
The Strained Alliance

U.S.-EUROPEAN RELATIONS FROM NIXON TO CARTER

MATTHIAS SCHULZ
Université de Genève

THOMAS A. SCHWARTZ
Vanderbilt University

GERMAN HISTORICAL INSTITUTE

Washington, D.C.

and



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way for the Gynnich compromise indicates that Europe's dilemma went deeper than personalities or parties. In the end, the EPC turned out to be little more than a platform for institutionalized negotiations between nation-states, much as the skeptical Kissinger had expected. The Middle East crisis made the Nine realize how right Kissinger had been in his assessment of Europe's global weight. If Washington lacked the power to shape a Europe of its own liking, it could nonetheless use its influence to break up a seemingly unified European front. Given West Germany's inherently vulnerable position, it is not surprising that Kissinger focused on Bonn when he escalated the pressure on Europe in March 1974.

The final results of the Year of Europe were thus decidedly mixed. For a time, Europe had stood up to American demands of predominance. The intrusion of world politics into the insulated transatlantic dialogue quickly proved, however, that Europe still lacked the power – and the will – to deal with a global emergency. Because of this deficiency, because of the inherent power of the United States, and because of the divergence of national interests in the Old World, European unification against the United States was not possible – nor will it be any time soon.

The United States, Western Europe, and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, 1972–1975

SARAH B. SNYDER

The Soviet Union, hoping for formal recognition of the post-World War II borders in Central and Eastern Europe, had sought a European security conference (ESC) since 1954, but the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies feared that such a conference would be far more beneficial to the Soviets than to Western Europe. Primary Western European concerns were that a conference could strengthen the Soviet position in Eastern Europe, divide the Western alliance, and expand the influence of Soviet Communism internationally. By the late 1960s, however, widespread public interest in reducing East-West tension, and potential strategic gains from a conference overcame Western resistance. The outcome was a complex, drawn-out period of diplomacy broadly divided into three phases: developing consensus to hold an ESC from 1969 to 1972; the Helsinki consultations in 1972 and 1973 to determine the timing and agenda for the conference; and the crucial negotiations of the Geneva stage from 1973 to 1975. The negotiations culminated in a document, the Helsinki Final Act, that contained principles to govern East-West interactions in Europe. In addition to incorporating an agreement on the inviolability of frontiers, the Helsinki Final Act committed its signatories to respect human rights and facilitate human contacts across East-West borders.¹ Often described

¹ The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) negotiations from 1972 to 1975 and the Helsinki Final Act that resulted were structured around four groupings of issues, which were called "baskets." The first dealt with ten principles guiding relations in Europe, most notably Principle Three, which established the inviolability of frontiers and Principle Six, which mandated nonintervention in internal affairs. The first basket also addressed confidence-building measures such as advanced notification of troop maneuvers, prior notification of military movements, provisions for the exchange of observers, and disarmament. The second basket concentrated on economic, scientific, and technological cooperation between CSCE states. It discussed facilitating business contacts, cooperating with

as the "high point of détente," the Helsinki Final Act would prove a key diplomatic turning point in the Cold War.²

Throughout the discussions, the United States strained to balance its commitment to NATO and its bilateral interests with the Soviet Union. The primary American objective ostensibly was to maintain allied unity and support Western European interests. However, its other policy prerogatives, namely Soviet-American détente, eventually led the United States to work closely with the Soviet Union to expedite what became known as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). This behavior, in which the United States could often be categorized as playing a mediating rather than a partisan role, piqued allied suspicions of Soviet-American collusion and at times threatened fissures in the Atlantic alliance. Thus, the CSCE presented the United States with a difficult course to navigate – avoiding disadvantage and fracture to the alliance while preserving a new-found partnership with the Soviet Union.

Opposition among the allies to the Soviets' ESC proposal initially was unanimous. The Western European countries had important reservations because of concerns about the myriad Soviet objectives the conference could facilitate, most significantly the legitimization of the Soviet position in Eastern Europe.³ The United States, uninvited by the Soviets in many of their early calls for a conference, was particularly opposed to the idea. The shock of the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia only further convinced the NATO allies that they should not consider such an initiative.

Nevertheless, many West European governments were keenly aware of their populations' desire for decreased East-West tension. It was in this climate that a new Warsaw Pact appeal for a conference resurrected the

respect to industry, encouraging tourism, and expanding transportation networks. The third basket concentrated on increasing contacts through family meetings and reunifications, binational marriages, and travel. In addition, Basket Three also addressed humanitarian issues such as improved working conditions for journalists, increased cultural exchanges, educational cooperation, and better information flow. The fourth basket outlined a follow-up mechanism.

2 Mike Bowker and Phil Williams, *Superpower Détente: A Reappraisal* (Newbury Park, CA, 1988), 63; Peter Wallenstein, "American Soviet Détente: What Went Wrong?" *Journal of Peace Research* 22, no. 1 (1985): 1; Gregory A. Flynn, "The Content of European Detente," *Orbis* 20 (Summer 1976): 402–3; and William G. Hyland, *Mortal Rivals: Superpower Relations from Nixon to Reagan* (New York, 1987), 10. That current scholars and observers attribute a significant role to the Helsinki Final Act and the CSCE meetings that followed in ending the Cold War can be identified in proposals that the CSCE process be exported to other troubling regions, such as Central Asia and the Middle East. The Helsinki process is now widely regarded as a potential paradigm for addressing human rights abuses and a successful model for far-reaching, peaceful political change.

