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Science and technology are now assuming an expanded role in world affairs. At the same time, the modes by which U.S. science and technology interact with those of other countries are evolving. These developments have accompanied far-reaching changes in the fundamental assumptions of U.S. policy-makers.

For many years U.S. foreign policy and actions were influenced strongly by faith that our form of government and value systems were superior and universally applicable, and belief that a liberal program of foreign aid would lead to progress, democratic governments, and enduring gratitude. An outcome of these assumptions was enmity with the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China.

The unsatisfactory recent results of U.S. foreign policy are evident. Our foreign aid programs have neither been advancing democracy nor winning staunch friends. Enmity with the Soviet Union and China has produced perilous tensions. A new approach is indicated. In formulating new policies, the Nixon Administration has taken into consideration some present-day realities. First, the U.S. public and its elected representatives are disillusioned. Second, balance of payments difficulties argue against generosity. Third, there is a growing realization at the highest levels that the United States' greatest relative strength lies in its science and applied technology. Another present-day reality is that there exist far more irreconcilable differences between the Soviet Union and China than between the United States and either of these countries.

A crucial event was the announcement that Nixon would visit China. Immediately, a progressive warming in U.S.-Soviet relations became apparent. This has been especially evident in matters involving science and technology. An important outcome of Nixon's visit to Moscow was a series of agreements for U.S.-Soviet cooperation in science and technology. Earlier there had been a small but significant scientist exchange program, managed on our side by the National Academy of Sciences. This supplemented useful contacts at international meetings and the activities of private groups, such as Pugwash. The new program will involve far more interchange and will be managed at a high official level.

In congressional hearings on the new U.S.-Soviet agreements,* Edward E. David, the President's Science Adviser, noted great differences between the two countries—political, economic, social, philosophical, organizational—that in the past have led to frustrating difficulties. Nevertheless, he said, "The United States is moving . . . toward a new relationship with the U.S.S.R." He then listed many technological and scientific efforts in which the two countries might cooperate and made it clear that the Administration is committed to fostering a meaningful joint enterprise.

In keeping with U.S. disillusionment with give-away programs, the cooperation will not be one-sided. Most of the programs will be selected on the basis of mutual ability to contribute. The pacts with the Russians are some of many recent bilateral arrangements between the United States and other powers. In such agreements, the United States is an honored partner with adequate voice in arrangements that promise to advance the interests of this country.

In contrast, recent experience with multilateral activities, especially those connected with the United Nations system, has not been so satisfactory. In consequence, the status of these organizations is at a new low in Washington and the bilateral mechanism has risen in stature as an instrument of foreign policy.—PHILIP H. ABELSON

* Panel on Science and Technology, *International Science Policy*, 12th meeting, Proceedings before the Committee on Science and Astronautics, U.S. House of Representatives, 92nd Congress, first session (Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1971).