

East-West Relations

Cooperation with the Soviets for world peace



Last April, a decision was made in Moscow of crucial import to world peace. That decision, taken jointly by French President Giscard d'Estaing and Soviet President Brezhnev, consisted of an agreement—unprecedented in Soviet-Western relations—to hold regular yearly summit level meetings between the heads of state of the two countries, and to set up a “direct liaison between the Kremlin and the Elysée Palace.”

Giscard's April 25-27 talks with Brezhnev in Moscow were a high point in the development of Franco-Soviet relations since General de Gaulle first broke through the Cold War crisis with his call for “détente, entente, and cooperation” between the two countries.

The international context in which these and other accords were signed—only weeks after China invaded Vietnam with the prior knowledge and consent of the Carter administration—gives a hint of how these relations have kept the West from blundering its way by miscalculation into a thermonuclear showdown with the Soviet Union. France, with its foreign policy formulated independently of the Anglo-American camp and its independent nuclear strike force to back it up, is increasingly the world's best guarantee of survival.

Giscard and Brezhnev also established the principle of maintaining continuous bilateral consultations at various levels to ensure the necessary quality of political cooperation. These will be maintained through periodic meetings of the Soviet and French foreign ministers and the establishment of permanent working contacts between officials of the foreign affairs ministries on all “questions of common interest.”

The foremost aim of these summits and consultations, as emphasized in the joint “Program for the development of cooperation between France and the Soviet Union in the interests of peace and détente” (see EIR, May 8-14, 1979, for excerpts of accords signed), is “to rid humanity of the threat of war.”

The two countries also broadcast their resolve to “apply decisive efforts to help anticipate and remove hot spots of tension and settle unresolved international problems,” citing among them Asia, the Middle East (“they are convinced that a genuinely just and durable peace in

this region can only be established through a comprehensive settlement, with the direct participation of all the interested parties”) and Africa.

Giscard has carried further the implied broadside against the Carter administration's Camp David Mideast accords and other international policy. Since Carter came into the White House, Giscard has stated and restated that Carter's “human rights” crusade goes against the grain of détente. Less diplomatically, Giscard asserted in a July 2 interview with *Newsweek* that the Carter administration was to blame for the deterioration of U.S.-Soviet relations.

As the political basis of Franco-Soviet relations is consolidated, so too are their economic relations. The objective set in 1974 of tripling trade between 1975 and 1979 is now considered reached, and new avenues for increasing already advanced cooperation in such fields as peaceful uses of nuclear energy, space and computers are being opened. In March of this year, French companies were awarded an 85 million franc contract (approximately \$20 million) to supply the Soviet press agency Tass with an “IRIS 80” model large computer. The contract had previously been awarded to Univac, but was unilaterally cancelled in August 1978 by Carter on a human rights pretext. A 1980-1990 program for industrial, technological and economic cooperation established the framework for an intensification of those relations.

‘A question of paving the way for détente, entente and cooperation’

Following are some of the statements made by French President Giscard d'Estaing on the occasion of summits with Soviet President Brezhnev and at other major diplomatic events in Franco-Soviet relations.

June 30, 1976 statement on the tenth anniversary of Franco-Soviet cooperation accords. It has been 10 years since General de Gaulle's visit to the Soviet Union and the decisions made there, inaugurating a new and capital phase in relations between our two countries.

For the Soviet Union as well as for France, it was a question of opening the way, first between themselves and ultimately between all the nations of Europe, for détente, entente and cooperation.

The Permanent Franco-Soviet Mixed Commission, which has become as a result of its increasing role what we both now call the Grand Commission, was born out of this concern for realism at the service of a grand political conception...

Nonexistent in 1965, industrial cooperation has taken an essential part in our relations. Projects of great scope have already been realized, whether it be the construction in Issoire by a Soviet company of the world's largest matrix press, or the construction in the Soviet Union of chemical plants, cellulose production units and, soon I hope, a powerful aluminum factory.

Scientific cooperation has greatly developed in such fundamental fields as nuclear energy, space, and computers....

October 12, 1976 interview with Moscow correspondent of French TV station no. 1 broadcast throughout the U.S.S.R. (a week earlier an interview with Brezhnev was broadcast across France). ... When two countries like the Soviet Union and France have cruelly suffered and suffered in fact side by side the trials of the last war, they share the same attachment to the cause of peace. And the policy that leads to peace is the policy of detente....

Detente is not only the state of nonwar, or the absence of war. Detente must also be the will to live together and thus to accept our differences....

The second aspect is the contribution we must all bring to development. ... This is why France took a position in favor of the search for a new international economic order. ... And we find this same concern in the Soviet Union, since like us it participates in the United Nations work on commerce and development...

June 21, 1977 address in honor of Brezhnev during his Paris visit. ... By refusing to yield to the climate of distrust and confrontation of the post-war era, by being the first to resolutely set out on the path of detente, France and the Soviet Union set an example....

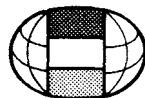
France and the Soviet Union must consult together and draw the necessary conclusions as to the danger that nuclear weapons proliferation would represent for humanity. They are thus all the more qualified to affirm at the same time their willingness to meet the requirements of many countries that are acceding to the peaceful uses of atomic energy. The technological capacity of the two countries, along with their sense of duty toward the international community, entitles us to propose this approach which is both positive and responsible....

This is true for the Middle East, where our two countries could do much to encourage a just and lasting settlement whose principles they have defined in similar terms, a settlement awaited by the peoples of that part of the world who want to be able to devote themselves in safety to their economic and social progress....

France expects much from the Soviet Union, with its riches, its capacities and its influence, is in a position to contribute in these different ways to the cause of detente, nuclear safety in the world and development....

Economic Policy

Giscard's fight for a new monetary system



It is not currently decided whether the European Monetary System will become the "seed-crystal for a new world monetary system," as officials believed at the July 1978 founding of the EMS, or degenerate into a "regional currency bloc" along lines proposed by Prof. Robert Triffin, the current mastermind of the European Community Commission. However, there is total consistency in French President Giscard's approach to the EMS since the initial discussions with his West German counterpart Helmut Schmidt on the plan at the beginning of 1978.

In a nationally-televised interview Dec. 12, Giscard resummarized his program for the EMS, and the basis for his promised personal initiative for a new world monetary system early this coming Spring. The world has two interrelated problems, the French President stated. One is the "extravagant monetary disorder" in the West, against which the European Monetary System has become an "island of stability." The other is the failure to create an agreement for development between the Northern and Southern hemispheres; without such an agreement, Giscard concluded, the European Monetary System could continue to play the limited role it has thus far.

The European Monetary System was proposed at a July 1978 summit of European Community leaders in Bremen and ratified at the Dec. 5, 1978 summit following. It provides a narrowed band of fluctuation between European currencies (excepting sterling), and a fund for defense of these currency parities through the pooling of 20 percent of participating nations' gold and dollar reserves (gold valued at market prices). Effectively, the EMS officially remonetized gold and set the basis for gold's return to leading reserve status after the 1971 removal of the dollar-gold link by then Treasury Secretary John Connally. American officials admit, with some bitterness, that the longstanding French holdout position for retaining gold's reserve role, dating back to 1960s Finance Minister Michel Debré's obstinacy against Anglo-American plans for demonetization, has ended in a French victory.

As Giscard's recent television address indicates, the