3 NSSM 83, "Current Issues of European Security," Folder NSSM 83 [1 of 4], Box H-166, Institutional National Security Council (NSC) Files, Nixon Presidential Materials Project, College Park, MD (hereafter NPMP).

issue on March 17, 1969. During a NATO ministerial meeting in Washington the following month, many foreign offices went on the record welcoming the appeal and calling for further discussion of the proposed conference. Western European governments, responsive to domestic politics, could not disregard potential opportunities to defuse tension with the Warsaw Pact. Indeed, Italian Prime Minister Mariano Rumor pointed out to U.S. President Richard Nixon that politically he could not reject such a proposal.⁴ Moreover, the United Kingdom and others saw potentially positive implications for Eastern European autonomy and warned against dismissing such initiatives.⁵

In the face of Western European interest, the United States' long-held opposition to the conference began to subside. The Soviets removed a significant obstacle to the conference when they indicated that American participation would be acceptable; they later opened the way for Canadian participation as well.⁶ In addition, as Soviet-American relations improved through détente, it became more difficult for Nixon and National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger to ignore Soviet General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev's strong interest, as the Soviets had emphasized that the conference was a "pet project" of senior officials.⁷ In the early years of the Nixon administration, the most significant issues on the American foreign policy agenda were the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) with the Soviets, the quadripartite negotiations regarding Berlin, and the situation in the Middle East; the proposed ESC was of secondary concern. Despite Washington's expectation that such a conference would be of limited value – Kissinger thought the CSCE offered no benefit to the West and would have no practical impact on international relations – it was not willing to sacrifice its recently cultivated relationship with the Soviet Union, its ties to Europe, or its NATO partnership to avoid participation in the ESC.⁸

In the delicate negotiations that led to the CSCE, NATO's broad goals included limiting Soviet influence in Western Europe, maintaining alliance unity, facilitating peaceful political change in Eastern Europe, reducing

4 Memorandum of Conversation, Apr. 1, 1969, Folder 2, Box 694, NSC Files, NPMP.

5 REU 25, "Current West European Attitudes toward a European Security Conference," Apr. 3, 1969, Folder 1, Box 709, Country Files: Europe, NSC Files, NPMP.

6 Kissinger wrote, "This represents a major change in Soviet policy." Memorandum, Kissinger to Nixon, Apr. 3, 1969, Folder 1: Briefing Book, Box 56, Country Files: Europe, HAK Office Files, NPMP. Canada and the United States were not part of the original 1954 Soviet proposal.

7 John J. Maresca, *To Helsinki: The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, 1973–1975* (Durham, NC, 1985), 10; and Telegram, AmEmbassy Moscow to SecState, Feb. 19, 1970, Folder 1, Box 711, Country Files: Europe, NSC Files, NPMP.

8 Jussi Hanhimäki, "They Can Write It in Swahili," Kissinger, The Soviets, and the Helsinki Accords, 1973–1975," *Journal of Transatlantic Studies* 1, no. 1 (2003): 37.

East-West tensions, and extracting Soviet concessions on other issues before agreeing to a conference. Allied positions became more complex, however, in the course of the protracted, often-tense negotiations as the conference progressed. Building and maintaining consensus for allied policy in the CSCE was difficult as many countries balanced individual bilateral relationships with their multilateral alliance. As with the United States, some Western European countries were unwilling to jeopardize détente with the Soviet Union for the sake of humanitarian issues. Over time, the CSCE seemed less a symbol of the strength of détente than an indication of its fragility and therefore increased divisions within the West as to what agenda to pursue.

DEVELOPING NATO CONSENSUS FOR A CONFERENCE

After the United States had put aside its objections to an ESC, the NATO allies entered into discussions about how best to achieve allied objectives in such a conference. They sought to develop substantive conference proposals that would turn the CSCE to the allies' advantage. This transatlantic discussion was overshadowed, however, by Kissinger's disregard for the CSCE and his greater interest in Berlin and mutual and balanced force reductions (MBFR).

By the fall of 1970, statements by French and West German leaders forced recognition among the Western allies that a conference had become inevitable, in part because of the fear that those who openly opposed the conference risked being seen as endangering détente. Therefore, the Western allies began multilateral efforts to secure immediate concessions on Berlin and to seize control of the substance of the proposed conference. Both the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany made their participation in the conference contingent on the conclusion of talks between the four postwar occupying powers: Great Britain, France, the United States, and the Soviet Union.⁹ In addition, in ministerial meetings and bilateral talks, the NATO allies moved beyond initial Soviet hopes for a short, narrowly defined conference to envision one that would be as advantageous as possible to Western European goals. They explored including freer movement of people, ideas, and information on the agenda, as well as expanded cooperation within Europe and human rights.¹⁰

⁹ Telegram, AmEmbassy Moscow to SecState Washington, July 28, 1971, Folder 1, Box 715; and Telegram, AmEmbassy Bonn to SecState Washington, Oct. 14, 1970, Folder 2, Box 713, Country Files: Europe, NSC Files, NPMP.

¹⁰ Final Communiqué, May 26–27, 1970, <http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c700526a.htm>.

The United States and most of the allies supported a tough negotiating position with the East on these issues.¹¹ To determine how the United States and the allies could best use the conference to advance their interests, clearly formulated allied objectives were necessary. In the words of National Security Council staff member Helmut C. Sonnenfeldt, "The main problem, thus, is that the Soviets have clear purposes . . . but the allies and the United States have no conception of what a Conference would achieve other than atmospherics of détente."¹²

Divergent national interests among the allies, however, complicated the development of a uniform NATO position. For example, the United States had concerns that France and the Federal Republic were prepared to participate in a conference without substance, whereas many American administration officials wanted to put the Soviets "on the tactical defensive" by including force reductions on the agenda and supporting a permanent institution to which East Europeans could appeal if threatened militarily.¹³ At the same time, NATO coordination suffered from inattention from U.S. policy makers. Throughout the different stages of the CSCE negotiations, the United States perceived its bilateral negotiations with the Soviet Union on arms control and other matters as more significant than the CSCE. Therefore, it was less focused than its allies on the form and content of the conference, and thus, the European allies led the efforts to protect Western interests in the conference preparations, albeit with mixed results. At times, U.S. disinterest enabled the Western Europeans to press more forcefully on proposals intended to open Eastern Europe to outside influence, which the United States would likely have not supported given Soviet opposition to such measures. Yet American inattention to the negotiations also undermined the allied stance, reducing pressure on the Soviets to compromise.

Although the opportunity to garner Soviet compromises appealed to many in the West, NATO's overall priority was to prevent potential negative consequences from the conference. A NATO steering brief emphasized the alliance's defensive posture and outlined important goals for the consultations stage: sustain Western unity, avoid losing public and legislative

¹¹ Telegram, USMission NATO to SecState, Sept. 10, 1971, Folder NSSM 138 [2 of 2], Box H-187, Institutional NSC Files, NPMP.

¹² Memorandum, Sonnenfeldt to Kissinger, Nov. 18, 1971, Folder 1, Box H-63, Institutional NSC Files, NPMP.

