

Superpowers push European 'New Yalta'

by Gabriele Liebig

The claims which the condominium partners—the United States and the Soviet Union—are making on many “external aspects” of the establishment of a unified Germany, are going much too far. Indeed, West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl would be well advised to act quickly and pull his foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, down from the Soviet clouds where he has been hovering of late. For what Germany and all of Europe need urgently at this point, is some stubborn resistance against U.S. and Soviet plans to control it from the outside. Presidents Bush and Gorbachov, for all their differences over which strategic alliance a unified Germany will belong to, nevertheless fully agree that Germany, Western Europe, and the nations of Eastern Europe, which are on the verge of throwing off the yoke of the “old Yalta,” should now be tied into a “new Yalta” system, presided over by the U.S.-Anglo-Soviet condominium.

Of course, there would be little reason to object *per se* to upgrading the status of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), having regular meetings of the 35 heads of government, and establishing a CSCE secretariat along with institutional mechanisms for conflict prevention, etc.—provided that the United States and the Soviet Union did not strive to exert joint dominion over Europe. Unfortunately, it seems that that is precisely what they intend to do in the framework of the new CSCE institutions on essential questions of foreign, security, and economic policy.

And in order to be able to exert pressure as required, U.S. troops will remain in the western part of Germany, while Soviet troops will remain in the eastern part. Gorbachov, whose stated goal heretofore has been the complete withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Europe, declared after his Washington summit meeting that the Soviet Union now has no objection to the continued presence of U.S. troops in Europe, since “Soviet-American cooperation” is one of the “pillars on which Europe’s political security rests,” reported the daily *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* on June 13.

Sovereign nations should decide

This should cause Europeans and their friends to prick up their ears. What questions are these, which the Germans and the other Europeans should exert their sovereign and independent right to decide?

- Foreign policy relations with the countries of Eastern Europe—for example, effective support for the political opposition in Romania.

- Defense policy cooperation between France and Germany, as well as integrating Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland into a common European defense policy.

- The troop strength and armament of the future unified German armed forces, which are supposed to be reduced to 200,000—far below the current level of the West German Bundeswehr. (The condominium’s argumentation on this question is reminiscent of the U.S. argument that Panama should no longer have an army, since U.S. troops are there now to protect it.)

- Europe’s economic and financial policy, which Washington and Moscow want to “co-determine.” But here, at least, there is some difference in interests between the economically decaying superpowers: Moscow would like the most massive possible economic support from Germany and Europe, and thus has a burning interest in creating a second European economic miracle; whereas the U.S. financial establishment, and officially the Central Intelligence Agency, sees Europe only as a dangerous economic competitor.

- Europe’s policy toward the Third World. It would conflict with the aims of the superpower condominium, if one or more European governments hit on the idea of using the reconstruction of East Germany’s economy as a model for a similar reconstruction policy toward countries in Africa or Ibero-America. Doing that would mean a fundamental break with Bush and Gorbachov’s view that it would be a catastrophe if living standards in the Third World were raised up to the level of the industrialized countries.

Partnership with equal rights

It would be much more in keeping with actual economic relations, and with the rules of civilized intercourse among nations, to have a relationship of equal partnership with the United States. And in this connection, the elected representatives of Europe and the CSCE ought to take special care that the United States, in the process of its rapprochement with the Soviet Union, does not itself rapidly degenerate into a police state.

Europe’s relationship to the Soviet Union will certainly change for the better with the transformations in Germany, Eastern Europe, and the Soviet Union itself. But Europe’s attitude must also be tempered by great circumspection regarding the continued existence of the Soviet Union’s modernized military power, the expanded activity of the Soviet KGB in the West, and possible sudden shifts in the Moscow leadership. The Soviet Union should receive massive economic help from the West, in order to increase the productivity of the Soviet economy and to overcome the economic misery caused by the communists—but only if this is based on actual “westernization” of the Soviet economy, and not on Kissinger-style superpower deals.