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THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN STATES



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X

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CHAPTER X

Criticisms of Contemporary Diplomacy
 = *Contemporary*

I have at various points in this book discussed a number of basic arguments against diplomacy: that is, doubts about the assumptions which underlie the dialogue between independent states. Some of these arguments shade off into a condemnation of the existence of independent states at all. Where the continued existence of independent states is accepted as probable and desirable, and the need for a diplomatic dialogue and for some management of international society is fully recognized, there are also certain criticisms of the existing mechanisms of diplomacy - of the forms and conventions practised today or at any rate yesterday. The purpose of some of these criticisms is to decry or warn against the dangers of specific diplomatic institutions, such as alliances or the United Nations; other criticisms suggest changes in current diplomatic practice so as to make diplomacy safer, or more realistic, or more accessible to small and new states, or otherwise improve it.

Serious criticisms of the diplomatic methods of the day have been made for centuries, in the same way as criticisms of the internal operations of governments. Some of these comments, especially when their approach was constructive and well-informed, have played an important part in developing the forms and mechanisms of diplomacy, and adjusting them to changing circumstances. The impact of such criticisms on the evolution of European diplomatic practice can be seen in Chapter VIII. However, the objections made in previous centuries had nothing like the same wide vogue, nor the same influence, as the specific criticisms directed against the bilateral diplomacy of the time which became very widespread after the First World War. These criticisms arose from the general desire to establish the real causes of that disaster of unforeseen magnitude which had overwhelmed

European civilization and had left the leading states of European society in a state of shock or collapse. They continue in modified forms today. They have coincided with, and helped to bring about, a decline in the value of diplomacy in public esteem. They have also sharpened the awareness among governments that some nineteenth-century methods and techniques have proved inadequate to cope with twentieth-century problems, and therefore need fairly radical modifications in order to bring them up to date.

In this chapter I wish to examine first some of the principal criticisms of bilateral diplomacy between individual states, and then some criticisms of multilateral and omnilateral or universal diplomacy.

The widespread stock criticisms of what the critics sometimes call traditional diplomacy may be broadly grouped under three headings. First, the diplomatic institutions and methods in use in Europe before 1914, and even those used after, including the League of Nations as it functioned in practice, are inadequate: they failed to prevent disastrous world wars and cannot deal with present dangers. Methods of conducting international affairs which have so clearly proved unsuccessful, it is argued, need to be replaced by more effective ones. Second, there is the criticism that secret diplomacy, and also all 'private' alliances other than a commitment to a universal body, are dangerous, entangling and immoral. These two groups of arguments are directly connected with concern over the continuing increase in the destructiveness of total war between major powers, a concern which has been much reinforced by the development and spread of nuclear weapons since World War Two. The third criticism is a more general argument arising from technological development: namely that modern technology has made obsolete certain institutions of modern diplomacy, and especially professional diplomats and resident embassies. The problems which governments face, it is said, have now become so technical, and at the same time communication so easy, that 'experts' can and should now deal with each other directly. As well as these general criticisms, there are also more specific and recent suggestions for changing present bilateral diplomatic practice, which deserve our consideration.

Before we look at these proposals in detail, we should note that all these general criticisms have much to be said for them when they are put forward on their merits, and not as special pleading for some other cause such as world government. The history of diplomatic institutions and methods shows them to be constantly evolving to cope with changing conditions. Public debate helps to ensure that they are kept up to date, and is the right and duty of the informed citizen. One of the requirements of effective diplomacy is elasticity about means and procedures; uncritical conservatism about diplomatic institutions that have worked well in the past may lead to

less effective diplomacy when the setting changes. Many recent critical suggestions have already had a beneficial effect. But not all change is for the better, and criticisms need to be examined in detail. *or see below*

The criticisms of diplomatic society based on bilateral diplomacy between individual states, that it is inadequate because it failed to prevent disastrous world wars, is less insistently heard now than after World War One. This is partly because the bilateral dialogue no longer has the field so largely to itself. As a result of this criticism, and spurred by the catastrophe of the war, the League of Nations and, after World War Two, the United Nations were set up as collective omnilateral diplomatic institutions to supplement the existing bilateral system. These diplomatic innovations have also proved inadequate, and have belied the hopes of their more optimistic supporters. The disappointments caused by the functioning in practice of these diplomatic experiments, and suggestions for remedying their defects, are discussed below. A very substantial element of bilateral diplomacy continues, and statesmen are perhaps more inclined to rely on it now than when many of them shared the popular misgivings about it and the faith in collective security that were current half a century ago. So the criticisms are still relevant today.