¹³ NSSM 138: A Conference on European Security (Analytical Summary), Oct. 2, 1971; NSSM 138: Conference on European Security: Talking Points, Oct. 2, 1971, Folder 1, Box H-63, Institutional NSC Files, NPMP.

support for defense spending, convince the public to be cautious about the benefits of a CSCE, maintain momentum for Western European integration, disagree with the Soviet interpretation of peaceful coexistence, and assert the equality of states in their freedom from intervention. Although NATO members were in general agreement about defensive goals, they disagreed on the balance between extracting concessions and threatening European détente with confrontational negotiations. Potentially offensive objectives included diminishing divisions within Europe; championing human rights; formulating confidence-building measures (CBMs); and most controversially, increasing the autonomy of the Eastern European states.¹⁴ The United States supported a more aggressive agenda in part to demonstrate that significant differences remained between the East and the West, thus necessitating the continuation of the Atlantic alliance and the presence of American troops in Europe.¹⁵

Despite the secondary role of the United States in these talks, its position was of particular importance because the Western European allies were concerned about maintaining harmony within the Atlantic alliance. The head of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Western Organizations Department, Crispin Tickell, wrote, "We do indeed want to avoid any European/American row about CSCE, and we agree that the avoidance of such a row is more important than abstract arguments about how a hypothetical conference might be prepared."¹⁶ The U.S. CSCE Inter-Agency Task Force's second interim report warned that the allies were splintering into two sides over the shape of the CSCE conference, with some pressing to strengthen détente and others for more substantive negotiations and agreements.¹⁷ The task force suggested that if the NATO allies could

14 Draft Brief, Nov. 13, 1972, G. Bennett and K. A. Hamilton, eds., *Documents on British Policy Overseas: The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, 1972-1975* (DBPO), series 3, volume 2 (London, 1997).

15 A National Security Study Memorandum supported an assertive approach by identifying potential propaganda victories and Soviet concessions. CSCE Task Force Second Interim Report, May 15, 1972, Folder 7, Box 103, Executive Secretary's Briefing Book, General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59, National Archives, College Park, MD; and Reply to NSSM 138, Oct. 2, 1971, Folder 1, Box H-063, Institutional NSC Files, NPMP (hereafter RG 59). At the same time, however, others such as the National Security Council's Sonnenfeldt were cautious about the CSCE and believed that confrontational negotiations had limited potential significance. In Sonnenfeldt's view, "some debating points may be scored" but, for example, an agreement on freer movement would not significantly affect Europe. Memorandum, Sonnenfeldt to Kissinger, Aug. 19, 1972, "NATO, the Warsaw Pact and Détente, 1965-1973," Cold War International History Project Conference Volume.

16 Letter, Tickell to Butler, Mar. 27, 1972, DBPO 3:2. The WOD was the primary group working on CSCE issues for the British government.

17 CSCE Task Force Second Interim Report, May 15, 1972, Folder 7, Box 103, Executive Secretary's Briefing Book, RG 59.

maintain a uniform position, they could exact concessions as a result of Soviet emphasis on a "successful" conference.¹⁸

There were differences within the Nixon administration as to the significance of allied unity. Some officials, particularly in the State Department, suggested that Washington should agree to go forward with the conference purely to satisfy the desires of its allies. As they tried to formulate an administration policy on the CSCE, officials even considered deferring completely to what the Europeans wanted: "The [United States] could accept whatever issues the Allies deem desirable - the purpose of such an approach being to maintain unity."¹⁹ Others, including Kissinger most importantly, acknowledged the importance of unity but wanted to preserve American negotiating prerogatives to pursue Soviet-American détente and to secure an agreement on MBFR. Nonetheless, the United States needed to maintain some semblance of harmony to preserve the alliance. To this end, Sonnenfeldt suggested that Kissinger dampen Soviet hopes of American cooperation with respect to the CSCE: "We have probably led the Soviets to believe that we are going to be their partner in fixing this conference in advance. In fact we have little freedom of action, given the keen interest of our Allies. Your main purpose, therefore, may be to introduce a note of sobriety in Soviet expectations, without appearing antagonistic toward their pet project."²⁰ Later Sonnenfeldt warned Kissinger that the importance of allied unity "means carefully resisting the natural temptation to cook the results of the conference with the Soviet Union, privately behind the backs of our friends."²¹ This was particularly significant in light of concern by European allies that the United States already had preempted CSCE negotiations with the 1972 Soviet-American Basic Principles and their ongoing worries that the United States would pursue a bilateral agreement with the Soviets, undermining the role of other states in the CSCE consultations.²² This anxiety was partly due to a general allied belief, largely accurate, that Kissinger did not view the CSCE as a "serious" matter.²³

18 Attachment to Memorandum, Mar. 20, 1972, Folder NSDM 162, Box H - 233, Institutional NSC Files, NPMP. Well aware of the disunity, the Soviets worked to exploit these rifts as they pursued the conference through bilateral meetings with Western countries. Telegram, AmEmbassy Luxembourg to RUEHC/SecState, July 12, 1972, Folder 1, Box 720, Country Files: Europe, NSC Files, NPMP.

19 Memorandum, Folder 1, Box 667, Country Files: Europe, NSC Files, NPMP.

20 Memorandum, Sonnenfeldt to Kissinger, Aug. 8, 1972, Folder 1, Box 495, President's Trip Files, NSC Files, NPMP.

21 Memorandum, Sonnenfeldt to Kissinger, Aug. 19, 1972, "NATO, the Warsaw Pact and Détente, 1965-1973," Cold War International History Project Conference Volume.

22 HAK Talking Points, Dec. 1, 1971, Folder 6, Box H - 32, Institutional NSC Files, NPMP.

23 Minute, Braithwaite, Mar. 2, 1972, cited in DBPO 3:2. This estimation was based on the observations of the British counselor in Washington, Michael Butler.

THE HELSINKI CONSULTATIONS AT DIPOLI

The consultations stage to establish the agenda for the CSCE, also known as the Multilateral Preparatory Talks (MPT), began on November 22, 1972, in Dipoli, Finland, not far from Helsinki. As the agenda would determine the substance of the negotiations and the outline of the final agreement, the MPT was a critical component of the CSCE. Thus, the Dipoli phase presented a significant opportunity for the Western powers to seize control of the agenda. American relations with the NATO allies and the Soviet Union during the MPT were shaped by a number of factors: disinterest at high levels of the U.S. administration in the CSCE; Western emphasis on enhanced substance, such as humanitarian provisions, for the conference; Western European concern about public opinion; and increased Soviet pressure on the United States and others to accommodate their objectives.

