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*The Evolution of East–West  
Relations and the Arms Control  
Dialogue during the Next Two Years  
– A Personal Forecast*



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*The Evolution of East–West  
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**NORSK UTENRIKSPOLITISK INSTITUTT**

Summary

The present paper contains a personal forecast. It considers that political developments in Europe will shape East-West relations over the next years. The new political order in Europe most likely will be a community order which is designed to absorb and contain centrifugal ethnic pressures on the existing states and of responding to the transnational challenges linking the countries of Europe to a common future. It could include a security and disengagement zone, SDZ, comprising the countries of East-Europe. Foreign troops and nuclear weapons would be prohibited in the zone and indigenous forces would be limited. The SDZ would contribute to a geopolitical balance in the European order between the USSR and NATO.

The prospects for arms control agreements are good. START-I and CFE-I treaties will be followed up by negotiations for future reductions and constraints. CFE-II is likely to have a territorial rather than a structural orientation. The paper concludes by outlining the rationale for a structural approach to naval arms control.

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Armstrong  
Political Systems  
International politics  
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1988  
1989

G: Europe  
1: CSCE  
START

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## 1. EAST-WEST RELATIONS

East-West relations over the next two years will be shaped primarily by political developments in Europe. These developments in turn will revolve around the political reconstruction of the European order and the reassociation of western and eastern Europe. The democratic experiment in eastern Europe is likely to retain the attention and fascination of West-European publics and political leaders. Essentially non-Communist governments are the likely results of elections in Poland, GDR, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. There may be de facto power-sharing arrangements in Rumania (with old communists in new clothes) and Bulgaria. Centrifugal pressures on the Yugoslav federation are likely to attract attention and concern.

The legitimacy of the democratic experiment in eastern Europe could become a tragic hostage to a failure of economic reform. Strict IMF-style conditionalities could become a heavy burden on fragile democratic institutions. Transition to market economies will be painful, but we should not expect or seek conformity to the principles of laissez-faire economics. It will require decisive and comprehensive action by the new governments of eastern Europe in order to facilitate market processes (price formation, bureaucratic deregulation, discipline in state enterprises, price stability, etc.). They are likely to concentrate on early reform in order to ride the wave of revolutionary enthusiasm, in spite of the weak structures. They need to see early results. Furthermore, the perestroika of East-European economies will require enlightened and generous response, primarily from Western Europe, but the United States, Japan and NIC-countries like Korea can play important roles. The basic issue on the agenda for the next two years is a commitment to incorporate the democratic countries of East-Europe into a common all-European market. It will require sacrifices in accepting imports into Western Europe of goods from East-Europe. Agricultural imports are likely to prove most controversial and difficult. In addition

East-Europe will need financial support to build up its foreign exchange reserves, to institute emergency food aid, and to renovate the infrastructure and enhance environmental protection. The most controversial issues are likely to be debt relief and grant aid. Results could come early, but they depend on courage and vision to make possible that which is necessary. The future of Europe will be determined to a considerable extent by how the European Community responds to the challenges and opportunities of the East-European revolutions.

The German issue will be the dominant political issue over the next two years. In the latter half of the twentieth century the right of self-determination cannot and should not be denied to the German people. Such singularity would constitute a constant source of frustration and potential instability. The issue, however, is German unity rather than necessarily reunification. German unity is a rightful option of the German people. It implies the absence of barriers to the free movement of people, goods, services and money. It does not imply rights to territories no longer controlled by German authorities. German unity implies a community of Germans. However, such a community does not necessarily imply a single German society or a single German state. It seems likely that a German community embracing the populations of the FRG and the GDR could become reality only within a broader European community.

The classical balance of power in Europe is unlikely to see another light of day. It has been superseded by the balance of nuclear deterrence between the USA and the USSR with marginal British and French components. Furthermore, its internal logic would be largely incompatible with the passions and movements of mass politics in open societies. Finally, its carrying capacity does not extend to the weight of a united Germany. Hence, the evolution of the European political order is likely to reflect the logic of transnational interdependence and community building. The European Community, EC, is

likely to become the primary shaper of the new Europe which is in the making.

The emergence of a community order in Europe does not, of course, imply an absence of concerns about equilibrium. However, there will be no fixed lines of division and confrontation. Military considerations will be less important in shaping political relations than they have been in post-war Europe. East-European countries are likely to retain sizable military establishments as insurance against social turmoil and pressure from the East. The community order could evolve through the expansion of an inner core, EC, to outer rings. Over the next two years we are likely to see two outer rings, rump-EFTA and Eastern Europe, linked to the inner core.