The basis of these contemporary criticisms is the complaint that the bias of direct bilateral diplomacy is away from the regulation of differences and disputes by the binding and somehow enforceable decisions of a world body or a regional and representative gathering – indeed some would say away from justice and the rule of law – towards a system where what counts is power, and in the last instance military force. These critics argue that unless the balance of power is managed with great statesmanship, which cannot be counted on, it resolves itself into two opposing camps, and this ultimately leads to disaster. The international system before 1914 was, in Lowes Dickinson's famous phrase, an international anarchy.

Anarchy may seem to us in retrospect a strange term for a Europe which enjoyed a century of peace broken only by short local minor wars, which was close to being a free trade area, where international conventions multiplied and the citizens could move almost everywhere without a passport – a Europe more united and orderly than it has been since. Nevertheless, the Concert of Europe had declined in effectiveness, and did not prevent the disaster of the world war. Some critics argued that an anarchical society could not function without such catastrophes, and that therefore the hitherto independent 'nations' needed to have superimposed on them a 'supra-national' organization capable of keeping the external relations of all the members of the states system in order, while leaving each of them its cherished independence in running its internal affairs.

By now it has become obvious that neither the League of Nations nor the United Nations is a supranational authority in that sense. A world body made up of envoys of individual states, acting on detailed instructions from their governments, will not supersede the desire and indeed the need for these governments to talk directly to each other; and even if the member states gave real decision-making and enforcement powers to the supranational body, they would still pursue a diplomatic dialogue to lobby for the decisions they favoured. Conflicts of interest between states would not suddenly disappear. Indeed the founders and advocates of the League and the United Nations did not think in terms of abolishing the bilateral diplomatic dialogue with its apparatus of embassies, treaties and the like; but they did expect that the bilateral dialogue would come to be conducted increasingly in terms of supranational bodies and their decisions.

In one major way this criticism of the inadequacy of mere bilateralism has achieved its aim. The need for a world body, indeed a number of world bodies for different purposes, is now generally accepted. Nobody seriously proposes to go back to the form of international anarchy which Lowes Dickinson condemned. But it is also true that the League and the United Nations have not worked anything like as well as their proposers hoped. Though some specialized agencies have done useful work, the central bodies do not appear to most observers to have substantially furthered the cause of peace. During most of the brief twenty-year interlude between the two world wars, and for the first twenty years or so after World War Two, the leading powers of the world system were even more divided into two opposing camps or alliances than before 1914: a division made more bitter and less bridgeable by ideology, which did not play a significant part before the first war. The view came to be widely held that a third world war was only prevented by the very frightfulness of the weapons available to the two super-powers – the 'balance of terror'. Diplomacy, both bilateral and omnilateral, seemed almost to have abdicated its role of managing the system as a whole, and confined itself largely to relations within the two blocs and with the less-developed 'third world' that tried to deal with both sides. When at last the leaders of the two super-powers, and of some of their junior partners, began to feel their way tentatively towards a détente and a resumption of serious diplomatic dialogue, it was the old-fashioned, secret, bilateral methods and institutions that they used. Both sides felt that their hesitant explorations would be halted by the glare of publicity; that a public dialogue would keep both sides locked into the positions they wanted to move away from. The subjects of these exchanges were, first the balance of terror and how it could be managed at less expense to both sides (the most imperative and intractable question of all); and then other aspects of the multiple

own values

balance of power in various different parts of the world, crisis management, procedures for organizing change, technical and economic collaboration. The dialogue on many of these subjects could broaden out onto a more multilateral basis later and in some cases soon did. Few suggested that it could be otherwise, or that the super-powers could have entrusted the whole business to the United Nations.