The United States' relative disinterest in the CSCE continued in the Dipoli phase. In Italian diplomat Luigi Ferraris's view, the American "attitude of detachment" was "ostentatiously" displayed there. He believed that Kissinger regarded the CSCE "as an exercise, at best significant for public opinion, but certainly not as an essential component of the substantial make-up of the process of détente."²⁴ Indeed, in conversations with the British, U.S. administration official William Hyland described the CSCE as "not important" to the United States; moreover, he suggested that no senior administration officials were focused on the conference.²⁵ Furthermore, U.S. CSCE delegate John J. Maresca acknowledged that the United States initially pursued a "low profile" at the negotiations.²⁶ To Maresca, the speaking order at the Helsinki foreign ministers meeting following the MPT most clearly illustrated the American disinterest. According to him, all the other thirty-four states asked for special placement on the speakers' list, whereas the United States made no such request. This led Secretary of State William Rogers to be listed last, an embarrassment only partially lessened after his arrival in Helsinki when the Finnish hosts switched places with the United States, moving Rogers up to the twenty-first position. The Soviets, who had designated a diplomat to wait outside the Finnish foreign ministry overnight to secure their spot on the roster, spoke first.²⁷ American apathy, it seems, was a result of skepticism about the conference's impact. Kissinger was particularly doubtful about the value of the European focus

24 Luigi Vittorio Ferraris, ed., *Report on a Negotiation: Helsinki-Geneva-Helsinki, 1972-1975*, trans. Marie-Claire Barber (Alphen aan den Rijn, 1979), 66.

25 Letter, Graham to Bullard, Mar. 12, 1973, *DBPO* 3:2.

26 Maresca, *To Helsinki*, 44.

27 *Ibid.*, 39-40.

on humanitarian provisions, remarking, "What is it that suddenly possesses the West to believe that it can affect the domestic structure of the Soviet Union through a treaty signed in Geneva of peripheral significance?"²⁸ Such disinterest by a key American official raised allied concerns about potential negative consequences for NATO interests.

American inattention troubled its European allies because the NATO allies were apprehensive that an agreement between Eastern and Western states could prompt false euphoria, which might unduly raise public expectations or threaten defense spending. Consequently, the British in particular pushed for a hard line on humanitarian issues to demonstrate how little substance détente with the Soviet Union offered.²⁹ The British and other allies wanted to appease public desire for reduced tension in Europe, but not through empty declarations.

Across the negotiating table, the Soviets expressed concern about the slow pace of the talks, perhaps due to expectations that their bilateral negotiations with the Americans would speed the discussions.³⁰ American officials repeatedly countered with entreaties to the Soviets to show more flexibility, as the U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union, Walter Stoessel, argued that the real drag on the discussions was the Soviet position on issues such as human contacts.³¹ Unwilling to make compromises, the Soviets and their allies continued to exert bilateral pressure on the Western and neutral states to hasten the talks. Despite the eventual conclusion of the talks in Dipoli, significant work remained for the CSCE delegates in Geneva.

The Helsinki consultations ended on June 8, 1973 with agreement on the "Final Recommendations" that delineated the timing of the formal conference and the four groups of issues, which were called "baskets" in CSCE terminology, to be discussed in the Geneva phase. By the end of Dipoli, the negotiators had already defined the elements of each of the baskets, indicating that delegates at Geneva would consider proposals on freedom of movement, dissemination of information, and different types of exchanges. In addition, the negotiations had outlined what would be the ten principles of Basket One, including the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Broadening the agenda to include these and other issues such as family reunification and working conditions for journalists, not part of early

28 Secretary's Staff Meeting Report, Oct. 29, 1973, National Security Archive Collection, Washington, D.C.

29 Minute, Walden to Tickell, Apr. 16, 1973, *DBPO* 3:2.

30 Memorandum, Dobrynin to Kissinger, Apr. 10, 1973, Folder 2, Box 496, President's Trip Files, NSC Files, NPMP.

31 Memorandum for the Record, Apr. 19, 1973; and Telegram, SecState to US Mission NATO, April 1973, Folder 4, Box 77, Country Files: Europe, HAK Office Files, NPMP.

Soviet proposals, led to positive appraisals in the West.³² Nevertheless, fundamental disagreements within the NATO alliance and between East and West on Basket One and Basket Three issues remained and would characterize much of the negotiations in Geneva. A five-day foreign minister-level meeting officially launched the CSCE on July 3, 1973.

NEGOTIATING THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT AT GENEVA

The Geneva negotiations deepened the stress on transatlantic relations as a result of divisions among the Western allies over the CSCE agenda. The United States continued to strain the alliance, as Kissinger maintained his disinterest in the Geneva talks while persisting in parallel discussions with the Soviets on CSCE issues; moreover, he often blamed the NATO allies for the slow pace of the conference, raising West European suspicions that he might make a deal with the Soviets behind their backs.

Nine months into the talks, at the June 1974 NATO meeting, ministers expressed anxiety about the second stage of the CSCE negotiations, which they said had "advanced unevenly." Progress lagged on significant issues such as CBMs, principles governing relations between states, increased human contacts, and the free flow of information.³³ Several days later, Kissinger wrote that a "major conflict has developed" between the Soviets and the Western allies over the concessions necessary to agree on a final summit.³⁴ The Soviets had been expected to make compromises on CBMs and freer movement of people in response to earlier Western agreement on frontier inviolability language; instead, the Soviets maintained their previous positions even as they increased pressure to speed the conclusion of the Geneva phase.³⁵ Such demands, however, increased allied awareness that the Soviets felt time constraints, giving the West leverage as the allies could slow the pace of the negotiations to gain Soviet concessions.³⁶

The United States tried to use its unique role to facilitate compromise. For example, en route to Moscow in June 1974, Kissinger stopped in Western Europe ostensibly to consult with the allies but actually to mediate

32 Final Recommendations of the Helsinki Consultations (Helsinki 1973), Ottawa 1985, Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe Archives, Prague, Czech Republic.

33 Final Communiqué, June 18–19, 1974, <http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c740618a.htm>.

34 Memorandum, Kissinger to Nixon, June 27, 1974, Folder 8, Box 8, Office of the Counselor, Helmut C. Sonnenfeldt, 1955–1977, RG 59 (hereafter Sonnenfeldt Collection).

