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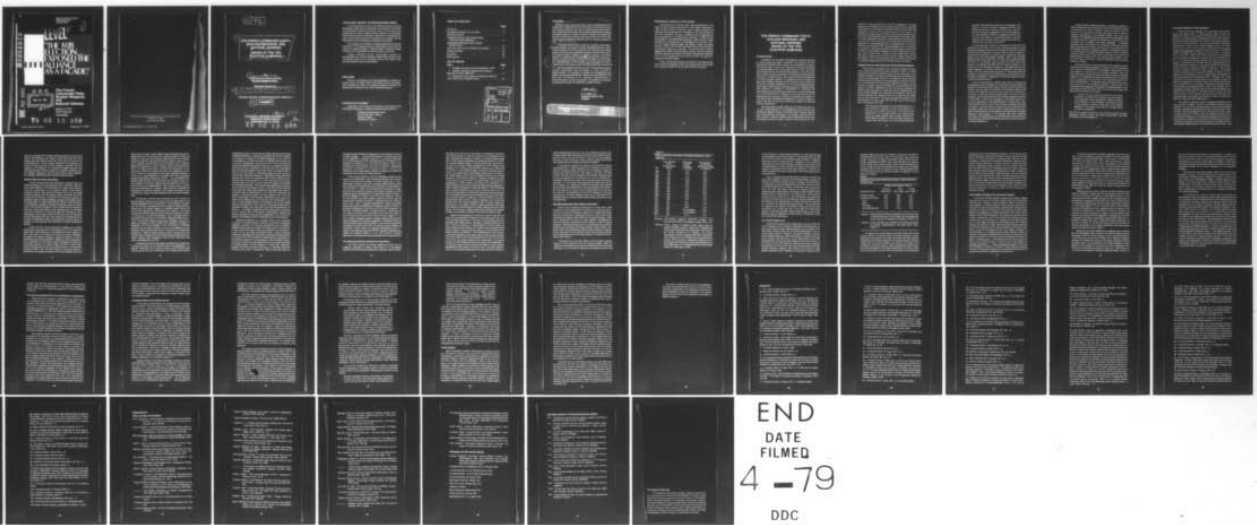
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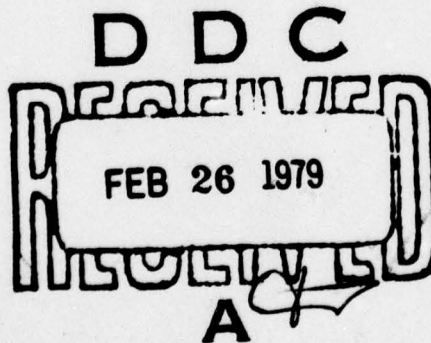
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**THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY,
NUCLEAR WEAPONS, AND
NATIONAL DEFENSE:
ISSUES OF THE 1978
ELECTION CAMPAIGN,**

(10)

by

LTC Raymond E. Burrell USA
Senior Research Fellow

Research Directorate

(14)

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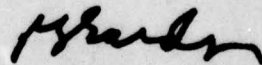
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FOREWORD

France is alone among the NATO Allies in possessing both an independent nuclear strike force (FNS) and a Communist party with the prospect of playing a key role in a coalition government. Historically, the parties of the French Left have been opposed to the FNS and the Atlantic Alliance. Therefore, it was an intriguing volte-face when the Parti Communiste Francais (PCF) announced, prior to the 1978 French General Assembly elections, that it no longer opposed the FNS. *The author*

start here Lieutenant Colonel Raymond Burrell, the author of this study, probes beneath the rhetoric to reveal inconsistencies and contradictions inherent in the PCF positions on the FNS and the co-related issues of force structure, deterrence strategy, and the French role in the Atlantic Alliance. Despite PCF claims of acting in the French tradition of independence, *he* the author argues that PCF positions on the various issues serve the interests of the USSR to such an extent that implementation of PCF policies would neutralize the French nuclear force and seriously impair the stabilizing effect of NATO. *4*

With the possibility that Communist or Communist-dominated coalition governments could be elected in certain countries of Western Europe, it is important to consider the implications for the Atlantic Alliance and the defense of Western Europe. The author not only has contributed to an improved understanding of Eurocommunism, but also has placed in perspective the cardinal importance of France in the defense of Western Europe.



R. G. GARD, JR.
Lieutenant General, USA
President

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

LTC Raymond E. Burrell, USA, was commissioned in the Field Artillery following graduation from Stetson University in 1958. He has served in Artillery units in Alaska, Vietnam, and Germany and commanded the 4th Battalion, 4th Field Artillery at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. He was a member of the US expeditionary force dispatched to the Dominican Republic in 1965 and has participated in one REFORGER Exercise in West Germany. While assigned to the Headquarters, United States Army, Europe in 1971-73, LTC Burrell worked closely with British, French, and West German military and civilian agencies concerned with Berlin contingency plans and exercises. LTC Burrell holds masters degrees from Wake Forest University (History), Auburn University (Political Science) and Boston University (International Relations) and is a 1977 graduate of the US Army War College Corresponding Studies Program.