However, many people, including responsible statesmen in countries excluded from the talks, did again see one of the dangers that the critics of bilateral diplomacy put forward. They feared that the two super-powers, and also China which had for many years stood outside the general diplomatic dialogue, were engaged in 'collusion' or even conspiracy, that they were advancing their own interests at the expense of others, even that they were weakening traditional alliances and deserting their friends (though this is not a charge that the original critics of international anarchy and alliances would like to make). These charges have force, now as before. There may be no other satisfactory method of resuming a serious diplomatic dialogue between the most powerful states in the system; but that does not mean that we should not look hard and realistically for one. Meanwhile bilateral diplomacy has certainly come to its own, in defence of state interests and military security and also in the cause of peace and of relaxation of tensions.

Several people on both sides of the cold war argue that it is a betrayal of principle to negotiate confidentially with the ideological enemy, and that the ideas which people believe in and to which states are often said to be dedicated should not be sacrificed to expediency. This is a version of the ideological fundamentalism discussed in Chapter VI, which distrusts all diplomatic dealings with doctrinal opponents. It is in a different category from the criticisms of bilateral methods and institutions which we are considering here. It is certainly true that the bias of diplomacy is to blunt ideological controversy and to play down doctrinal differences: to think in terms of the interests of states rather than moral principles, of conditionals rather than absolutes. However, this fundamentalist criticism does render one service to the bilateral diplomatic dialogue between ideological opponents once it is engaged. It ensures that the negotiators are especially cautious, and always have with them that most useful metaphorical diplomatic instrument, a long spoon.

These considerations bring us to the second set of criticisms, those concerned with the secrecy of diplomacy, and especially of traditional bilateral diplomacy. This secrecy remains an active target. In almost every free society where public discussion of such matters is permitted, it is condemned genuinely by people who want a safer and juster world, and believe that the

secrecy of much of the diplomatic dialogue works in the opposite direction. (It is also denounced by those who in one way or another would stand to gain by the disclosure of a state's diplomatic secrets: but that is another issue.) Secret diplomacy is said to be dangerous in itself; to mask plotting that would be rejected by the people if they knew; to lead either to war or to shameful compromises. It is said to run counter to the principles of democracy: 'the people have a right to know what is being done in their name'. There should only be, as President Wilson said, 'open covenants openly arrived at'. These covenants might still turn out in the long run to be 'entangling alliances', but at least the people would know what they were being committed to. Moreover, diplomacy is apt to lead to alliances, or at least collaboration, with other states which may have parallel interests on certain external issues, but whose internal policies the people dislike.

There are two unspoken premises in these criticisms. One is that the sovereign majority of citizens have the right, like absolute rulers in former times, to pursue whatever foreign policy appeals to them, whether it serves or damages their interests - whether or not, in more traditional language, it is in accordance with reason of state. The second unspoken premise is that 'the people' are more rational, fairer and more moral than governments.

It seems obvious to professional diplomats and negotiators that confidential discussion is necessary if negotiations between states are to lead to any significant results, if what Professor Hans Morgenthau called 'the translation of conflicting or inchoate interests into a common purpose of the conflicting parties' is to take place. They therefore become impatient of the criticisms of secrecy made against the diplomatic dialogue in democratic societies, especially when made by politicians or journalists whose motives they distrust. Indeed the confidential nature of diplomacy is and has been so universal, at all times and in all places, that it is necessary to examine the reasons for this secrecy in order to see how far it is practicable to give effect to the criticisms of it.

Firstly, a considerable amount of diplomacy is not secret. From the polemical debates of the United Nations General Assembly to the complex technicalities of the revision of international law, much of the dialogue is conducted openly, as were the arguments of envoys before the assemblies of ancient Greece. Secondly, the diplomatic dialogue of an international society is an aspect of politics. And all politics, even in the most open democracies, involves public debate and also private discussions, between members of governments and readers of political parties, and also between executive governments and parliamentarians and between members of legislatures. All politics is concerned with conflicts and alliances of interests and personalities, even in countries where public debate over matters of