35 Briefing Paper, CSCE, Folder 2, Box 188, Executive Secretary's Briefing Books, RG 59.

36 Basket 3, Folder 4, Box 77, Country Files: Europe, HAK Office Files, NPMP; and Ljubivoje Acimovic, *Problems of Security and Cooperation in Europe* (Rockville, MD, 1981), 114.

between NATO and the Soviets. In his talks with Western European leaders, Kissinger planned to stress the need not only for Soviet compromises but also for realistic allied expectations. According to his briefing notes, Kissinger planned to encourage the allies to work on minimum acceptable conference results, to think pragmatically about what they could gain, and to pursue more effective negotiations with the Soviets.³⁷ He also sought to reassure the allies that despite their differences of opinion, the United States would not make a preemptive agreement with the Soviet Union.³⁸

American efforts to push the Western allies, such as Kissinger's visit, often bred resentment, however. One attempt spurred a British representative to cable home: "The US statement is astonishingly tactless. It totally disregards the views of the Nine as expressed at Brussels and [Geneva], and shows no understanding at all of the character of the CSCE and the role and susceptibilities of the neutrals."³⁹ The British seemed to recall fondly Kissinger's earlier policy of benign neglect toward the conference, and they feared his increased interest could lead to greater pressure to compromise with the East. They attributed the breach between Kissinger and the nine members of the European Community to Kissinger's misinterpretation of the significance of CSCE to the West and the differences in their understandings of détente; divergent motivations and hopes for détente colored the allies' view of the value of the CSCE throughout this period. In addition, Tickell believed that Kissinger's respect for Metternich-style diplomacy impeded his ability to see the conference in idealistic terms. Kissinger's views, coupled with his inattention to the negotiations and impatience with their pace, often contributed to the differences of opinion between Kissinger and the European Community on the CSCE.⁴⁰ For Kissinger, the CSCE negotiations were only a lever to use in his contacts with the Soviets – to be slowed down or sped up as convenient for U.S. foreign policy.

37 Briefing Paper, CSCE, Folder 4, Box 189, Executive Secretary's Briefing Books, RG 59; Memorandum, Hartman to Kissinger, Jan. 10, 1975, Folder CSCE 1975 (1) White House, Box 44, National Security Council Europe, Canada, and Ocean Affairs Staff Files, National Security Adviser, Gerald R. Ford Library, Ann Arbor, MI (hereafter Ford Library); Declaration on Atlantic Relations, June 18–19, 1974, <http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c740618b.htm>; and Telegram, Peck to Callaghan, July 4, 1974, DBPO 3:2.

38 Briefing Paper: Netherlands; Luxembourg; Italy; Germany; Denmark; France; Belgium, Folder 5; Department of State Briefing Paper, CSCE, Folder 2, Box 188, Executive Secretary's Briefing Books, RG 59.

39 "The Nine" refers to the nine members of the European Community. Telegram, Hildyard to Callaghan, July 24, 1974, DBPO 3:2.

40 Memorandum, Elliott to Callaghan, July 29, 1974, DBPO 3:2. Maresca suggests that Kissinger pursued a more assertive policy with the Soviets on CSCE in late 1974 and in 1975 as a result of worsening Soviet-American relations and domestic political challenges. Maresca, *To Helsinki*, 46.

The United States was not the only power struggling to balance its relationship with the Soviets and its Western European allies.⁴¹ For example, Franco-Soviet relations further complicated allied coordination on the CSCE. France had devoted considerable energy to détente with the Soviet Union and did not want it to founder on multilateral disagreements. Therefore, at the end of 1974, in anticipation of their bilateral summit with the Soviets, the French retreated somewhat on divisive issues to speed the second stage of the conference.⁴² To this end, the French CSCE ambassador acknowledged to U.S. CSCE Ambassador Albert Sherer that the French public was not particularly invested in the conference negotiations and suggested that France would sign a diluted Basket Three to keep the process of détente moving.⁴³ The Franco-Soviet summit confirmed the weakening French position, and the ensuing bilateral communiqué, especially the seeming lack of Soviet concessions on Basket Three in exchange for a French shift on the summit finale angered Kissinger, who had been pressed by changing international and domestic circumstances to adopt a tougher approach with the Soviets. It produced an anti-CSCE tirade in which he declared: "I couldn't care less what they do in the European Security Conference. They can write it in Swahili for all I care. . . . I don't give a damn about the conference."⁴⁴ An American briefing paper described the results of the talks between Brezhnev and French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing as a "shock" and expressed frustration that France had not

41 As the Geneva stage wore on, there was "the risk of transforming the CSCE into a permanent inter-European debating forum." Ferraris, Report on a Negotiation 402. To avoid such a fate, some allies, such as France and Britain began to shift their positions. Telegram, US Mission Geneva to SecState, Sept. 25, 1974, Switzerland - SDT-To SecState - EXDIS (1), Box 13, President's Country Files for Europe and Canada, National Security Adviser, Ford Library; Briefing Item, Feb. 5, 1975; and Memorandum from Clift to Scowcroft, Feb. 14, 1975, Folder CSCE, 1975 (1) White House, Box 44, National Security Council Europe, Canada, and Ocean Affairs Staff Files, National Security Adviser, Ford Library.

42 Telegram, US Mission Geneva to SecState, Dec. 5, 1974, Folder Switzerland - State Department Telegrams - To SECSTATE - EXDIS (1), Box 13, President's Country Files for Europe and Canada, National Security Adviser, Ford Library. The change in government in France may also have affected French CSCE policy. Although the United States initially expected the French to continue aggressive negotiations and resist a final summit, the French president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing ultimately proved more amenable to Soviet entreaties. Telegram, AmEmbassy Paris to SecState, June 5, 1974, Folder 1, Box 680, Country Files: Europe, NSC Files, NPMP; and Maresca, *To Helsinki*, 108-9.

43 Feb. 20, 1974, Folder CSCE LOG Washington-Geneva, Box 4, Albert W. Sherer Jr. Papers, Yale University, New Haven, CT (hereafter Sherer Papers). In discussing French policy, Kissinger suggested that Giscard might betray the allied position at his upcoming Franco-Soviet summit if Germany had not done so already during German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt's summit in Moscow. Staff Meeting Transcript, Dec. 5, 1974, HAK Staff Meetings, 1973-1977, Transcript of Secretary of State, RG 59; and Secretary's Staff Meeting, Dec. 9, 1974, National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.