This is LTC Burrell's second contribution to the National Security Affairs Monograph Series. His previous work was number 78-4, *Strategic Nuclear Parity and NATO Defense Doctrine*.

THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY, NUCLEAR WEAPONS, AND NATIONAL DEFENSE: ISSUES OF THE 1978 ELECTION CAMPAIGN

INTRODUCTION

Preparation for the March 1978 National Assembly elections in France marked yet another watershed in the annals of the *Parti Communiste Francais* (PCF), a party not unaccustomed to precipitate policy shifts, as this time it assumed a radically new stance on national defense. The turning point came on 11 May 1977 when Jean Kanapa, head of the Foreign Affairs Section of the PCF's Politburo and principal spokesman for Secretary General Georges Marchais on defense policy, announced the Party's endorsement of France's nuclear deterrent, the celebrated *force de frappe* created under President Charles de Gaulle and now more commonly known by its military appellation as the *Forces Nucleaires Strategiques* (FNS). Catching most observers by surprise, Kanapa's statement seemed to represent a contradiction of everything the Communists previously claimed to stand for on nuclear armaments over the past 20 years. Indeed, up until that point the PCF consistently had renounced the FNS, proclaiming its intention to work toward the immediate dismantlement of France's nuclear arsenal in the event of coming to power as a partner in a left-wing coalition government.¹

Why the sudden reversal? While on the surface the new policy may initially appear to be incompatible with the Party's past declarations against nuclear armaments, closer analysis indicates that, under present conditions, it is entirely in accord with the PCF's broader, long-term political goal of separating France from the Western security system. After all, even though the PCF

justified its long opposition to France's possession of nuclear weapons on the basis of moral scruples, the policy was sustained nonetheless by the dictates of practical politics; and so it was that pragmatic politics were responsible for the change. The intervening variable was the French Government's halting moves, after 1974, at reconciliation with France's allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). It was precisely for the purpose of countering this trend that the Communists switched their allegiance to nuclear weapons. But to understand this new role the FNS has come to play in PCF political strategy, first it is necessary to evaluate in some detail the Party's pronouncements before and during the 1978 election campaign on such related issues as foreign policy alternatives, strategic nuclear deterrence, defense spending, military force structure, and the Atlantic Alliance. For only against such a broad background will the PCF's real motives for affording belated sanction to the FNS emerge with clarity.

FOREIGN POLICY AND STRATEGIC NUCLEAR DETERRENCE

Responding to questions from the press, Kanapa's account of the reasoning behind the Party's decision in favor of nuclear deterrence sounded straightforward enough. Because it was "deeply attached" to the goal of maintaining French independence under all circumstances, the PCF, he explained, always had been concerned about questions of national defense. It was for that reason, he continued, the Communists regarded the nation's armed forces as "a means of capital importance" in guaranteeing France's freedom of action. Determined to see that France possessed the military power necessary to underwrite national independence, the Party, Kanapa pledged, was "absolutely committed to insuring the country's security and keeping it free of any pressure, any threat, any foreign intervention." But after studying the question of national security for over a year, the PCF had come to the conclusion, in Kanapa's words, that:

The absolute priority given by the government to nuclear weapons, against our will, has resulted in a decline of conventional forces. This decline is catastrophic. The present state of our conventional forces no longer enables them to insure effective national defense unaided. On the other hand, there is the nuclear force. We fought it and, as Georges Marchais

has said, "We take back nothing of this struggle." But today it is a fact, it exists. It represents the only real deterrent which the country will have, for a time, to face up to a threat of aggression. And I mean deterrent, for quite obviously, we have no aggressive aims for our country. We simply but resolutely want a national defense with the sole mission of signifying clearly to *everyone*: Do not touch our country.²

If this assertion served to reconcile the Party with the existence of the FNS, it in no way implied acceptance of the deterrence strategy formulated by the government under President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. Of course, what is really at issue is a fundamental disparity in foreign policy objectives. Whereas Giscard and the Center-Right coalition under Prime Minister Raymond Barre have been intent on defining a responsible place for France in the Western security system, the PCF remains opposed to any defense ties either with the Atlantic Alliance or with members of the European Community, most especially with the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). Paradoxically, both factions claim, and not without good foundation, to be acting within the precepts—nonalignment with great powers, limited security commitments, and detente—imposed by the Gaullist legacy on French foreign and defense policy.³

