Barre bursting out of the suit which never seems to fit him (or his ego); the enormous Paul Volcker who was born with a cigar in his mouth.

The usual rest of the cast was also present: Katharine Graham; David Rockefeller, who now spends his time complaining about the lack of morals on Boesky's Wall Street; Umberto Colombo; Zbigniew Brzezinski; Alexander Haig; Father Theodore Hesburgh of Notre Dame University; the *New York Times*' Flora Lewis; Simone Veil; Volker Ruehe; Otto Lambsdorff; Otto Wolff von Amerongen; and the crowd of well-dressed, well-groomed, pretty, and prim boys and girls who compose the secretariat of the Trilateral. One should not forget the ladies, wives of the illustrious, who were treated to tours, cakes, and other delights, while their husbands debated the fate of the cosmos.

The event unfortunately was not mere theater. Unlike the first years of the Reagan administration, which marked an ebb in the influence and power of the Trilaterals in Washington, the first steps of the Bush administration have been accompanied by renewed vigor of the "permanent establishment" which, if it does not dictate policy, has played a significant initial role in idea and policy formation for George Bush.

The Trilateral meeting reflects the return to Washington of "the best and the brightest," the permanent administration, the WASP elite. The Bush administration, in the words of Brzezinski, is the "best in 50 years." For the *Washington Post*'s David Ignatius, it is the modern day incarnation of the "true establishment," the return of the "wise men" to power.

But, as the proceedings of the Paris conference make clear, the return to prominence of the Trilateral Commission

gang means a policy consolidation for the "New Yalta" deal with the Soviet Union. Nothing could make this clearer than the role played by Henry Kissinger, as the spokesman for the Trilaterals' new concept of "deterrent disarmament."

The window of opportunity

Though differences were perceptible at the conference on the methods by which East-West détente should proceed, the premise of the main speakers was that a historic "window of opportunity" exists in East-West relations, which should pave the way for a new "liberalization."

In their public report, "East-West Relations, a Draft Report to the Trilateral Commission," Henry Kissinger, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, and Yasuhiro Nakasone (who was not present as a result of personal legal problems in Japan) agree that "the relaxation of tensions in the late 1980s is qualitatively different from earlier periods of détente." They call for a division of labor for the West and Japan in dealing with the Soviet Union. "Western Europe should take the economic and political initiative at the moment," while the United States "should take the strategic arms control initiative."

The report focuses on the potential for a new European arrangement, or what Kissinger in his press conference calls "the reunification of historic Europe." Giscard proposes that the "European economic communities study a formula of an accord of association for Eastern Europe." The idea is "to devise a category of association with the European Community based on Article 238 of the Treaty of Rome. This kind of association should be regarded as a new type of relationship, adapted to the special circumstances of the countries concerned. This relationship will not include, for the foreseeable future, any political or security dimension." The report also endorses the implementation of joint ventures in the U.S.S.R., proposes the creation of a financial facility to finance joint ventures, invites the Comecon countries to participate in, though not join, international monetary and trade institutions, but concludes that "there be no global financial aid to the U.S.S.R. which would undercut reforms." The report concludes that "the opportunity to put East-West relations on a new foundation is before our countries. To seize this opportunity, our countries must act on the basis of careful analysis, not wishful thinking."

In an internal report to the conference, "Can We End the Cold War? Should We Try?" Robert McNamara ends up with even more radical and sweeping globalist conclusions. "We face an opportunity, the greatest in 40 years, to bring about the end of the Cold War. To fail to grasp it means an indefinite extension of the risk that unintended conflict between East and West will endanger the very survival of our civilization" writes McNamara. He proposes joint superpower management of world affairs, notably to regulate crises under the umbrella of the United Nations, and on the model of the Soviet-American entente during the Suez Crisis in 1956.