Over the next two years the EC will focus much attention on the single market and 1992. However, events in eastern Europe in general, and in the GDR in particular, are likely to prevent the EC from turning inward. Enlargement and deepening of the Community system is likely to constitute tandem-processes. Some kind of association agreements may be in the making for several of the East - European countries and a special status is likely to be accorded the GDR. The current rate of exodus from the GDR to the Federal Republic of Germany is clearly unsustainable and could force the issue of German unity to be "settled" as a matter of urgency over the next two years through some confederal- or commonwealth arrangements and a peace-treaty based on the territorial status quo. The EC would have to accommodate such changes in order to maintain the allegiance of the West-Germans. France is likely to abandon much of her historical opposition to supranational arrangements in the EC in order to nail the FRG to the Community and prevent the emergence of a German-led Middle-Europe. The United Kingdom is likely to join the EMS but also to become the principal opponent of supranational arrangements, such as the EMU. Negotiations between EFTA and the EC could result in the constitution of a European Economic Space, EES. However,

the EC will not admit non-members to influence over decision-making in the Community. The Austrian application is unlikely to generate much enthusiasm in the EC over the next two years.

Developments in the Soviet Union will continue to produce hovering clouds on the European horizon. Till now there may have been more glasnost than perestroika. However, the Soviet position as a great power depends on a reconstruction of the economy and a reallocation of scarce resources (scientists, engineers, managers, skilled workers, computers) from the military and space sectors of the economy to the civilian sector. Hence, Moscow is extremely interested in substantial arms control and arms reduction agreements. Economic reform will require political reform, particularly in order to reap the benefits of modern information technology. Such reform is likely to engender bureaucratic resistance on a pervasive scale. It is likely, furthermore, to entail the stimulation of national aspirations and a rekindling of ethnic animosities in a union comprising more than a hundred nationalities. Over the next couple of years the Baltic republics are likely to make substantial progress towards autonomy. National stirrings, in part violent, are likely to continue in the Trans-Caucasian and Central-Asian republics. Protestant Estonia and Latvia are likely to seek ties with the Nordic countries while Catholic Lithuania may seek closer links with Germany and the Poland of Solidarity. The real challenge to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics could come from nationalist movements in the Ukraine and Moldavia.

Gorbachev is likely to persist in his efforts to save the union and contain the pressures for secession, stimulated in part by the revolutions in eastern Europe. He is likely to accept the principle of secession but constrain the actual option by legal and practical conditions. The national mosaic of the Soviet Union will constitute another constraint (Russians consistute more than 30 % of the population in Latvia and slightly less in Estonia). Andrej Amalrik's question



concerning the survival of that union will remain unanswered during the next two years. Secessionist rumblings could stimulate a Great-Russian nationalist reaction, spearheaded, perhaps, by an alliance between "Pamyat" and the army. Gorbachev did not intend to preside over the dissolution of the Soviet Union, but he may have to do just that, acting on the side of history rather than attempting to stop it. He could try to preserve Russia as a great power while accepting certain peaceful adjustments on the fringes.

The Gorbachev policy of reforming society from the top via the state apparatus in the tradition of Muscovy is likely to continue although the pace and future choices of direction seem much less certain. In eastern Europe society will continue to reform the state from below. It is more likely than not that Mikhail Gorbachev will remain the leader of the Soviet Union over the next two years and that the Soviet Union will remain essentially a one-party system in that period even if the CPSU is losing its monopoly position.

The Soviet Union is likely to continue to seek a special relationship with the United States, primarily via the arms control negotiations. It will prefer a continued American engagement in the European political order and could be tempted to pursue the course of a duopolistic umpireship in Europe if the opportunity presented itself.

Both alliances are likely to remain over the next two years, although they would change in the direction of becoming instruments for the coordination of negotiating strategies and the adjustment of force postures to new arms control provisions and fiscal constraints. East-Europeans are likely to attempt to exploit the multilateral format of the Warsaw Pact to achieve a greater degree of equality while avoiding challenges to vital Soviet security interests, seeking to reassure Moscow that she is right in concluding that in the age of nuclear weapons, national security cannot be predicated on

territorial buffers. The concept of common security is likely to grow in importance and adherence. In the longer term the Warsaw Pact is likely to disappear.

In the longer term new challenges to peace and security in Europe may be threefold: (1) A new era of nationalism brushing aside the perspectives of common security and common welfare; (2) A break-up of the Soviet Union injecting volatility and instability into the political order in Europe; (3) Demographic pressure from North-Africa causing Mediterranean Europe to raise new walls in order to prevent another Moorish "invasion".

The principal challenge in the years ahead is the construction of a new European order. It will transform relations among the states, societies and ethnic communities in Europe. It will transform existing institutions. It will transform relations with outside countries and regions. The emerging contours are barely visible. The new order in Europe probably will not be defined in terms of a final destination, but rather of a continuous journey. Over the next two years the interlocking issues of political architecture and security structure will shape the agenda.