From his perspective, Giscard looks upon the FNS as the indispensable means necessary for preserving France's freedom of decision.⁴ At the same time, however, he acts on the principle that French security must be anchored on the Atlantic Alliance; that France and Western Europe must not be left, politically or militarily, to face the Soviet colossus alone. A policy of French neutrality, then Foreign Minister Jean Sauvagnargues proclaimed in June 1976, "would be as unrealistic in the military sphere as it would be disastrous in the political sphere."⁵ General Guy Mery, Chief of Staff of the French Armed Forces and Giscard's principal confidant in defense matters, voiced the same sentiment while advocating closer ties with the Alliance. France could not afford to take a neutral stance in an East-West confrontation, Mery remarked, because it was unlikely, "in an extreme case when everything in Europe had collapsed about us, the national will would survive to have recourse to the threat of massive destruction, even to ensure our continued existence."⁶

Hence, without forsaking detente or de Gaulle's decision in 1966 to withdraw French forces from the NATO integrated military command and to remove foreign troops (principally US) from French soil, the Giscard regime has taken steps to reaffirm France's commitment to the Atlantic Alliance. But since even de Gaulle had regarded continued adherence to the Alliance as the "ultimate precaution" against the Soviet Union,⁷ Giscard can claim his goals are "no different from those envisaged . . . in General de Gaulle's day."⁸ And within that framework of continuity with the past, the government views its more open form of cooperation with the Western allies as "a dialogue founded on a balance of power" for the purpose of preserving European security.⁹ In short, Giscard portrays a picture of a France that "is the loyal ally of some, the active partner of others, but in any case nobody's subject."¹⁰ And, he could have continued, it was the FNS that insured France's freedom of choice.

The Communists, on the other hand, claim Giscard's policies "have led to de facto reintegration of France into NATO, especially with respect to determination of strategies." Emphatically ruling out support for "any form of 'joint European defense'," they now push de Gaulle's maxim that atomic weapons provide the requisite means for an independent foreign and defense policy to the outer limit by proposing to put the FNS "at the exclusive service of national independence."¹¹ Conversely, they would place French security exclusively in the hands of domestic nuclear forces. This translates into acceptance of the doctrine of sanctuarisation, a concept dating from the early days of the *force de frappe*, and described by Raymond Aron as the

... gospel that any state which has acquired a minimum of nuclear force transforms its own territory into a sanctuary, which means that it is safe from attack as its capacity to inflict damage is such that it would not be logical or rational on the part of the potential aggressor to risk some of its cities for the stake which our country represents.

But as Aron goes on to point out, while the theory has been advanced numerous times, no French Government, not even de Gaulle's, has ever adopted it.¹²

Communist Variations of "Sanctuarisation"

To serve their own purposes, the Communists have embellished the basic notion of sanctuarisation with at least five distinctive touches, some original, others borrowed. For one, objecting to the present policy of directing France's nuclear weapons exclusively toward the Warsaw Pact states, they propose instead to adopt an omnidirectional, or *tous azimuts* strategy. Completely independent of NATO, *tous azimuts* targeting in the PCF mold would insure that French nuclear strikes could be launched "against any aggression wherever it may come from."¹³ Advanced earlier by General Ailleret, deterrence *tous azimuts* in its pristine form, to cite Aron, "means that France would have no designated enemy and that its foreign policy would be one of armed neutrality."¹⁴ In Communist parlance, however, *tous azimuts* amounts in reality to a substitution of enemies, with the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany replacing the USSR and the East European Communist states as targets of deterrence. Nor is such thinking confined within PCF circles, as the Center for Socialist Studies, Research and Education (CERES) in Nantes, which speaks for a substantial minority (approximately 25 percent) of Francois Mitterrand's *Parti Socialiste* (PS), in October 1977, urged retention of France's nuclear forces for the specific purpose of deterrence against the "Atlantic" threat. For French Communists and Socialists alike the example of Salvadore Allende's fate in Chile arouses very substantial fears. Thus, it was probably not for propaganda reasons alone that the PCF endorsed the CERES conclusion that, in the event of the Left's arrival in power, the most likely danger to the nation's security would come from the capitalist states of the West, which would be under "a great temptation to thwart the French experiment."¹⁵

For another innovation, the PCF advocates abandonment of the "anti-city" strategy. The PCF is somewhat ambivalent about whether this is to be a unilateral step or is to be accomplished through a negotiated agreement with other nuclear powers.¹⁶ Nevertheless, the very suggestion flies in the face of the logic underlying the FNS. For in either event, the alternative to anti-city or countervalue targeting is a counterforce strategy. But lacking both the absolute numbers of deliverable warheads and the technological sophistication required for assuming a credible counterforce posture against either of the Great Powers (see Table 1), the

FNS would be virtually impotent in a counterforce role.¹⁷ Moreover, imposition of a *tous azimuts* orientation on top of a counterforce strategy would only further degrade the FNS as a deterrent force. Indeed, after weighing the arguments against abandonment of anti-city targeting, one cannot escape the conclusion that the PCF posed the issue largely to restore a semblance of moral superiority to their stance on nuclear deterrence.¹⁸

Table 1.

