



The Change Is Welcome

What were the accomplishments of the recent talks at the "Summit?" Dr. Benson discusses the achievements and shortcomings in a penetrating analysis of the four-power conference.

By DR. OLIVER BENSON, '32ba, '33ma

Within the modest limits of its purpose the Geneva Four-Power Conference of the Heads of Governments may be put down tentatively as a success. The accomplishments of the "Summit" discussions are strictly imponderable ones: no concrete agreement on specific disputes between East and West resulted. Much less was any progress made toward elimination of the basic power-ideological clash between the Communist Empire and the Free World. Nonetheless the defeatist mood that major war is inevitable has changed, and the change is welcome.

TO SUMMARIZE the achievements of the Geneva meeting as definitely as their

vagueness permits, we may point to three areas of improvement:

First, the conference helped relax the East-West tension, and so reduced the risk that war might result from a blunder.

Second, some slight progress was made toward the long-postponed World War II settlement in Europe.

Third, the Western Alliance, by virtue of the fact that its most responsible leaders have for the first time in ten years met with the most responsible Soviet leaders, has undoubtedly gained a somewhat clearer notion of what the Russians intend to do.

These are not sensational accomplishments. They are in sum rather less important than the aura of publicity which quite

naturally surrounded the conference would suggest. They by no means indicate that disarmament is just around the corner. Nuclear war is still to be feared. We still cannot afford to relax the firm ties of our alliance with the NATO powers. We do not necessarily stand on the threshold of more substantial agreement in further conferences at the foreign ministers' level, though these are now scheduled. Thankful for a good beginning, we must avoid taking for granted that the beginning will be followed by any main event.

Even so, the new atmosphere of relaxation is in itself a positive gain. The switch in Communist propaganda from open hostility to official cordiality has reduced the



Heads of nations meeting at "Summit" pose on lawn of Palais des Nations at Geneva. They're Premier Bulganin, President Eisenhower, Premier Faure, Prime Minister Eden. UP photo.

danger of overt hostile action. The Soviet image of the West—and particularly of the United States—as a culture headed by capitalistic, imperialistic warmongers, is in process of being replaced by an official line characterized by smiles and outward friendliness. From the tense Quemoy-Matsu crisis of the winter to the smiles and sunshine of the Geneva meeting, East-West relations climbed an almost steadily rising trend curve of amelioration.

The Bulganin succession of February was universally interpreted as foreshadowing a much tougher Soviet line in foreign policy. The final signature of the London-Paris agreements on West German rearmament and admission to NATO—long declared by Russia to be tantamount to Western aggression, should by all odds have hardened the lines of conflict. Instead the course of world politics from February to July was marked by a completely new tone of *détente*. Signs of the thaw included the Austrian treaty, a new round of Russian disarmament proposals, the agreement

for the summit meeting itself, the Russian state visit to Yugoslavia, Russian participation in Eisenhower's Atoms-for-Peace plan, the arrangement for exchange visits of farmers between the United States and Russia, and a steady plugging up of the several smouldering volcanoes in the Far East. Small wonder that after ten years of tension, crisis, and war the new pattern has left the publics of both West and (presumably) East gasping and suspicious that the new promises of peace are too good to be true.

SPECULATION has abounded as to underlying motives for Moscow's New Look. Motives are still obscure but perhaps a little less so than before Geneva. To add one more speculation, we may assess Russian objectives as falling somewhere within the following triad of possible explanations:

ONE. The Russians, shaken off balance by two leadership succession crises in rapid order, and beset by domestic production difficulties, are trying by a change of face toward the West to trap us into letting down our guard. They wish us to dismantle NATO. They hope we will continue the dangerous cutbacks in military budgets launched by the Eisenhower-Wilson regime. With their impressive new military aircraft they might then shortly aspire to air supremacy over Europe and the Polar area.

TWO. The Russians, owing to the weaknesses cited above, may be after an honest settlement with the West, but one for which the West would pay a ruinous price. Continued division of Germany, continued Soviet domination of the satellite satrapies, adjournment of the NATO buildup, continued Soviet support for aggressive communism in Asia: these would be the terms, acknowledged or implicit, of such a deal.

THREE. Domestic Russian needs for a more relaxed international atmosphere may be so great that they would be prepared to make an honest settlement and to pay what they would consider a high price for it themselves. The hallmark of such a settlement would be an honest agreement for the unification of Germany on the basis of genuinely democratic elections. This would of course cost them East Germany. The previous Austrian agreement pointed slightly in this direction and was evidence of a new turn in Soviet policy; it cannot be lightly dismissed.