44 Transcript, Secretary's Staff Meeting, Dec. 9, 1974, National Security Archive.

consulted or informed the United States of its position in advance.⁴⁵ At issue were differences between American and French understandings of détente and their national interests. For the French, the continuation of détente was of paramount importance, and the drawn-out, confrontational negotiations at Geneva had begun to threaten the spirit of détente that the CSCE had once represented. The irony of Kissinger's outburst, of course, is that France faced the same challenge as the United States - to protect its national interests without sacrificing NATO objectives.

American policy officially remained supportive of proposals that were important to the allies and to resist Soviet pressure to acquiesce to a summit as the final phase of the CSCE.⁴⁶ American officials were extremely cautious to avoid giving the impression that the United States was siding with the Soviets. This even led the National Security Council to recommend denying clearance to a State Department telegram to the Finns noting how many hotel rooms the United States would need if the conference ended with a summit, arguing that such a telegram would leave the United States out in front of its European allies.⁴⁷ Similarly, from January through to mid-July 1975, White House Press Secretary Ron Nessen repeatedly prepared to answer questions about the CSCE in line with the NATO position by declaring that more progress was necessary before the United States would agree to hold a summit.⁴⁸

By early May 1975, Sonnenfeldt reported to Kissinger that there was a "virtually unanimous desire" among those in Geneva to end the conference by swiftly moving to the final stage.⁴⁹ Yet tension within the NATO caucus had increased because of frustration with the lack of Soviet movement and allegations that the United States might settle for a weaker Basket

45 Telegram, SecState to AmEmbassy Brussels, Dec. 12, 1974, Folder Belgium - State Department Telegrams - From SECSTATE - NODIS (3), Box 1, President's Country Files for Europe and Canada, National Security Adviser, Ford Library. The British did not see Giscard's actions in quite the same light - in their reading of the communiqué, the French had not abandoned the allied position, and they believed that Giscard had gotten some Basket Three concessions from Brezhnev. According to Tickell, the French "have a paper." Telegram, AmEmbassy London to SecState, Dec. 10, 1974, Folder United Kingdom - State Department Telegrams - to SECSTATE - EXDIS (1), Box 16, President's Country Files for Europe and Canada, National Security Adviser, Ford Library.

46 Memorandum, Kissinger to Ford, Jan. 17, 1975, Folder CSCE 1975 (1) White House, Box 44, National Security Council Europe, Canada, and Ocean Affairs Staff Files, National Security Adviser, Ford Library. In this context, Sherer emphasized at the North Atlantic Council in December 1974 that maintaining allied unity was necessary to force Soviet concessions on the issues most important to the West. Statement, Dec. 3, 1974, Folder CSCE Geneva, Box 4, Sherer Papers.

47 Memorandum, Clift to Kissinger, Jan. 21, 1975, Folder CSCE 1975 (1) White House, Box 44, National Security Council Europe, Canada, and Ocean Affairs Staff Files, National Security Adviser, Ford Library.

48 Guidance, Folder CSCE, Box 122, Ron Nessen Papers, Ford Library.

49 Memorandum, Sonnenfeldt to Kissinger, Folder 11, Box 7, Sonnenfeldt Collection.

Three, which threatened allied goals. Sherer reported that his delegation was working hard to soothe disagreements among the allies, but trust between many of the countries had waned.⁵⁰ Kissinger had long wanted the NATO states to agree on the minimum threshold at which they would hold a summit, but some allies had feared that Kissinger would leak this information to the Soviets and thus had not articulated a negotiating position. Avoiding such talks, however, prevented the allies from developing a more unified position on Basket Three, reaching a compromise with the Soviets, and concluding the conference.

Further complicating the strains caused by the absence of a unified allied position was the continuing low level of American involvement in the negotiations, which persisted throughout the Geneva phase. Shortly after his appointment to head the U.S. delegation at Geneva, Sherer discovered that the American delegates had never received written instructions from Washington.⁵¹ Sonnenfeldt, who was following the CSCE for Kissinger, confirmed that neither Nixon nor Kissinger had been interested in the conference, but they felt it was necessary to participate to placate U.S. allies. Sonnenfeldt suggested as late as January 1974 that "there would be no tears shed in Washington if the conference failed." Sonnenfeldt's justification for the low American profile at the negotiations was that "the allies got us into this mess and they should take the lead in getting us out of it."⁵² A Department of State briefing paper suggests more diplomatic reasons for the low profile, namely as a response to competing pressures from the Soviet Union and the Western allies.⁵³ From a European perspective, however, the United States' apathy posed significant risks. Swiss Ambassador Edouard Brunner expressed concern that Kissinger's lack of interest in and positions on the CSCE created the possibility for a meaningful breach between the European Community and the United States, as Western European public opinion had certain expectations of which Kissinger did not seem cognizant.⁵⁴ Sherer's log reveals Kissinger's disinterest also threatened U.S. negotiating positions in Geneva as Kissinger conceded certain points to Soviet Ambassador to the

50 Briefing Item, May 27, 1975, Folder CSCE 1975 (3) White House, Box 44, National Security Council Europe, Canada, and Ocean Affairs Staff Files, National Security Adviser, Ford Library; and Apr. 22, 1975; Apr. 23, 1975, Folder CSCE LOG Washington-Geneva, Box 4, Sherer Papers.

51 Jan. 11, 1974, Folder CSCE LOG Washington-Geneva, Box 4, Sherer Papers.

52 Jan. 28, 1974, Folder CSCE LOG Washington-Geneva, Box 4, Sherer Papers.

53 Briefing Paper, CSCE, Folder 2, Moscow Briefing Book Vol. II, Box 189, Executive Secretary's Briefing Book, RG 59.

54 Feb. 9, 1974, Folder CSCE LOG Washington-Geneva, Box 4, Sherer Papers. In addition, the British worried the overall lack of American interest in the CSCE could prompt a bilateral agreement with the Soviets to expedite the second stage to the disadvantage of Western European goals. Steering Brief, Sept. 13, 1973, DBPO 3:2.