Strategic Nuclear Force Comparison—1977

| System | USA | USSR | France |
|---------------------------------------|-------|------------------|--------|
| Intercontinental ballistic missiles | 1,054 | 1,527 | 0 |
| Intermediate range ballistic missiles | 0 | 600 | 18 |
| Submarine launched ballistic missiles | 656 | 785 ¹ | 64 |
| Strategic missile submarines | 41 | 58 | 4 |
| Intercontinental strategic bombers | 387 | 135 | 0 |
| Intermediate range bombers | 66 | 810 | 40 |

¹Not including 60 missiles embarked aboard 20 diesel submarines.

Source: Centre de Prospective et d'Evaluations (ed.), *La Defense en Chiffres, 1977* (Paris: Sirpa, 1977).

A third wrinkle in the Party's nuclear doctrine, acceptance of the "no first use" proposal advanced by the Soviet Union, offers a clearer example of the PCF's alignment with Kremlin policy. Looked upon as one of the leitmotifs of Soviet diplomacy, the idea has been rejected outright by the Giscard government on the grounds that it "would invalidate the very principle of our nuclear deterrent."¹⁹ In contrast, the Communists see a "no first use" agreement as but a "small step" on the road to disarmament; a step which should be discussed seriously with Moscow.²⁰ From the non-Communist viewpoint, however, the real purpose behind the PCF's position on "no first use" is to remove the FNS as a factor in the array of Western weapons directed against the Soviet Union.

And fourth, although now calling for a nuclear strike force sufficiently equipped to insure French independence and security, the PCF continues to make a strong appeal for disarmament. "We believe," Marchais proclaimed, "that it is necessary to wage a

struggle to progress not only toward the prohibition but also the destruction of nuclear arms. We are the party of peace, we are the party of peaceful coexistence, and we are the party of disarmament."²¹ Implying that these are all things the present government is opposed to, the PCF charged Giscard with

... heavy responsibility for the arms race and the failure of certain attempts to curb it. Hitherto the French leaders have invariably pursued the "empty chair" policy at all international conferences and talks on disarmament, the policy of refusing to associate themselves with agreements and treaties concluded on the subject of nuclear tests and nonproliferation, [and] the policy of intensive arms sales, even to the most reactionary regimes.²²

To right these errors of the past, the PCF advocates "immediately making France party to all existing agreements aimed at limiting the arms race." At the same time, they propose that France seek to become associated with the US-Soviet Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) in Geneva, and by implication with the Mutual Force Reduction negotiations in Vienna. But once again, the thrust of the PCF's position on disarmament brought the Party down squarely in the Kremlin camp on most major issues. This was manifested first by their call for "the conclusion of nonaggression treaties, [and] treaties of friendship and cooperation [with] . . . any country willing to sign one, including the Soviet Union."²³ Secondly, PCF support for "a European security treaty which all interested countries could join," is a Soviet initiative widely regarded as designed to shortstop development of a supranational West European defense organization and to separate America from her European allies.²⁴

Finally, the PCF proposes to remove the power of decision concerning the use of nuclear weapons from the exclusive control of the President and invest it in a "special high committee consisting of the President, the Prime Minister, the National Defense Minister, *ministers representing the governmental coalition* and the Chief of the General Staff."²⁵ According to Marchais, this plan was advanced because "an extravagant right of life and death over millions of men should not be left to one man."²⁶ Marchais' political motive was clear—with the possibility of a Left

coalition, including PCF ministers, gaining power as a result of the March 1978 elections, this measure would have given the Left a nuclear veto over Giscard, who has 3 more years to serve on his Presidential term.²⁷ From a military standpoint, the proposal is patently incongruous with the PCF design to abandon anti-city targeting. To be effective, a counterforce strategy demands rapid decisions because timing is critical to its success; whereas an anti-city strategy, assuming a secure French second strike capability, can tolerate a somewhat slower decisionmaking process.

Discord within the French Left Alliance

French Communist Party attempts to impose their new defense doctrine on the Left alliance, prior to the March 1978 elections, were rebuffed by the Socialists. As a result, after failing to reach an agreement on an updated version of the defense provisions of their 1972 Common Program, which had renounced nuclear armaments, the two parties, though ostensibly still allied, conducted the election campaign with opposing positions on important issues of national defense. Actually, both parties made a concerted effort to clarify what Michael Harrison characterizes as "the deliberately ambiguous foreign and defense policy provisions of the 1972 Common Program."²⁸ But whereas the PCF leaped to embrace nuclear deterrence, while rejecting many of the tenets (anti-city targeting, orientation against the Warsaw Pact, Presidential control) upon which the FNS was built and operated, the *Parti Socialiste* (PS) was more cautious in subscribing to the principle of deterrence while at the same time coming around to accept, for the most part, the government's nuclear employment policies.

