deficit and had led to a decline in support for foreign intervention in the world. Detente would offer an opportunity to uphold the interests of the USA without the need for military intervention that might not succeed.

- Detente would also allow the influence of powerful industrial-military complex to be reduced. Plans for social reform had been undermined by a lack of resources due to continued military spending. Kennedy had a vision of a New Frontier, Johnson a New Society; both were sacrificed for increased armaments. Moves to Detente would allow resources to be released from the military budget to improve the lives of the American people.

The position of China

By the early 70s China was worried about its international isolation and saw accommodation with the USA as beneficial to its own interests as well as a snub to the Soviet Union. This, Detente was to involve a Chinese dimension that provided a useful opportunity for the USA to reduce the power and influence of the Soviet Union through peaceful diplomacy. Sino-American relations had been gradually improving after China and the USSR had fallen out for a number of reasons. Khrushchev had implemented peaceful coexistence without consulting Mao and China implemented Stalinist policies at a time where USSR was condemning them, thus Soviet-Sino relations worsened and Sino-American relations improved.

Ostpolitik

Developments across Europe in the late 60s encouraged movement to Detente. The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and large-scale student demonstrations in France revealed the tension in eastern Europe. Political disorder posed a danger to East and West in Europe. The West German politician Willy Brandt took the lead in promoting links across the divide. Brandt became Chancellor in 1969 – he saw a stabilisation of European relations as essential to the interests of the continent as a whole. By reducing tension and establishing links between East and West, the divisions that had scarred Europe since the early Cold War would be gradually eroded. Brandt’s response to this situation was to develop his ‘Eastern Policy’, better known as Ostpolitik. By opening up the channels between East and West in Europe, Ostpolitik greatly aided the impetus towards detente. Brandt’s policy encouraged other European countries to establish links across the East-West divide.

Detente represented a change in the tactics of superpower conflict rather than an end to the Cold War.