United States Anatoly Dobrynin that the American delegation had hoped would be part of a compromise or trade.⁵⁵

Kissinger's continuing indifference can be attributed to the level of significance he ascribed to the CSCE. Briefing President Gerald Ford after Nixon's resignation, Kissinger summarized, "On CSCE, we never wanted it but we went along with the Europeans. . . . The Soviet Union wants it as a substitute for a peace treaty. They more or less have that. The big hang-up is on freedom of movement. It is meaningless – it is just a grandstand play to the left. We are going along."⁵⁶ Kissinger was interested in the CSCE only as far as it related to his larger, geopolitical goals and U.S. relationships with the Soviet Union and its allies. The actual substance of the talks was less significant in his view, and thus he focused more on timing than content. In the early stages, Kissinger focused on slowing down the progress of the talks to achieve Soviet concessions.⁵⁷ Later in the Geneva stage, he tried to accelerate the talks because he perceived a threat to his other priorities with the Soviets. More recently, Kissinger has suggested that he recognized a "long-term opportunity" in the CSCE, but he still identified that "opportunity" as the possibility for the United States to use its participation in the conference as a tool to restrain Soviet behavior.⁵⁸ Kissinger, like many other participants at the time, did not foresee the influential role the CSCE would play in ending the Cold War.⁵⁹

Despite expressed U.S. concern for allied unity, Kissinger was working closely and clandestinely with the Soviets to forge compromises at Geneva. For example, the United States and the Soviet Union reached an agreement on Basket Three language, but to avoid raising Western European suspicions they developed a plan whereby "Country X," later decided to be Finland,

55 There even were those in the State Department who expressed concern to Sherer that Kissinger had made a secret bilateral agreement with the Soviets regarding the CSCE. Jan. 12, 1974, Folder CSCE LOG Washington-Geneva, Box 4, Sherer Papers.

56 Memorandum of Conversation, Aug. 15, 1974, Folder, Aug. 15, 1974 – Ford, Kissinger, Box 5, Memcons, National Security Adviser, Ford Library.

57 Hanhimäki, "They Can Write It," 40.

58 Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York, 1994), 758.

59 Kissinger, however, tried to suggest that he deserves some of the glory now linked with the Helsinki Final Act. In a 1990 speech to the Gerald R. Ford Foundation, Kissinger located the origins of the fundamental changes taking place in Eastern Europe with the Helsinki Final Act. Discussing the controversy it engendered at the time, Kissinger said, "People didn't recognize that these agreements laid the basis on which one could appeal could on the subject of human rights in Eastern Europe. . . . [It] gave all the fighters for democracy behind the iron curtain a forum and a rallying ground and I think it may have been the most significant agreement that was signed in the last thirty years." Kissinger went on to say, "[The Helsinki Final Act] was signed against violent opposition, by people who are now embracing it." What Kissinger neglected to add in his comments linking Ford's foreign policy with the end of the cold war was that he was one of those who had belatedly recognized the value of the CSCE. Henry A. Kissinger, "William E. Simon Public Affairs Lecture," Jan. 31, 1990, Ford Library.

would introduce the language. The United States would comment favorably on the "new" language once other countries, including the Soviet Union, had reacted.⁶⁰ The United States took further steps to shield its bilateral negotiations in secrecy, limiting discussions with the Soviets to Washington and Moscow as opposed to between the delegations in Geneva.⁶¹

Despite his bilateral discussions with the Soviets, Kissinger clearly believed that the United States had not abrogated its responsibilities to its allies. Sonnenfeldt similarly asserted that, though many Western European nations engaged in negotiations with the Soviets, the United States had been the most forthcoming in sharing its conversations with the other NATO countries.⁶² The British ambassador to the United States supported that position, noting that American officials had been "meticulous" in their consultations with the European allies.⁶³

Nonetheless, Kissinger's secret bilateral discussions did complicate allied relations. At a May 1975 meeting, Kissinger and Andrei Gromyko engaged in direct negotiations on the outstanding issues in Geneva, including CBM parameters and the follow-up mechanism. When Kissinger later admitted to Gromyko that he had been negotiating without his allies' knowledge, Gromyko expressed concern that their negotiations would produce a backlash from the Western allies, asking Kissinger, "Are you sure they won't cast reproaches on you for being in some kind of collusion?"⁶⁴ Indeed, certain Dobrynin-Kissinger bilateral agreements, such as on CBM parameters, inspired "stupefaction and horror" on the part some Western Europeans and neutrals.⁶⁵ Moreover, Maresca suggests that without the immediate disavowal of the agreed Soviet-American parameters, a significant rift could have developed between the United States and its allies.⁶⁶

In addition to negotiating secretly with the Soviets during the Geneva stage, Kissinger repeatedly undermined Western European negotiating

60 Memorandum of Conversation, May 7, 1974, Folder 4, Box 71, HAK Office Files, NPMP; and Memorandum, Stabler to Kissinger, June 6, 1974, Folder 8, Box 8, Sonnenfeldt Collection. As Sherer did not know about these discussions, Kissinger was asked to approve instructions informing Sherer of his role in this charade.

61 Memorandum, Hartman to Kissinger, Feb. 16, 1974, Folder 3, Box 2, Office of the Secretary, Records of Henry Kissinger, 1973-1977, RG 59; and Telegram, AmEmbassy Moscow to SecState, Feb. 28, 1974, Folder 1, Box 723, Country Files: Europe, NSC Files, NPMP.

62 Transcript, Secretary's Staff Meeting, Dec. 9, 1974, National Security Archive Collection; and Telegram, AmEmbassy Paris to ALL CSCE Capitals, Dec. 9 1974, Folder USSR (6), Box 17, President's Country Files for Europe and Canada, National Security Adviser, Ford Library.

63 Ramsbotham to Callaghan, June 21, 1974, Gill Bennett and Keith A. Hamilton, eds., *Documents on British Policy Overseas: Détente in Europe, 1972-1976*, series 3, vol. 3 (London, 2001).

64 Memorandum of Conversation, May 19, 1975, Folder 11, Box 7, Sonnenfeldt Collection.

65 June 9, 1975, Folder CSCE Log Washington-Geneva, Box 4, Sherer Papers.

66 Maresca, *To Helsinki*, 164.

positions, as he had during the talks in Dipoli. In response to Gromyko's frustration at the pace of negotiations in Geneva, Kissinger blamed the slow pace on the Europeans, whom he described as "crazy on the subject of human contacts."⁶⁷ Similarly, in June 1974, Nixon said to Brezhnev, "We have had a problem, quite candidly, getting our European allies to agree on the substance."⁶⁸ In talks with the Soviets, American officials repeatedly shifted responsibility away from themselves to blame the measured pace of the Geneva talks on the West Europeans. Kissinger deflected Soviet complaints on the slow pace of the talks by saying, "The trouble . . . is with our European allies. Speaking very frankly, every country wants to extract something from the Soviet Union."⁶⁹ Kissinger's dismissive attitude toward confrontational Western European proposals on, for example, the freer movement of people likely emboldened the Soviets in their unwillingness to compromise.