Unlike the PCF, which switched its allegiance to nuclear deterrence by executive fiat, the Socialists could not so easily put aside their moral revulsions to the thought of atomic weapons.²⁹ Still committed to the ideal of banning the bomb, Mitterrand, throughout the election campaign, voiced his intention to have a Left government put the question of retaining nuclear weapons before a referendum of the French people. Pending the outcome of the popular decision, he vowed to keep the FNS "in good order" while simultaneously exploring possibilities for an alternative defense system.³⁰ But the PCF refused to accept the idea of a referendum, as Kanapa maintained "the French people cannot be

called upon to make a clear decision about defense policy with a simple yes or no. It is a much more complex question."³¹ While it is difficult to find fault with Kanapa's reasoning, the PCF's hostility toward the idea of a referendum (however unlikely it may be in reality) probably derived more from the realization that a decision against the retention of nuclear weapons likely would have the effect of forcing France back into greater dependence on the American umbrella of deterrence than from opposition in principle.³² Even so, compromise on this issue appeared possible in the form of a draft statement to the effect that "until the general nuclear disarmament measures for which . . . [a Left coalition] will actively fight are taken, the government will maintain French nuclear weapons at the level required by the demands of the country's security and independence."³³ Both parties, long on record favoring disarmament, probably would have been amenable to amending the Common Program in this manner had other, more fundamental, issues involving defense policy not arisen between them.

Principally, Mitterrand rejected the PCF notion of sanctuarisation. France, in his view, could not stand alone in the manner suggested by the Communists. "The Socialists," he asserted, "do not want to deceive the French people by leading them to believe that the nuclear weapon is a magical weapon which will insure their protection by itself without any alliance." For France "to leave the Atlantic Alliance without having any alliance in hand," in his opinion, "would be senseless"; yet, he stopped short of advocating France's return to the NATO integrated defense structure.³⁴ France would keep her "autonomy of decision," but in language as strong as that coming from Giscard's ministers, in November 1977 the PS adopted a Joint Draft Motion on Defense spelling out the Party's intention to honor the obligations of the Brussels Treaty and the Atlantic Pact "in the event of unmistakable aggression" against another signatory state.³⁵ Lacking any qualifications about weighing French interests before taking action and clearly implying close cooperation with the FRG, this policy was totally unacceptable to the PCF.

Addressing himself to the subject of disarmament, Mitterrand outlined his views in two lengthy articles first appearing in *Le Monde* in December 1977. He did not accept the PCF position that France should accede immediately to all existing arms control

agreements, since in his view some of these treaties would require extensive alterations to become compatible with French interests. In particular, he cited the US-Soviet agreement of June 1973 on the prevention of nuclear war, which he believed was of value only to the two superpowers, and that by virtue of the world policing rights they assumed thereunder. Moreover, he rejected the idea of joining the SALT negotiations and was less than enthusiastic about French participation at the Vienna talks. He reasoned that in both forums the range of negotiable issues was too narrow to achieve any meaningful measure of disarmament. What Mitterrand sought was a bold new approach under French initiative for attacking world disarmament in a more comprehensive manner. France's task, as he saw it, was to enter the stage and assemble the "scattered elements." Although his ideas generally ran counter to the Communist tendency to fall in line with Soviet initiatives, there were two areas where Mitterrand seemingly came close to the PCF's views on disarmament: (1) on control of arms sales, especially to colonialist, fascist, and racist regimes; and (2) on the idea of convening a new European Conference which would embrace all European security problems from the Atlantic to the Urals, a plan strikingly similar to the Russian call for a European security agreement.³⁶ But the PCF dismissed Mitterrand's proposals as being "not unlike that of the Giscard government, in the end . . . a strategy of passivity and thus the pursuit of the arms race."³⁷ Hence, even in the realm of disarmament, where there should have been the best chance of agreement on a PS-PCF joint position, reconciliation failed to materialize prior to the elections.

Mitterrand objected in no uncertain terms to PCF proposals to adopt an omnidirectional strategy, to abandon countercity targeting, to accept a "no first use" commitment, and to establish collegial control over the nuclear strike force. As for *tous azimuts*, he did not see "the need to point our missiles at our own allies."³⁸ It was not the term itself he disliked; rather, it was the political meaning of neutralism and disruption of existing alliances attached to it by the PCF.³⁹ And the effect of switching from countervalue to counterforce targeting, in his assessment, was to condemn France, in the event of war, to a futile expenditure of her nuclear warheads on military targets.⁴⁰ On the question of "no first use," Mitterrand agreed with the government that such a commitment would be contrary to the notion of deterrence. While on the latter point, he

maintained that "deterrence disappears if this decision [to launch] is made collegial, . . . [for] under the threat of a nuclear war, time will be measured in minutes, in seconds." In summary, Mitterrand and the PS believed the PCF's defense doctrine was based on fundamental contradictions. Or, as *Le Monde* reported, "while in fact adopting the nuclear weapon, the PCF, by a series of subsequent proposals, canceled out its deterrent effect."⁴¹ And to cite Mitterrand, "the nuclear weapon deprived of deterrence loses all its significance and would be a tragic absurdity."⁴²