Of the three explanations outlined, it now seems that the second is nearest the truth. Or if we picture the three alternative analyses as forming three sides of a triangle, Russian policy seems to be veering slightly in the direction of hard bar-

gaining rather than toward cunning duplicity or generous bargaining.

This choice by no means rules out the possibility of a trap play. It has long been Communist policy to portray NATO as an aggressive alliance. Even though Bulganin stated twice during the Geneva conference that he believed Eisenhower's assurance that NATO would never be used for aggression, the Russians did not recede a single step from their position that NATO must go before Germany could be reunited. (It may be remarked in passing that in their antagonism to NATO the Russians have received a good deal of aid and comfort from a lunatic fringe of our domestic American isolationists.)

Given firm determination to retain our position of strength—compounded of both our own military forces and the Western Alliance arrangements—there is some reason to feel hopeful that the new pattern may prove fairly durable. If we allow validity to a few widely held speculations, we can see certain logic in a Russian decision to lower sights and to settle for smaller game than she has been seeking. If it is true that Russia is in fact having serious production trouble, with the concomitant difficulty in control of her people which would result even for a police state; if she is none too confident of the dependability of her satellite empire; if it is true that the post-Stalin leadership is composed of men

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About the Author



Dr. Oliver E. Benson, '32ba, '33ma, professor of government, is an acknowledged expert in the field of international politics. In addition to his O.U. degrees he received a doctor of political science degree from the Institute of International Relations, Geneva, Switzerland, site of the "Summit" discussions. A tribute to his scholarship, he recently participated in the Global Strategy Discussions of the Naval War College.

'55m.Lib.sci, Oklahoma City, and Calvin Brewer, '55m.Lib.sci, Stillwater, have accepted positions as librarians with Oklahoma A&M College, Stillwater.

Lamar Smith, '55m.Lib.sci, Reno, Nevada, has accepted a position as circulation librarian at the University of Nevada.

Jackson Hill, '55m.Lib.sci, Norman, has accepted a position as librarian with Lockheed Aircraft in Burbank, California.

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Wayne Greenlee, who has been switched to fullback after a sophomore year as guard.

SUMMING UP: Line is strong from tackle to tackle; good end material a little short on experience; capable performers at three backfield spots who may need a bit more seasoning, and a question mark at fullback. Team should be a good ground team in the Wilkinson tradition. With Tubbs calling defensive signals, line should be tough, excellent line-backing by Tubbs, and adequate secondary defense.

On 10 consecutive Saturdays, opponents will attempt to batter their way to a win over the Sooners. How good is the O.U. opposition? Unless some coach comes up with a near miracle, Pittsburgh, Texas, Colorado and Oklahoma A&M figure to give the Sooners their strongest competition. Off their showing in recent years, Texas and Colorado seem the most formidable.

Texas Coach Price says: "We look to 1955 as an opportunity for a comeback, and we are pleased with the way the boys are facing the challenge." He has seven of last year's starters available. In addition, Texas has one of the most highly rated quarterback prospects in the nation moving up from the freshman squad. He's Walter Fondren. Lettermen are available at every position.

Colorado looks tough as usual. Twenty-seven of thirty lettermen return. Every line letterman is back. Frank Bernardi and Carroll Hardy have been lost, but backfield prospects appear good. Line that was all new last year has added experience. This game should decide who wins Big Seven title and trip to Orange Bowl.

Pittsburgh has a new coach but lots of experienced performers. Every starter is a letterman and seven more are available for the second unit from the team that trimmed Navy 21-9 last year.

Oklahoma A&M has a new coach, Cliff Speegle, '41ed, and a new line. Back for his senior year is Earl Lunsford, outstanding fullback. Lack of experience may hurt in early stages of season, but should be gained by time A&M plays O.U. in last game of the season.

All the other teams will be pointing for O.U., which usually means they play their

best game against Oklahoma. Missouri will prove tough in Columbia, but the other opponents—North Carolina, Kansas State, Kansas, Iowa State and Nebraska—don't figure to beat Oklahoma.

SUMMING UP: Texas, Colorado and Pittsburgh will be the BIG ONES. O.U. has advantage of playing on home field for the latter two. Oklahoma A&M and Missouri could provide real threats.

This is the way the season looks to one paper quarterback. It looks considerably different to the coaches, who prefer to play one game at a time, and the team. Now they're getting into shape, doing the hard work that makes a winning team, and trying desperately for a place on the team. There is little glamor on the practice field.

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somewhat less dogmatically hidebound by the predestinarian Marxian dialectic, and perhaps feeling none too secure in their seats of power: then the switch in policy is understandable.