Public dialogue

Public dialogue

principle is permitted as well. Thirdly, a large part of diplomacy, as of all politics, is concerned with bargaining. Allies bargain to determine the extent and limits of their commitments to each other. Adversaries also bargain when elements of implied or explicit threat may be among the inducements used. All the economic discussions which bulk so large in the contemporary diplomatic dialogue involve bargaining. Even omnilateral arrangements for the ordering of international society, such as periodic revisions of the law of the sea, contain a large element of bargaining about the effects of each clause on the interests of each state concerned. The essential feature of bargaining is that the other party does not know how far you will go, and it is therefore most effectively done in private discussion; though the final results of a bargain, or a package of limited conditional bargains, can of course be made public. Fourthly, states do not talk to one another only about their own intentions. They also exchange confidential views and guesses about the other states in the system and the intentions of those states — views and guesses which they do not want repeated to the others. Unless a state can keep to itself the confidences it learns in this way — and this involves not passing on these confidences to other states or to journalists or legislators who make it public — it will soon find itself cut off from the confidence of other states, which will involve a serious loss of awareness of what is going on. Fifthly, reporting between a state government and its embassies abroad needs to be confidential, in the same sort of way as between a lawyer and his clients, and is covered by the general recognition of the value of diplomatic immunity.

It is also instructive to note the similarity between diplomatic and military secrecy. There are occasions when a state or a military alliance finds it useful to make its military forces conspicuous, for instance in order to deter a hostile power, or to invite observers from other states as part of an international agreement. But almost everyone readily accepts that in a world of independent states some degree of military secrecy is necessary. The case for diplomatic confidentiality is less obvious to many members of the public; but governments consider that an area of secret exchanges is necessary, and that they must decide what part of their dialogue with other states they will make public and what they will keep confidential.

The issue of secrecy is therefore not an absolute one. Democratic societies, where the right of the public to be informed is widely and increasingly recognized, usually accept the distinction between confidential exchanges and private discussions that do not lead to any agreement, negotiations and bargaining which does result in an agreement or commitment, and the commitment itself which will need to be ratified. Private exchanges between statesmen and their agents are generally accepted, and would in any case

be virtually impossible to prevent. Democratic governments accept on the other hand that covenants should be open, and that they should not make secret agreements, or secret clauses to otherwise open agreements. The significant differences of opinion occur over the confidentiality of negotiation: whether open covenants must or in practice can be openly arrived at, or whether, as many statesmen and diplomats argue, you cannot play serious poker if you have to keep your cards exposed on the table while some of the other players hold theirs close to their chests. If those who demand open negotiation are too insistent, then parallel informal unwritten negotiations are apt to take place alongside the open formal ones, so that the most sensitive points can be discussed in private.

Since nobody realistically supposes that states will not communicate privately with one another, the practical issue is: how large should the area of open diplomacy be? In general those who want to extend this area are those who believe in democracy and open government domestically, and who also believe that international society can and should be made more like the kind of domestic society which they favour, with a greater degree of world authority, more 'rule of law', and a more fully informed public opinion in all countries. Events do not appear to be moving in that direction. The proportion of independent states with more or less democratic governments is less now than it was at the end of World War One, and certainly less than many liberal thinkers hoped would be the case when the great movement of European decolonization began following World War Two. Moreover, a reduction in the area of secret diplomacy has to be fairly universal to be acceptable. A few small dictatorial régimes would not perhaps matter much, but so long as major powers like the Soviet Union and China, and a majority of states generally, prefer not to conduct their affairs openly, a democratically-minded state can only disclose the substance of its diplomatic dialogue with authoritarian states at the cost of severely limiting its exchanges with them. This is not in its interest, or in the interest of international society as a whole.

The criticism that modern technology has made diplomacy *obsolete* is sometimes merely part of the wider charge that a society of independent states (or 'the nation state') is incapable of dealing with the problems of the contemporary world. But many critics who fully expect independent states to continue, and to conduct a dialogue, and to maintain departments of foreign affairs, use the expression 'diplomacy' loosely, to mean the institution of resident embassies and the special immunities and privileges which (with occasional exceptions) they are still accorded. We saw in the last chapter that the speed of modern communications is such that statesmen can learn