Thus, by the summer of 1977 the Socialists, except for their stance on a referendum, were bringing themselves into harmony with the Giscardist policies on nuclear deterrence. In fact, Mitterrand's critique of the PCF's proposed defense policies reads like a page from Prime Minister Barre's speech at Camp Mailly on 18 June 1977, in which he summarized the government's objections to the Communist program announced by Kanapa. Anti-city targeting, Barre emphasized to the assembled military officers, is the only strategy for France "that can be truly deterrent." And as for *tous azimuts*, the Prime Minister, referring to the fact that the Soviet Union maintains hundreds of missiles which are "aimed at most of our cities," expressed disbelief that "certain Frenchmen are anxious about the existence of analogous missiles in France."⁴³ Moreover, acceptance of the PCF's call for a French pledge of "no first use" of nuclear weapons, in Barre's opinion, "would make us the consenting victim of an adversary who could then attack us with conventional forces alone—forces that are superior to our own." Finally, a collegium system of decisionmaking, Barre averred, would be tantamount to telling an aggressor "in advance and for sure that the decision would never be made." Joining all of the qualifying conditions put forth by the PCF to France's nuclear strategy, he concluded, "would remove all deterrent effectiveness from it."⁴⁴ Indeed, it was the case that in the PS-PCF interparty negotiations to update the defense platform of the 1972 Common Program, Mitterrand could just as well have been speaking for the government.

The Political Dimensions: Domestic and International

The PCF's doctrine of nuclear deterrence should not be judged by standards of military utility alone, for it is designed primarily to serve the political objectives of the party, not the immedi-

ate security of France. For this reason, the elements of that doctrine (*tous azimuts*, "no first use," and so on) are based more on their individual functionality in relation to ultimate political goals than on their logical consistency as supporting themes of a coherent national defense strategy. The real purpose they must serve, to borrow from Ronald Tiersky's assessment of PCF foreign policy objectives, is to "strike at the economic, political, and military ties of France to other West European and North American governments, and specifically at the alleged subservience of France to the United States in NATO and the Atlantic Alliance, and to West Germany in the Common Market."⁴⁵ Therefore, viewing the policy of the Giscard government as accelerating "the Atlanticist reintegration of French policy" and laying "the foundations for a 'West European army' which would give West German generals access to [French] weapons of mass destruction,"⁴⁶ the PCF seized upon nuclear deterrence as a tool for fighting this trend. To continue the advocacy of conventional defense would have served only to buttress the government's purpose, since any French strategy oriented toward a classical or forward defense naturally swings Paris back toward a policy of alliances, and in this case toward NATO and closer cooperation with the United States and West Germany. Conversely, French nuclear ambitions traditionally have acted as a stumbling block to closer relations with the United States, and France's nuclear forces clearly present the greatest problem of coordination between France and her Atlantic allies.

Against this background, it would be unwise to assume that either the contradictions contained in the Communists' new doctrine of nuclear deterrence, or the split it has occasioned with the Socialists over defense policy, represents a political liability for the PCF. In the first instance, it is characteristic of French politics, as Marie Claude Smouts relates, that "public opinion generally takes little interest in foreign policy except for a few categories of persons directly concerned."⁴⁷ The complexities of *tous azimuts*, counterforce targeting, and related issues, simply are less compelling to the mass of the French electorate than to the narrow circle of political and military analysts. More importantly, in a broader context, the PCF presents its policy as being in the mainstream of the Gaullist legacy by proclaiming its ability to insure national independence and freedom of choice. And it is the shorthand account, not the detailed explanation, that gets the PCF's version of

nuclear deterrence past the bar of public acceptance. Even so, this probably makes little difference to the bulk of the traditional Communist voters, who are attracted to the PCF for other reasons, although it may be opening vistas to those Gaullist malcontents who oppose Giscard's foreign and defense policies.⁴⁸

In the second instance, the efficacy of the PS-PCF alliance was derived from a basic congruence in the social and economic realms of domestic politics and not from a consensus in regard to foreign and defense affairs. With regard to the latter, the 1972 Common Program, which throughout the election campaign both parties presented as the basis of their joint cooperation, represents, in Harrison's words, "little more than mutual consent to disagree."⁴⁹ In any event, having shoved the matter aside during the campaign, any resolution of PS-PCF differences over national defense must now be fashioned in the post-election environment.⁵⁰ But that awaits the future, and at this moment it will be more instructive to concentrate on how the PCF attempts to influence the direction of French defense policy than to speculate on the possible forms an eventual *modus vivendi* among the parties of the Left might take.