The political architecture to an increasing extent will be designed to contain ethnic and nationalist challenges to existing states and to respond to the trans-national challenges to the viability of those states. Community building through political and economic integration, the EC model, is likely to constitute the only viable approach. Moscow has suggested the idea of a common European home. However, the role of the Soviet Union in an all-European community or "home" is far from clear. A minimum requirement to the new political architecture is that it protect against Soviet hegemony by containing Soviet power. For foreseeable future that will require American involvement in the running of the common European home. The vast economic disparities in Europe



could create a European home which is dominated by upstairs - downstairs relations, by the resentment and envy of those who live downstairs of the lifestyles of those who reside upstairs and by condescension and exploitation in the opposite direction. Cohabitation could become difficult unless the downstairs inhabitants be invited to move upstairs.

The security structure of the new order is even more distant. It must provide for American contribution to the containment of Soviet military power, principally through extended deterrence. However, the requirements of deterrence will change as the political revolutions in eastern Europe are followed by a dismantling of the military confrontation in Central-Europe, a substantial reduction of Soviet forces and their eventual withdrawal from East-Europe. New strategies and force postures will be needed. Concepts for minimum deterrence emphasizing existential rather than operational perspectives are likely to gain support and open for substantial further reductions of strategic forces following a START-I agreement. The possible requirement for theater nuclear forces in Europe is likely to diminish severely under the impact of the constitution of an all-European community order. NATO will abandon the concept of forward defence in Central Europe, although it will remain relevant in Norway and Turkey as they border on the Soviet-Union. It is likely to be replaced by concepts for rapid reaction forces, emphasizing mobility and flexibility. Deep force cuts beyond CFE-I could pose challenges to systems of national conscription leading to requirements for a restructuring of conscript training and mobilization arrangements. Moreover, they would pose a challenge also to the force structures of professional armies, like those of Britain and the United States, by highlighting the need for latent capacities for demobilization and remobilization.

The new security order could encompass novel schemes for security and disengagement zones (SDZ) in East-Europe. Such zones could provide reassurance to the Soviet Union as the Red

Army is withdrawn. The constraints in the zone could apply to stationed troops, exercises, deployment of nuclear weapons, the structure and size of indigenous forces, etc. It could be instituted under the aegis of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, CSCE, and hence be part of a framework with Soviet and American participation and responsibility. Over time the East-European SDZ could constitute a functional successor arrangement to the Warsaw Pact for the Soviet Union. It would contribute to greater geopolitical equilibrium, provided NATO remains an instrument for the containment of Soviet military power in Europe.

The security structure of a new community order in Europe is likely to have a strong arms control component. Arms control measures would be instituted with the aim of enhancing stability in the new political order, particularly by preventing the military dispositions from pushing states to precipitous military action in a period when conflicts are more likely to arise from social and ethnic unrest than from East-West confrontations.

## 2. ARMS CONTROL

I expect a START-I agreement for a 50% reduction of strategic nuclear forces to be concluded in 1990-91. This involves compromise solutions to such thorny issues as mobile missiles, counting rules for Air-Launched Cruise Missiles and the relation of offensive forces and strategic defenses. The issue of SLCM's is likely, unfortunately, to be deferred or obfuscated in the agreement.

The CFE-I agreement is likely to be concluded in the course of 1990 leading to a drawdown of Soviet and American troops in Europe, essential parity (275 000) in ground forces and a stabilization of the military forces confronting each other on the old continent. Crisis stability would involve a preferential withdrawal of the force components which imply



the greatest potential for surprise attack and sustained offensive action; tanks, armoured fighting vehicles, artillery, fighter bombers, helicopters. Arms race stability would involve agreement on ceilings and essential parity. Political stability would involve an effective elimination of the threat of military occupation. Events in eastern Europe are likely to shift Western priorities in CFE-II to a withdrawal of the Red Army from that area in order to prevent it from blocking the process of further democratization and implementation of the "Sinatra Doctrine" (the right to do it their way). The Western reciprocal could then be a further build-down of American stationed troops and restructuring in support of an expeditionary concept involving pre-stocked equipment and exercises.

CFE-II could imply a shift away from structural measures to territorial arrangements. Political considerations could lead to the constitution of a SDZ in East-Europe. It could be constituted for the double purpose of providing reassurance to NATO against Soviet military power and to the Soviet Union of threats from the west. It would slow down and space out preparations for attack and constitute a follow-up to the structured reductions of CFE-I, and further restructuring in the direction of a defensive emphasis through force planning in NATO and the Soviet Union. It could be supplemented by an extended regime of CSCE confidence and security building measures e.g. establishing ceilings for conscription periods and, possibly, guidelines for coordinated budgetary reductions. The SDZ itself would involve symmetrical obligations and it would compensate for some of the geographical asymmetry between the Soviet Union and NATO in Europe.