To be safe we must continue to act on the hard lesson we have learned at great cost—that no mere paper agreement with Russia can be trusted. Agreement can be based only on the confidence of each side in its own defense establishment. This is of course precisely the operating basis of the stalemate of the past ten years in great power relations, so the suggestion that it must continue as the basis does not introduce any startling or novel idea. What is new is rather a tendency on each side to concede that the other may conceivably be mainly interested in defense rather than aggression. In measure as this tendency grows—if it does—more substantial progress may eventually prove possible.

The topics on which such progress may be first tested are those delegated to the foreign ministers conference. These include the questions of German unity, a security pact for Europe, disarmament, a partly demilitarized zone along both sides of the Iron Curtain, and the exploration of ways to eliminate barriers to free communication and peaceful trade between East and West.

Of these items, the German question will most likely be the key. Intransigence on that will be the significant line to watch in future negotiations with the Russians, for without a German settlement the remainder of the agenda will be meaningless.

Disarmament must be linked inevitably with security. No state can be expected to let down its defenses unless certain that

the defenses which remain are adequate. The proposal for a semi-demilitarized zone is a happy semi-solution to this age-old dilemma. No complete answer, it nevertheless would carry the assurance that each side would retain unimpaired quantities of forces, but with reduced positional advantage for unprovoked aggression. There would also be markedly less danger of unintended but inflammatory incidents at the borders of East-West power.

A LESS OBVIOUS TREND in world politics pointed up at Geneva is that away from the bipolarity which has been the basic pattern since World War II. By bipolarity is meant that the world has been dominated by two *and only two* centers of power—Russia and the United States. Factors which created the pattern included the tremendous increase in American and Russian power during World War II, the defeat of four of the prewar seven great powers (France, Italy, Germany, and Japan), and the ideological conflict between our western liberal democracy and Russia's totalitarian communism. The bipolar pattern was new in modern history: it gave us a new type of balance of power, in which there was no room for diplomatic maneuver. An obvious result was the complete stalemate in negotiation of a peace settlement for the war, as well as a deadlock in all major United Nations attempts at working out specific plans to implement the high promise of its Charter.

For about a year signs of a breakup in this bipolar pattern have increased. Governments other than the two superpowers have become steadily more important. In the summer of 1954 the first major settlement of an East-West issue was reached without American initiative or active participation—the Indo-China agreement. The plan for German admission to the Western European Union and to NATO was worked out mainly by Britain and France, and was a substitute for the long-pending American plan for a European Defense Community. Much of the early spadework and almost all the early enthusiasm for the summit conference came from Britain and France. New major independent powers have emerged in Asia, and evidence of independent policies on their part was supplied by the Bandung conference. Germany and Japan have all but completed the process of reestablishing themselves as major factors in world affairs. The force of neutralism operates as an additional restraint—dominant in much of Asia but important even in such countries as France, Germany, and Britain, where though minority opinion it must be weighed by responsible govern-

ments. Neutralism's equivalent on the Russian side is undoubtedly present: the Tito break is clear evidence. We have now moved past the historical period in which two powers and two alone controlled the entire world supply of nuclear weapons.

All these threads of evidence seem to lead to a similar conclusion: that the world is no longer so bipolar as it has been. This fact has automatically brought a "New Look" to world politics, a new look which is more fundamental than any shallow shift in outward policy of particular governments.

Deadlock may of course continue, but with any willingness at all to make concessions negotiation from strength has more room for maneuver. We cannot tell whether such willingness exists in Russia but we have wisely begun the process of finding out.

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Saudies carried out their assignments. They are engaged in many skills including rotary driller, bull-dozer operator, refinery worker, laboratory technician, plumber, carpenter, etc. Many of these Saudi workers came from the desert, which makes them the first of their generation to do any kind of mechanical work. A monthly average of 2,893 Saudi employees received on-the-job instruction in 1954. This number is in addition to those who received training in company industrial training schools. A number of early-day workers have become contractors, and are now doing work for the company and others. Private business is thriving in Saudi Arabia.

The company has co-operated with the Saudi Arabian government in building schools, developing agricultural projects, building a railroad, constructing roads across desert sands, and in many other ways. His Majesty King Sa'ud ibn'Abd al'Aziz is cognizant of the importance of primary schools for his people. In December of last year he took time off from a busy schedule to dedicate two company-built primary schools in the eastern part of his country.

Rock ballast is used on the road bed of the Saudi Government Railroad, which has the latest type Budd streamlined cars, including combination diner and lounge car. I was told the trains sometimes streak across the desert at 110 kilometers per hour, with no discomfort to passengers who enjoy the air conditioned interior of the cars—while the thermometer stands at 120° F. in the shade outside.

Creeping sand dunes, some of them thir-

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