DEFENSE SPENDING AND FORCE STRUCTURE

Returning to Kanapa's statement of 11 May 1977, most observers would agree that his evaluation of the decline in France's conventional defense capability is substantially correct. Yet this is certainly not a recent development. It was no secret that Presidents de Gaulle (1959-1969) and Georges Pompidou (1969-1974) capitalized the FNS to a large extent by mortgaging the future of France's conventional forces. Against a trend of relative declines in defense spending both as a percentage of the national budget and as a share of the gross national product (GNP), additional funds were generated to speed nuclear weapons programs, first by reducing the total strength of the armed forces and later by further postponements in the modernization of conventional armaments. (See Table 2.)

Furthermore, by the late 1960's, as the nuclear programs began to reach maturity and thus required smaller outlays for research and development, money that otherwise would have been channeled into conventional weapons procurement accounts had

Table 2.**Military Personnel Strength and Defense Spending Trends,
1960-1977**

| Year | Total Strength of the Armed Forces (000's) * | Percentage of GNP Devoted to Defense ** | Percentage of Government Spending Devoted to Defense** |
|------|---|--|---|
| 1960 | 781 | 5.48 | 28.5 |
| 1961 | 778 | 5.12 | 26.7 |
| 1962 | 742 | 4.71 | 24.7 |
| 1963 | 632 | 4.50 | 23.9 |
| 1964 | 555 | 4.34 | 23.0 |
| 1965 | 510 | 4.25 | 22.5 |
| 1966 | 500 | 4.14 | 21.8 |
| 1967 | 500 | 4.10 | 20.7 |
| 1968 | 505 | 3.97 | 20.0 |
| 1969 | 503 | 3.60 | 17.9 |
| 1970 | 506 | 3.32 | 17.6 |
| 1971 | 502 | 3.17 | 17.2 |
| 1972 | 501 | 3.13 | 17.0 |
| 1973 | 504 | 3.10 | 17.7 |
| 1974 | 503 | 2.94 | 17.4 |
| 1975 | 503 | (not available) | 16.9 |
| 1976 | 513 | (not available) | 17.1 |
| 1977 | 502 | 3.14 | 17.4 |

*Source: *The Military Balance, 1976-1977* (London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1977), p. 83.

**Source: France, Ministry of Defense, *French White Paper on National Defense*, Volume 1. (New York: Ambassade de France, Service de Presse et d'Information, 1972), pp. 54-59; France, Ministère de la Defense, *Les Armees Francaises de Demain: Programmation 1977-1982* (Paris: Sirpa, 1976), pp. 8-12; and *Rapport sur le projet de loi de finance, 1975*, presente' a l'Assemblée Nationale par la Commission des Finances de l'Economie Generale et du Plan (Washington, DC: Ambassade de France, Service de Presse et d'Information, 1978).

to be diverted to meet pressing demands for improved pay and living conditions for military personnel. For example, between 1968 and 1977 the portion of the military budget devoted to operating expenses (Title III expenditures) increased by over 10 percent, most of which came at the expense of weapons procurement (Title V expenditures).⁵¹ In short, the factors working to the detriment of France's conventional forces have been evident for at least a decade and should have been as apparent to the PCF as they were to the government.

Prior to Kanapa's May announcement, however, the PCF had given little evidence of concern for the deteriorating condition of France's conventional forces. Except to champion the continuation of conscription under the National Service system, a position taken for political rather than for military or economic reasons (see page 19),⁵² the Party was noted more for its negative approach to national security issues than for its support of any coherent, active defense policy. Disarmament, not rearmament, dominated its themes. On the other hand, if the Communists were genuinely concerned about France's conventional defense capability, then the timing of their endorsement of nuclear deterrence, combined as it was with the accompanying denunciation of the government for neglecting the nation's conventional forces, was all the more surprising, for it came less than a year after the Center-Right coalition supporting President Giscard had adopted a new 6-year defense program designed to pump billions of additional francs into conventional rearmament.

The "Fourth Program Law"

Winning final approval from Parliament on 19 June 1976, the Fourth Program Law for Military Expenditure and Equipment for the Armed Forces projects defense spending for the period 1977-1982. More ambitious than any of its three predecessors, the current program calls for almost a 100 percent increase in annual military appropriations by 1982, amounting to a planned total outlay of slightly over 502 billion francs (\$102 billion at the 1976 exchange rate) during the 6-year period, and for the first time in the history of the Fifth Republic affords conventional weapons procurement for the Army and Air Force nearly equal priority with nuclear armament programs. (See Table 3.) As a result, by 1982 defense spending would constitute an additional 3 percent of the

national budget and consume an added 1/2 percent of the GNP. If implemented as planned, the Fourth Program will insure that France continues to maintain the largest active military force in Europe, excepting the Soviet Union, and will secure its position as the world's third-ranking nuclear power. More importantly, the French armed forces would be assured of entering the mid-1980's equipped with an array of modern air, land, and sea weapons that rival comparable US and Soviet models in capability, if not in absolute numbers.⁵³

Table 3.

