

II-D

SHAPING THE NEW INTERNATIONAL ORDER

Georges Berthoin

European Chairman
Trilateral Commission, Paris, France

The Sixth International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences
San Francisco, November 25-27, 1977

SHAPING THE NEW INTERNATIONAL ORDER

Remarks by
Georges Berthoin

Two facts seem to prevail in our contemporary world: 1) growing interdependence, which results from a technology able to master time and space and which progressively transforms our planet, divided between far distant countries and civilizations, into one big village, 2) and, increasing need for identity expressed through the affirmation and use of national sovereignty not only among ancient countries, but also among countries who have recently gained their independence from foreign control.

It seems that both facts are fundamentally antagonistic to each other and that one of the major challenges of our time is to reconcile them both. To accept all consequences of interdependence seems to some to run the risk of complete integration into a system which, in the end, could eradicate one's traditions and personality. In the present circumstances, interdependence looks, to most, as being largely under the influence of centers of real strength -- military, cultural, political or economical. As such, to advocate interdependence today sounds like advocating submission to the influence and policies of one of the two superpowers.

Insistence on national sovereignty appears, then, to be a way to resist hegemony and avoid the loss of one's identity, but it can easily lead to isolating one's self from the benefits brought through the multinational exchanges, to restrict the best possible use of advanced technology, and to forfeit all chances of harmonious economic and social development at home, except through the strictest, and very often inhuman, national discipline. Even if these two attitudes are rarely brought to an extreme, each country has by choice or necessity to play a balancing act between both. Those who wanted to be completely cut off from any outside interference have had, in the end, for the sake of efficiency and performance,

to accept a certain recognition of interdependence and its rewards. But, on the other hand, it is a fact that any attempt to organize groupings based on recognition of interdependence has met very rapidly with the resistance of strong national feelings, habits, and interests and has remained as, in the case of the European Economic Community or the United Arab Republic, far from their original full integration target.

Certain historical developments during the last generation played a part in this process. From the Allied coalition which won World War II, through the nuclear monopoly enjoyed by the United States of America for a number of years, we reached the stage of Cold War which helped the Soviet Union to establish, in the end, a certain degree of military parity. Coexistence, then détente, formed the framework within which a fierce competition between two concepts of world organization is taking place. The rest of the world is being asked directly, or indirectly, to choose between one or the other, or at the best to remain neutral and independent from the other. Each system, through its sheer weight and logic, tends to advocate interdependence to like-minded countries in order to favor and accelerate a world unification process in accordance with its ideology. On the other hand, it insists on the respect of national sovereignty in order to weaken the unification process in the other camp. As things stand, to recognize interdependence can be interpreted as a hostile gesture by the other camp and vice versa. Our efforts should be to take this dilemma outside the East-West ideological confrontation.

In addition, a new and complex network of North-South tensions have developed. The main challenge of the so-called "Southern" countries remains the urgent need for development. This implies different forms of aid and a modification in the world balance which, up to now, appears to them as too much under the influence of the "Northern" countries' interests. Interdependence is illustrated by an existing and progressively recognized mutual need to keep markets opened for the South, and access to the raw materials for the North. But under the pressure of their public opinion, donor countries desire different forms of control in order to guarantee reasonable and proper use of their financial sup-

port. Some might even be tempted to insist on a more or less subtle type of linkage of an economic, political, or strategic nature. For their part, newly independent countries have no other choice than to stress their national sovereignty, as it is in their negotiations as important a bargaining power element as their natural or human resources. Very often they feel compelled to insist on its preservation to the point of exacerbation.

On the present basis, within the East-West or North-South context, a reconciliation between interdependence and national sovereignty, even if more than ever desirable, seems less and less likely. These facts explain many of the tensions we are witnessing today. Most of the local, regional or global challenges should be seen in that context. The need, widely shared, for a new international order should not ignore this challenge before having a chance of becoming a reality. Institutions which would both express the necessity and logic of interdependence and respect for national sovereignties could contribute to a solution.

Two types of approach exist. In the classic system, one accepts and recommends as the basis for interstate action, the recognition of national sovereignty. Hence, the emphasis put on the direct or indirect veto from each government on the operations of the "international" institution. Action is only possible when it represents a common denominator. As long as a challenge is equally visible to all, for instance in the case of any natural catastrophe, the common denominator can be found at its highest level; otherwise it is usually at the lowest. In addition, it depends very often for efficiency, credibility, and for finance, not only on the good will of all but also on the support and leadership of great powers. So, the institution's efficiency could be considered also a reflection of an hegemony. As such, its acceptability in representing the common interest of all will dwindle rapidly and be challenged on the first available occasion. Interdependence will become a threat to the sovereignties of smaller nations who will learn to dodge its necessity.