certain aspects of the news faster from the ticker tape and the monitoring reports of foreign broadcasts than from their own agents abroad, and can bypass their ambassadors by talking to each other by telephone or flying to meet each other in a few hours. A variant of this argument, put forward by diplomats more often than by scholars and journalists, is that both the functions and the status of an ambassador have been devalued. Ambassadors have multiplied so much in the last fifty years that many capitals have over a hundred. The United Kingdom and several other states maintain three in Brussels alone: one accredited to the Belgian government (technically to the king), one to NATO and one to the E.F.C. Also the small élite society which alone made foreign political decisions in the European society of states and in which the many fewer ambassadors of the European system moved and exercised a real influence, has largely disappeared. An ambassador, so this complaint goes, has shrunk from being the representative of his sovereign, or at least of his government as a whole, to being merely the instrument of the ministry of foreign affairs, one department among many engaged in the extended diplomatic dialogue of the modern world.

→ 2nd ed. - Procedure

The decline of the role of embassies in the diplomatic dialogue of today as compared with a century ago raises the question of the immunities and privileges accorded to them. The functions of a resident embassy today are still very considerable, and they *need* for their operation the basic immunities accorded to the persons of resident diplomats, their offices and residences, and their communication with their governments. The immunity of a herald from arrest has been regarded in all states systems as an obvious and necessary condition of his function, especially in hostile countries. No major state has proposed a curtailment now of these immunities, or of the courtesies which grow out of them. A striking reaffirmation of their universal acceptability and usefulness occurred when the revolutionary government in Iran recently endorsed violations of the immunity of the United States embassy buildings and personnel. These violations were condemned by virtually every other state, including those sympathetic to the Iranian revolutionaries, and the Iranians themselves carefully respected the immunities of other embassies and of the diplomatic emissaries who negotiated the eventual release of the hostages. The taking of diplomatic hostages, the burning of embassies and the assassination of ambassadors has made the diplomatic profession more dangerous everywhere, and the diplomatic dialogue less civilized at the fringes. But such acts are rarely committed by governments, and should not be seen as a collapse – or so far a modification – of the rules of immunity governing the institution of resident embassies in international society generally. Even where members of an embassy staff are deemed by a state to be guilty of espionage in violation of the accepted rules, the universal

custom is still to expel them rather than to arrest them, and the occasional exceptions do not disprove the validity of the rule.

Whether these necessary immunities need extend to parking offences in crowded cities, or whether resident diplomats should be allowed to import goods for their consumption including alcoholic drinks free of customs duties, is more debatable. These minor privileges cause much resentment, and could be modified without impairing the essential functions of embassies. It is true that the cost to a state of maintaining embassies abroad is roughly equal to the expenditure of other powers who maintain embassies in its capital; but perhaps all embassies cost more than they should. Undoubtedly also the personal prestige of ambassadors has declined, now that there are so many and that such a considerable proportion of them are without influence or expertise. This is the result partly of the proliferation of small countries, and partly of the practice of calling all envoys ambassadors (or equivalent terms, like *nuncio* or high commissioner). But it is also due to the subtle change in the stature of most ambassadors, from being men of some personal importance in their own country and the envoys of a sovereign, to being what in Britain are called senior civil servants. This change of stature and the closer re-identification of embassies with trade brings ambassadors back to something more like their original position of agents when the Venetians and Louis XIV were developing the practices of resident diplomacy. It is noteworthy that the United States' practice of appointing wealthy contributors and political figures to ambassadorial posts, and the custom in some new states of appointing relatives of the head of state, ensures that such delegates have a certain personal standing, and direct communication with the president or ruler, even though they lack the professional training of their colleagues. As a result the rank of ambassador, retained as a title after the position has been vacated, is taken more seriously in the United States than in most European countries.