NATO is extremely unlikely to carry out any modernization of its short range nuclear forces in the course of the next two years. Hence, no decision will be made to deploy a follow-on-to-Lance (FOTL) missile. Such a decision would be viewed as inconsistent with the flow of political events in eastern Europe. Strong appeals are likely to be made to the Soviet

Union to dismantle her vast numerical superiority in nuclear capable short range missile forces. In order to reinforce the contribution to crisis stability from a CFE-I agreement attention is likely to focus on the thinning out and withdrawal of battlefield nuclear munitions (artillery), particularly from forward areas. This could be accomplished through negotiations or by concerted unilateral action.

The issue of naval arms control cannot be kept off the agenda in the wake of a CFE-I agreement, nor should it be. However, it will be necessary to structure the process of negotiations about naval arms control with great attention and care. The first phase, which is actually on the way, is likely to focus on confidence-building measures, starting with a network of bilateral agreements between the Soviet Union and individual NATO countries about measures to prevent incidents at sea. Such agreements have already been concluded between the Soviet Union on the one hand and the United States, Great Britain, France, West-Germany, Italy, Canada and Norway on the other. The next elements could include some provisions for notification of major naval exercises and mutual observation (from special observation ships and with an option for the flag-state to invite observers on board).

The next phase could involve a dialogue about naval doctrine, force structure, and peacetime dispositions.

The third phase would then extend to negotiations about actual reductions of ships and naval armaments. The latter is likely to focus on nuclear-tipped long-range sea-launched cruise missiles. They constitute a potential threat to targets on land which has been a particular Soviet concern, but it is a concern also of countries with extended coastlines and shallow territories like Norway. Such an agreement ought to be in the interest of the West in view the fact that Western population centers and production facilities are more exposed to direct attacks from the sea than those of the Soviet Union.



Furthermore, interest is likely to focus also on removing all on-board nuclear weapons on naval vessels, primarily for anti-submarine warfare, essentially denuclearising the navies, except for nuclear dedicated platforms like strategic missile submarines (SSBN's). Such preferential reductions are likely to reinforce a structured approach to a build-down of naval vessels.

In regard to such reductions the point of departure should be the geographical asymmetry between the United States and the Soviet Union leading to an asymmetric dependence on the sea. Symmetric reductions, are likely to have asymmetric implications. A substantial reduction of the forwardly stationed troops in Europe will increase the dependence of the West on the trans-Atlantic sea lines of communication in order to counteract the potential ability of the Soviet Union to change the situation by reinforcements via interior over-land lines of communication. However, substantial reductions and political pluralism in eastern Europe will increase substantially the time it would take for the Soviet Union to muster such a threat and the scale of the effort required. Hence, the need for standing naval forces in order to protect the sea lines of communication in the West would diminish. A certain structural shift away from carrier task forces to ocean escorts is possible, also in view of the need to reduce defence expenditures. American military commitments to Europe could be restructured in a way which involves a shift from army units to air power and naval support (and Marine Corps units for the flanks) in the early phases of a crisis or war, thereby also reducing early dependence on the trans-Atlantic sea lines of communication. The US Army is likely to convert to a rapid-deployment concept for lighter formations which would similarly reduce early dependence on the sea-lines of communication. Their significance would depend largely on the duration and scale of any future armed conflict in Europe.

In order to reinforce a CFE-I agreement it is possible to

envisage negotiations for substantial reductions, possibly extending to a zero-option, of ocean-going attack submarines. Such preferential reductions would remove a major threat to the trans-Atlantic sea-lines of communication. Collateral benefits would involve a reduced threat to SSBN's, facilitating a follow-on to START-I agreement involving further substantial reductions, and the removal of targets for on-board tactical nuclear weapons. Similarly a reduction of naval bombers with stand-off weapons could further enhance the safety of the sea lines of communication. Such a transformation could lead to reduced requirements for surface naval forces and to agreements or understandings about their retirement or mothballing, thereby also reducing the operating costs of naval forces.

An East-West agreement banning the production and stockpiling of chemical weapons (CW) is within reach, particularly after the United States no longer insists on the right to produce binary weapons after the conclusion of a CW treaty. However, it seems unlikely that a CW treaty will attain universal adherence. Hence, a non-proliferation regime applying to chemical weapons and ballistic missiles is likely to constitute a platform of common interest for Soviet-American arms control efforts in the years ahead. Guidelines concerning the export of chemical plants and components could also enter the agenda. Increased concern about global proliferation issues combined with deep cuts in nuclear forces and a switch to minimum deterrence concepts could create a future basis of common interest also with regard to a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty (CTB).

Arms control is likely to expand in the next two years opening up for a major perestroika of the East-West military confrontation and competition as the cold-war comes to an end and a new political order emerges in Europe.



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