A "supranational" approach advocated by regional or world federalists could be the best way to recognize and follow the logic of interdependence. In this system, member states agree to transfer all or part of their sovereignty to independent institutions entitled to prepare, make or implement decisions directly applicable in each of their territories

or to the relationship between them. One of its features is the elimination of national veto. In practical politics it does not seem that the world is ready for such bold steps. Developing countries would reject it as a more or less creeping interference in their internal affairs. The Communist countries, in particular their elites, would see it as a threat to their politico-economic regime. Major powers like the U.S.A., U.S.S.R., and even China, Japan, or members of the European Community, would be reluctant to accept curtailment of what they still consider as their efficient and working sovereignties.

A new type of institution is needed. It should be placed outside the usual influence of national governments, but given competence to act within their national territories or interstate relations only when on an ad hoc basis; governments, for their own reasons, decide that interdependence means enough to them to accept its suggestions or advice. Neither inter-, nor supra-, this could be called an extranational institution (ENI).

The extranational principle is illustrated by the way the European Community is working in practice. Reaching for the supranational star of Jean Monnet, the Europeans fell short. But in falling short, they invented something new: an executive commission operating at the political level, which internationalizes much of the initiative for action without derogating from the ultimate power of the governments who have, in effect, loaned their sovereignty to the commission.

The European Commissioners are not "international civil servants." They are, for the most part, former ministers appointed for a term of years by their own governments but not removable by their own governments. They are, therefore, in a position to deal with governments laterally, as personal equals, not as secretaries serving political committees from below. Under the Treaty of Rome it is only the Commission, not the member governments, which takes the initiative in proposing "European" policies and actions; it is also the Commission which carries on the necessary consultations with nongovernmental organizations (trade union groups, agricultural associations, and the like) and with the European Parliament (which is scheduled to be directly elected after 1978). After these consultations, the Commission's revised proposals are submitted to the Council of Ministers, which can act for governments in

approving or rejecting - but not rewriting - what the Commission has proposed.

The keys to this social invention are:

- The obligation of the extranational body to analyze problems, establish a diagnosis, and formulate initiatives from an interdependence point of view;
- the capacity of its members to negotiate with governments at the political and technical level,
- the independent and sometimes collective nature of the executive leadership which gives some assurance that a wide spectrum of viewpoints will already have been brought to bear on its thinking before important initiatives are taken.
- A moral authority which makes its proposals acceptable to all.

If such an extranational Commission, instead of the U.S. Government, had worked out something like the 1970 proposal for a seabed authority, and had carefully and objectively explained to governments the potential benefits to developing countries from a strong international regime, the fate of that draft treaty might have been very different.

Extranational institutions do not need to take the particular form which has developed in Europe. There have been examples of extranational operations in other parts of the world - in planning the Mekong Valley development, for example, and in some of the U.N.'s peacekeeping and mediation efforts over the years. "Wise men," independent commissions of eminent persons, permanent tribunals, ad hoc groups of "experts", even vigorous and self-confident international executives (such as the leaders of the World Bank and the U.N. Environmental Programme) can raise questions, propose initiatives, and mount action programs which might be domestically difficult or internationally awkward for national governments or regional caucuses to propose.

Where international organizations are already in place, therefore, moving toward extranational institutions may be a practical and desirable

mutation of attitudes and relationships. Existing international executives should be encouraged to become more extranational in taking more initiative, and in recruiting individuals for whom taking the initiative is a congenial style. But when new institutions are in prospect (as in the Law of the Sea negotiations), it would be useful to study the European model and try to establish from the outset an extranational mode of organization.

Extranational bodies can increase the effectiveness of the interdependence process, without derogating from the sovereignty of nations participating in the system, at four critical stages of the process:

- conceptualization - catalytic policy analysis which brings relevant facts and their significance, choices and alternatives to the attention of governments and peoples;
- negotiation - assisting the bargaining process by identifying, advancing, and modifying practical compromise solutions;
- implementation - helping to secure compliance by interpreting ambiguous provisions, mobilizing political understanding to reinforce performance, administering incentives and disincentives; and
- adaptation - promoting timely adjustments in arrangements as conditions change, to avoid having to rerun a whole international negotiation from scratch.

An example, which should be at the center of a new international order, could be found in the problem of aid to development, mentioned earlier. It supposes a range of new or adapted international functions which would best be handled by one or more extranational bodies for:

- the analysis, proposal, and adjustment of international standards for minimum human needs;
- assistance to resource-poor countries in developing their own expertise for evaluating alternative development strategies and investment plans from the perspective of human needs;

- analyzing national and regional development plans from the perspective of their likely success in meeting both the international standards for basic needs;
- collecting taxes and fees related to the use of various international "commons", even including the operations of multinational companies;
- allocating these funds for development to implement agreed national and regional plans designed to meet basic human needs; and
- monitoring and evaluating the carrying out of agreed plans.