Both reports conclude that the Gorbachov reforms reflect an objective need of the U.S.S.R. to reform its dislocated and decaying economic system. The "East-West Relations" document states, "We are persuaded that it is the objective necessities confronting the Soviet Union which establish both the need for change as well as its direction. Were Mr. Gorbachov to leave the scene, these realities would probably sustain his general course and direction, albeit at a slower pace and less ebullient style." McNamara similarly writes that "two forces have led to the fundamental change in, at least, the Soviets' stated views of its relationship with the West . . . the first is that country's economic crisis."

The Trilateral roster

Among the more than 200 members participating in this year's Trilateral gathering, the following are some of the prominent personalities:

United States: David Rockefeller, Dwayne O. Andreas, C. Fred Bergsten, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Sol Chaikin, Gov. William Clinton, William T. Coleman, Katharine Graham, Robert D. Haas, Alexander Haig, Theodore Hesburgh, Richard Holbrooke, William Hyland, Robert Ingersoll, Bobby Ray Inman, Flora Lewis, Robert McNamara, Joseph Nye, Charles B. Rangel, Charles Robb, William Scranton, Albert Shanker, Gerard C. Smith, Robert Strauss, Strobe Talbott, and Paul Volcker.

Europe: Gianni Agnelli, Michel Albert, Umberto Colombo, Francesco Cingano, Samuel Brittan, Raymond Barre, Volker Ruehe, David Owen, Andrew Knight, Arrigo Levi, Otto Lambsdorff, Walther Liesler Kiep, Lord Roll of Ipsden, Cesare Romiti, Karl-Heinz Narjes, Michael Palliser, Edmond de Rothschild, Gaston Thorn, Horst Schulmann, Otto Wolff von Amerongen, Philip de Zulueta, and Simone Veil.

Japan: Koichi Kato, Isamu Miyazaki, and Saburo Okita, and others from Mitsubishi Corp., Matsushita, Sumitomo, and Nippon Life Insurance.

Kissinger propounds his New Yalta plan

In a press conference at the Trilateral Commission conference in Paris on April 11, Henry Kissinger said that the commission's study on East-West relations had focused on the premises of Soviet foreign policy, their ideological and historic background. He stated that 400 and more years of Russian expansionist history had to be taken into account when making an assessment of present trends. Thus Russia has faced perils, yet has engaged in "uninterrupted and inexorable expansion" for more than four centuries. In this light, said Kissinger, Gorbachov's proposals must be seen as "mixture of substance and psychological warfare." The Trilateral working group, said Kissinger, concluded that Gorbachov's reforms were driven by economic necessity, rather than good will, and that the West must guard against permanent Soviet efforts to "split the alliance."

In spite of this, he went on, "whatever their motives, the West must move forward in dealing with the U.S.S.R." Kissinger proposed a concept of "deterrent disarmament," i.e., maintaining deterrence at lower levels of forces.

Here are excerpts from the question and answer part of the press conference:

Q: You are arguing for balance of power politics in a context of lessened conflict. You are aware of the growth of the Russian racist mass movement Pamyat, which is being sponsored by the Russian leadership. Does détente make sense with these forces?

Kissinger: Pamyat reflects the growth of Russian nationalism, just as nationalism is developing in the non-Russian republics of the Soviet Union. This Russian nationalism is Dostoevskyian, or if you like, Solzhenitzynian. It is something we have to take into account. But I have always thought that the focus of the West must be to maintain equilibrium, to maintain equilibrium with the U.S.S.R.

Q: Your proposals for a European settlement, Mr. Kissinger, are they not a New Yalta?

Kissinger: Secretary Baker summarized my idea in two sentences. My idea is more complex than what you can get out of two sentences. I never used the term New Yalta. Rather, what we are looking for is the reunification of historic Europe, but this must be done on the basis of equal security. A stable balance of power means peace. In its absence, peace depends on the good will of the other, or the potential adversary. Reductions must lead to equilibrium, not instability. You cannot base your policy on the good will of the potential adversary.