The argument that technology, especially speed of communications, has destroyed the need for the diplomatic mechanism is largely illusory. For centuries it has been possible to read newspapers, which were likely to be seen by principals before their ambassador's report was laid on their desk. But journalism is concerned with effect and with newsworthiness; it is written under pressure of time, and based on much less information than is usually available even to secondary embassies; and newspapers normally only cover important or momentarily newsworthy countries, so that the general presentation is unbalanced and patchy. I have been told that French embassies in important capitals liked to wait until they knew what had been written in *Le Monde* before making their own comments, so as to amplify and correct what the recipients of their report would have read already, but

that in less important capitals they could be fairly sure most of the time that nothing at all would appear in the press. More broadly it may be stated that even in countries where press reporting is uninhibited, what governments say in public and what is gleaned and surmised by journalists are together no substitute for what governments are prepared to say to other governments in confidence. In countries that exercise a press censorship or other means of pressure, reporting by journalists will inevitably contain less than the whole picture as the journalist sees it, so that in certain capitals like Moscow in Stalin's time the copy publicly telegraphed was derisively called the application for a re-entry visa, and many journalists also corresponded with their editors through the diplomatic bag. The real difficulty is that governments are expected to react with increasing speed to events and the actions of other governments, so that they are less and less able to wait for the reasoned comments distilled by their diplomatic organization in the field and at home. Embassies are reduced to sending immediate telegrams referring to an event which is presumed to be known, and beginning with a sentence like 'The following points should be borne in mind'. Wretrapping and similar devices often still make it imprudent to telephone such confidential comments, even from very liberal capitals, though this technological problem may some day be overcome. The problem of striking a balance between speed and perceptive judgement remains, both for governments and for diplomatic services.

Nevertheless, when we have set aside what is untrue and exaggerated in these criticisms, it is true that technology has played its part in making the resident embassy, as opposed to the foreign ministry, a less important institution than it was, even though it still performs many vital functions. Direct meetings and communications between the statesmen who decide a state's policy are now much more frequent than before. If they are frequent enough not to attract undue attention they seem to the statesmen concerned to offer real advantages over the previous immobility of principals except at congresses and at royal weddings and funerals. But senior statesmen have discovered - and those who have been many years in office readily assert - that though the closer contacts which modern technology makes possible are valuable and welcome, they are not by themselves enough. Senior statesmen find that diplomatic negotiations are almost always too intricate and specialized, and too time-consuming, to be conducted only at personal meetings. Eminent public figures therefore tend to use direct personal meetings for specific negotiation only in order to initiate courses of action, or when a definite stage in the negotiation requiring their decision has been reached. Such meetings require much careful preparation on both sides, if they are to be successful; and this ancillary role falls inevitably to pro-

fessional diplomats, including resident ambassadors accredited to other states and to multilateral organizations. The bulk of the negotiating must be left to them if only because no senior political figure can devote the time.

Awareness of the relative decline in the importance of the resident embassy, and a more general need to adapt the machinery of diplomacy to the opportunities offered by modern technology and also the extension of the dialogue into new fields discussed in Chapter XII, has led a number of Western states, and individual diplomats with long personal experience, to propose and implement reforms of their diplomatic machinery. The proposals can be grouped in three categories. Some advocate concentrating a state's embassies, and the work of the foreign ministry, on the other states with which it is most intimately involved, and enlarging its embassies there to make them more representative of all the government departments now affected by overseas policy. Others on the contrary favour concentrating traditional embassies in states with very different social structures and international aims, because they hold that embassies are less necessary the greater the degree of intimacy between two states and especially necessary in alien and hostile ones. The third group is concerned with the divergence in democracies between the policies recommended by professional foreign services and the views of the political parties and of the electorate.

One instructive example of the first view is the Duncan Report to the British Government on the changes required in the British service. (Its principal recommendations on the development and direction of British diplomatic activity overseas are set out in Chapters I and IV of the report.) The distinctive feature of that report was the thesis that as a consequence of decolonization and the decline of British power in the world, British foreign relations no longer required the maintenance of resident political embassies on a global scale in the capital of every member state of international society as those of a super-power presumably did. The United Kingdom, said Duncan, should deploy its diplomatic resources mainly in the 'advanced industrial countries with which we are likely to be increasingly involved to the point where none of us will be able to conduct our domestic policies efficiently without constant reference to each other'. These closely interdependent countries can conduct their relations 'in a style different from the traditional one': essentially within the European Community, and in the North Atlantic Alliance for collective discussions about and negotiations with the communist world. In the advanced industrial countries, the report argues, Britain will still need a comprehensive diplomatic network multilateral and multilateral, so that governments can communicate with each other and bring political influence to bear. Elsewhere the traditional diplomatic scale

→ world social structure

of representation can be much reduced. Duncan pointed out that both the French and German governments had already reached the same general conclusion.

