

Fundamentally, it would appear that maintenance of this differential will not be a major obstacle to expanded East-West trade unless either side chooses to make it so.

The major question then asked regarding a change in U.S. trade policy vis-a-vis Eastern Europe, of course, is whether increased trade with the United States will tend to strengthen the military-economic system in the Eastern European countries.

The answer is "yes." And the answer will always be "yes" unless someone has invented a way to bring about an exchange of goods and services and information where the benefits bestowed will accrue solely to one party to the exchange—or, where the exchange is so particularized or minuscule as to be devoid of any meaningful economic impact.

Obviously, trade must be mutually beneficial or it will not take place between two parties who have the power of consent or denial. And as long as a significant portion of the total resources of the Eastern European countries are allocated to armaments and armed forces, anything which materially affects the output and use of those resources will strengthen that area in some degree as well.

The critical question then is: Will the Eastern Europeans and the U.S.S.R. obtain gains or benefits from an expansion of nonstrategic trade with the United States which outweigh the possible benefits sought to be obtained by the United States? Or the corollary: does the United States now stand to benefit more by a continued denial and discouragement of trade in nonstrategic items, than by a policy of developing and encouraging such trade with Eastern Europe?

A changed official, public, and congressional attitude on these questions constitutes the major hurdle which the new U.S. initiative in East-West trade policy must clear. And if the case is to be made, it will require a steadfast belief that the political gains from such a policy will be more real and meaningful than the apparent tangible contribution which might be made through increased trade to the growth and power of Communist Europe. In effect, increased political opportunity and the possibility of accelerating the processes of peaceful change in the Communist areas is considered the crux of the matter, and this is looked to offset the small potential benefits which the Communist areas might derive from encouragement of higher levels of trade.

For one thing, it must be made clear that the genesis of this policy change is to be found in the changing objectives, strategies, and intent of overall U.S. East-West policies; and, for another, the hoped-for outcome of a change in East-West trade policy is not only a new and larger pattern of two-way trade, but a new and more hopeful pattern of political and economic relationships between the United States and the nations of Eastern Europe and the U.S.S.R. This is the basic proposition underlying the new approach; a change in U.S. East-West trade policy is being pursued primarily as an avenue to peace—rather than as an adjunct to defense or in hopes of commercial gain.

It is necessary, I feel, to pursue this question more fully at this point—even before considering whether, in fact, U.S.-Eastern Europe nonstrategic trade can be appreciably increased. The reason for this is simple: it will indeed be difficult to increase such trade—and the perceived political benefits must be very apparent before we will be pre-