The Soviets finally displayed greater flexibility in negotiations at Geneva at the end of May 1975. According to Soviet CSCE Ambassador Anatoly Kovalev, Soviet compromises were intended as a "gesture of good will" to expedite the final discussions.⁷⁰ The Soviets were more willing to bargain on Basket Three than on the CBMs at the time, but in Kissinger's words, the concessions were "dribbling out."⁷¹ The shift in the Soviet stance may have been due to increased American interest and tough stance in the talks. In the aftermath of the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam, Kissinger became less enthusiastic about Soviet-American détente and felt compelled by domestic politics to appear firmer on the Soviets.⁷² To that end, the United States eventually pursued Basket Three language that adhered to or exceeded

67 Memorandum of Conversation, Dec. 22, 1973, Folder 2, Box 69, "The Road to Helsinki," Cold War International History Project Conference Volume. At times, however, this was a strategy to camouflage American intransigence. For example, when Gromyko advocated ending the Conference before the upcoming American summit in Moscow, Kissinger deferred blame to the Western European allies even though he was privately working against such a timetable. Memorandum of Conversation, Apr. 28, 1974, Folder 4, Box 71, HAK Office Files, NSC Files, NPMP.

68 Memorandum of Conversation, June 29, 1974, Folder 3, Box 77, Country Files: Europe, HAK Office Files, NPMP. Comments like these, however, revived concerns about American-Soviet collusion after they inevitably leaked, such as when the Italians learned the United States had told the Soviets the Italians "were being overly difficult" on Basket Three. Telegram, AmEmbassy Rome to SecState, Jan. 9, 1974, Folder 2, Box 696, Country Files: Europe, NSC Files, NPMP.

69 Memorandum of Conversation, Sept. 20, 1974, Folder Letters to and from World Leaders - USSR exchanges, 8/9/74-11/5/74, Box 1, Presidential Transition File, National Security Adviser, Ford Library.

70 Briefing Memorandum, May 29, 1975, Folder CSCE 1975 (3) White House, Box 44, National Security Council Europe, Canada, and Ocean Affairs Staff Files, National Security Adviser, Ford Library.

71 Memorandum of Conversation, May 31, 1975, Folder Britain 1975, Box 4, Sonnenfeldt Collection.

72 Maresca, *To Helsinki*, 120, 158.

Western European goals, and late American support of allied objectives strengthened the final document to the West's advantage. At the end of the Kissinger-Gromyko meeting in Geneva in mid-July, Kissinger finally was able to announce U.S. support for the Canadian proposal to end the Geneva negotiations and begin the CSCE summit in Helsinki on July 30, 1975.⁷³

By the time the Helsinki Final Act was signed on August 1, 1975, the content bore little resemblance to early ESC proposals. Instead, the text included a number of unique elements advocated by Western and neutral and non-aligned states that led to the CSCE's influence on the end of the Cold War. The follow-up mechanism in basket 4, commitment to respect for human rights in Basket One, and provisions for human contacts in Basket Three all fostered the development of a transnational network that was able to shape political and social reform in the late 1980s and fundamentally alter the Cold War division of Europe.

Despite myriad briefing papers and memoranda asserting that the United States' objectives were to maintain allied unity and avoid disadvantage to the West, a careful reading of the record suggests its position was more complicated. The principal aim of American foreign policy with regard to the CSCE as practiced by Henry Kissinger from 1969 to 1975 was to participate in the CSCE negotiations with the NATO allies in such a way as to avoid jeopardizing Soviet-American détente. Throughout the early CSCE negotiations, the United States was less interested in the content of the agreed-on text than in using the negotiations to advance other American foreign policy goals. Therefore, Kissinger chose to utilize U.S. entry into the CSCE talks, and later the pace of compromise and concessions, as a means to influence other areas of the Soviet-American relationship. American interests drove Kissinger's tactics, as the CSCE, NATO goals, and Western European concerns were lower priorities for the Nixon and Ford administrations.

The NATO countries had long feared that agreeing to a European security conference could threaten allied unity, but they discounted those concerns because of overriding policy objectives. Nevertheless, during the CSCE negotiations the United States, like other NATO powers such as France and the Federal Republic, struggled to balance its national interests, bilateral relationships with the Soviet Union, and responsibilities to the alliance. Moreover, Soviet negotiating tactics and American actions, in particular Kissinger's secret bilateral talks, strained the NATO alliance.

⁷³ Memorandum, Sonnenfeldt and Hyland to Kissinger, July 8, 1975, Folder 8, Box 7, Sonnenfeldt Collection; and Daily Bulletin, July 11, 1975, Folder Miscellaneous 1974 CSCE, Box 5, Sherer Papers.

Despite the complexity of the negotiations and divergent interests, however, negotiating the Helsinki Final Act tested the NATO alliance but did not fracture it.

The ability of the NATO states to remain united despite internal disagreement over negotiating tactics and objectives proved significant for the long-term influence of the Helsinki Final Act and the CSCE. First, the NATO decision to press firmly for human contacts language in the Geneva negotiations heightened the long-term significance of the agreement. In the years after the signing of the Helsinki Final Act, many Western leaders and Eastern European human rights activists used the Basket Three commitments to highlight violations of the agreement, as it was easy to point to specific terms unfulfilled by Eastern governments; eventually the efforts led to significant progress on Helsinki compliance. The allied success in achieving what would prove meaningful human rights and human contacts language was thus essential to the long-term success of the agreement. Over time, Soviet assent to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, to adhere to provisions governing East-West contacts, and to review progress toward Helsinki implementation at a subsequent follow-up meeting had far-reaching influence on the transformation of Eastern Europe. In addition, the commitment to NATO unity, albeit a tenuous one, throughout the different stages of the negotiations, set a precedent for future follow-up CSCE meetings, producing an advantage for NATO objectives. Through effective coordination and strong leadership, surprisingly by the United States in subsequent years, the NATO allies maintained pressure on Helsinki signatories to uphold their obligations, which slowly led to increased respect for human rights in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Allied efforts throughout the follow-up CSCE meetings to press for greater adherence to the Helsinki agreement succeeded in contributing to the peaceful end of the Cold War.