Criticisms of the type of the Duncan Report implicitly foreshadow the end of 'foreign policy' conducted between the 'nation states' of Western Europe, as they gradually become members of the European Community. This association would, Duncan assumed, grow from its existing form into a confederacy concerned with the establishment of acceptable common internal policies and increasingly coordinated external ones.

An integrated Community of the size and widespread external connections of Western Europe would wish to exert political influence round the world. It is true that some collective machinery for foreign policy, some Community institutions for its formulation and execution, may very well be evolved; but this evolution is likely to be slow, and the new institutions are virtually certain to grow out of the existing diplomatic machinery of the member states. While this evolution is taking place, member states of the Community should not, according to the Duncan and similar proposals, continue to conduct their own diplomatic dialogue round the world, bilaterally and multilaterally, but should concentrate their diplomatic resources more than hitherto on the dialogue between themselves. This intra-Community dialogue would be mainly concerned with working out the bargains and compromises that determine how the Community functions, both internally and in its relations with the outside world. It would cover an extremely wide field, involving almost every aspect of life with which a modern state is concerned. Duncan and other such critics suppose that the main instruments and channels of communication between the member states will continue to be, on the one hand the resident bilateral embassies which each state maintains in the capitals of the others, enlarged to contain representatives of almost every government department; and on the other the diplomatic machinery of the Council of Ministers and their professional staffs, which is a complex piece of multilateral diplomatic machinery whose key members are drawn from ministries of foreign affairs. Negotiations inside the Community, and the somewhat wider ones on defence, monetary and other issues involving the United States and in some cases Japan, will require a real and increasing concentration of diplomatic capacity, which should for reasons of economy involve a corresponding reduction elsewhere.

The second set of criticisms of the existing bilateral diplomatic pattern is essentially the opposite of that in the Duncan Report. Though at first sight more radical, it is perhaps as pertinent. The nub of this criticism is that the closer the relations between two states are, and the more their affairs are interwoven, the greater the number of separate channels of communication

there will be between various decision-makers; so that the dialogue between two very close and similar states can and does largely take place without the need for traditional resident embassies. This argument borders on the claim of the functionalists that independent states as such are largely being superseded by a multiplicity of separate international decision-making agencies (a view discussed in Chapter XII). But it is not necessary to suppose that the power of states, as the centralized institutions by which different groups of people deal with the outside world, is waning in order to maintain that the closer together two states grow, the less essential their resident embassies in each other's capitals are. Indeed, the critics most under discussion maintain that the converse of this thesis is also true, namely, that the less close, the more congenitally foreign and hostile two states are, the more the device of the resident embassy is needed to conduct an effective diplomatic dialogue.

One well-known exponent of this view is Zbigniew Brzezinski, who formulated it when after some years in the United States Department of State he became the Head of the Columbia University Research Unit on International Change. Professor Brzezinski argued that embassies as we know them have become superfluous between powers whose governments have and can expect to go on having close relations. In particular he suggested as an example that the very large U.S. Embassy in London could be substantially closed down, retaining only visa and other functions. The information about Britain which the U.S. Administration needs is almost all publicly available, and could, he claimed, be adequately analysed and submitted to it by experts working on it in Washington. The continuous and intimate exchange at many levels between the two governments about what is happening in almost every country in the world and how to deal with these developments could take place better directly by coded ticker between the experts in the two capitals and by direct discussion between members of the two administrations (where necessary, the Prime Minister and President) by telephone. Intermediaries would be cut out, and a direct working relationship between the governmental apparatus in the two capitals established. Brzezinski did not expect his proposal to be implemented literally, but rather wished to suggest more effective ways of deploying American diplomatic personnel.

At the other end of the diplomatic scale, according to this school of criticism, Western embassies are necessary in Moscow for two reasons. Relations between the Western and Soviet governments are not close enough to compare notes and work out policies that are in harmony if not the same: this means it is necessary to negotiate with the Soviet government (in areas where negotiation is practicable) as an opponent with which it is nevertheless possible to find areas of common interest or at least courses of action which avoid conflict. Secondly, the Soviet Union is a totalitarian