In practice, the ENI could be created as a result of international treaties of a regional or global scope, negotiated by those governments ready to establish for their relations, an ENI, or as the result of initiative and votes taking place in the context of the U.N. When in existence, the ENI, on the basis of its defined terms of reference, should fulfill its role in producing, thanks to its expertise and independence, diagnosis and proposals. A country needing help in the pursuit of a national interest should be given access to the findings and suggestions of the ENI. There would be extranational intervention only as a result of a national sovereignty decision and on the conditions negotiated between the ENI and the national government. Sovereignty would not only be respected, but recognized as essential to any practical implementation representing interdependence. But becoming more and more aware of the ENI's studies, suggestions, independence, reliability and reputation, the national governments, through the years, would be more and more inclined to look for the ENI contact. A process of mutual education would take place and would contribute to confidence-building.

The ENI would, in fact, help the national government to govern, it becoming more effective domestically thanks to the integration of its actions within the global reality of the world. Such a process could, in addition, function without raising the question of the internal structure or regime of the country concerned, and give itself a chance of escaping from the present ideological conflict. National leadership, bureaucracies and opinions could, in the end, accept participation in the new international order, without losing face vis-à-vis their people,

and without looking like accepting the interference of other national sovereignties, which remains the most unacceptable of all interferences.

This paper's only aim is to start a discussion in our conference on a new line of thought and contribute to findings an empirical answer to the question of how to shape the new international order. If this concept seems useful, it is strongly hoped that academic studies by experts would take place in order to give it a better theoretical and practical basis. Taken in a more articulated form, the concept of ENI could be carefully considered, particularly by developing countries, as a means to illustrate and implement their quest for a new international order which could prove efficient without interfering in their national sovereignty or political regimes. In the ENI's neutrality they could find a way to be directly linked to global realities without becoming more or less placed directly under the umbrella of any powerful protector. They could remain what they want to be and avoid isolation, with the strains always entailed on their population and the dangerous, even sometimes fatal, tensions it creates between rulers and people.

ENI should be of interest, too, for industrial countries. For example, fierce competition between them leads to industrial imbalance and increasingly unacceptable unemployment. It demands a global industrial strategy. What could be better placed as a reliable public institution to help in this field than ENI? Free trade, as it prevailed during the last generation, is now under severe attack. Protectionism is on the move again. More and more now insist in coupling free trade with fair trade. It does not mean interventionism or dirigism; it implies the elaboration of clear and strict rules of the game as, for example, within the U.S.A. The fundamental link between free trade/fair trade explains why the European Common Market needed, in order to exist, the type of extranational institution described earlier.

Even the Soviet Union and the U.S.A., in their bilateral dealings or in their global strategies might find it useful to join efforts in favor of ENI type of actions. This would help them to accept certain common discipline without seeming to give ground to the other's influence and without upsetting their national elites. If such evolution in favor of an ENI approach was backed by others, foremost the developing coun-

tries, the superpowers would be compelled to include it in their definition of détente, and organize its management through what some American leaders call today an architectural effort. For instance, an ENI could be in charge of human rights problems. In such a case, it would better represent the universal value of this issue and place it where it really belongs: in so doing, it could become more acceptable to all. Instead of being seen by some like a major part of American policy, it would look to most as a world-wide aim expressed through the independent neutrality of an ENI which could get, if the U.S.A. chose, its mighty support, stand and means of action.

Our discussion should provide us with an opportunity to quote other examples: operation of multinational corporations, use of space, international terrorism, population control, access to raw materials, nuclear proliferation, etc., etc.

In conclusion, one could consider the ENI as the third factor which is needed where one wants to express a built-in unity between two conflicting elements which belong to the same government of man. After all, in the phenomenon of life itself the same permanent opposition exists between the individual who carries it awhile and the group, which through its globality, transcends it. Man's conscious reaction through his instinct, reason, or feeling, leads him to recognize the value of both the individual and the group as compatible, through a third element equally present in both: the God, the spirit, the morality, the ideology. Religion appears as one of the extranational institutional ways to discover, or reveal to the individual, as well as to the group, their fundamental harmony.

The progress of mankind took place through this effort of revelation. It is the process of civilization itself, the one our present world is trying to discover. The compatibility of interdependence - the group - and of national sovereignty - the individual - exists in the concept of the fundamental unity of the world. In the past, it was the dream of the poet, the zeal of the religious, the faith of the scientist; today it is within the grasp of the most practical and realistic. Therefore, we are not very far from accepting implicitly that the real sovereignty is the sovereignty of the world. Isn't it more and more a fact that

national governments can perform efficiently and with legitimacy as long as they represent this new fundamental world sovereignty? The ENI could be a way to accustom us and them progressively to recognize and master this reality. ENI should be, then, a tool in this process of revelation which is the chance of our contemporary world.