Equipment Procurement Allocations: Second, Third, and Fourth Program Laws

| Equipment Type | Outlays (Percentage of Title V) | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| | Second (1965-1970)* | Third (1971-1976)* | Fourth (1977-1982)** |
| Nuclear Forces | 45.5 | 36.9 | 27.5 |
| Conventional Forces | 54.5 | 63.1 | 72.5 |
| Army | 17.5 | 20.8 | 25.0 |
| Navy | 13.1 | 14.4 | 16.0 |
| Air Force | 17.5 | 21.1 | 24.5 |
| Joint/Gendarmerie | 6.4 | 6.8 | 7.0 |

*Source: France, Ministry of National Defense, *French White Paper on National Defense*, Volume I (New York: Ambassade de France, Service de Presse et d'Information, 1972), p. 59.

**Source: France, Ministere de la Defense, *Les Armees Francaises de Demain: Programmation 1977-1982* (Paris: Sirpa, 1976), p. 9.

Of course one could argue, as the PCF does, that France cannot afford to maintain both a credible strategic nuclear deterrent and powerful conventional forces; that the long-term implications of the Fourth Program Law simply are beyond French means. But on closer analysis, the facts do not support this contention, at least so long as military expenditures remain within the limits envisaged by the Giscard government. For even though France continues to suffer some aftereffects of the economic

recession which swept Western Europe in 1974, barring more severe setbacks to the national economic growth rate, there is little doubt of France's potential to generate the relatively modest increases in financial and industrial wherewithal required by the Fourth Program. Moreover, it should be able to sustain the effort without demanding undue privations from the civilian sector, for even by 1982 France will be devoting less of its GNP to defense than does the United States and Great Britain today.⁵⁴ Indeed, the World Bank and the Hudson Institute-Europe, in recent separate studies, have predicted that France, already nearly the equal of West Germany in per capita income, will surpass the FRG in total GNP during the 1980's to become the fourth largest national economy in the world.⁵⁵ Clearly then, the most important question concerning the future of the Fourth Program is not one of France's ability to bear such a load, but rather of her political will to continue the task.

French Military Spending: The Communist Positions

For its part, the PCF refuses to support the military budgets required by the Fourth Program. Before 1977 the Communists justified their refusal to vote for defense credits on grounds of their objection to nuclear weapons. Now, using the same logic in reverse, they reject the government's defense plan because it emphasizes conventional weapons at the expense of the nuclear strike force. Explaining the Party's opposition to the 1978 military budget, a PCF official explained: "We support the maintenance of nuclear armaments while at the same time refusing to plunge France into the arms race."⁵⁶ In contrast with the government's plan to once again give defense the largest slice of the national budget (20 percent by 1982), Marchais placed defense spending third, behind expenditures for social progress and economic stimulation, on his list of budget priorities. His "budget of change," as he described it, "envisages saving money presently *wasted* on defense and making it possible both to develop the means of a *real* defense system and to raise soldiers' allowances and staff salaries."⁵⁷ As Kanapa put it, "considering the social and cultural objectives of the joint program, it would be out of the question to increase [the military] . . . share of the general budget."⁵⁸ From the PCF standpoint, a posture of minimum nuclear deterrence should translate into significant reductions in defense spending while still guaranteeing France's independence and security.

Proclaiming that France already possesses a sufficient number of nuclear warheads to support the Party's doctrine of strategic deterrence, the PCF declared itself in favor only of "maintaining" the FNS at its present level. "And I mean maintenance," Kanapa emphasized, "nothing more."⁵⁹ But maintenance, he elaborated, implies providing for the scientific and technological advances necessary for the "preservation of the nuclear force's operational capability at a quantitative level which would be determined only by the requirements of the country's security and independence."⁶⁰ This is sufficiently ambiguous to leave some doubt as to the Party's position on the government's nuclear warhead improvement programs outlined in the Fourth Program, which taken together will quadruple France's current nuclear stockpile of 22,000 kilotons by 1982 and triple the number of targets that can be engaged by 1990.⁶¹

Regarding delivery means, however, the Party has been more specific. Basically, it agrees with the government's plans to retain the triad of Mirage IV bombers, land-based missiles, and submarine-launched missiles, at least for the immediate future.⁶² Furthermore, it supports the *planned sixth nuclear submarine* and is critical of the government's failure to seek construction funds for it in the 1978 budget.⁶³ This is in harmony with a similar CERES proposal advocating that more reliance should be placed on the submarine component of the FNS in order to minimize the chances of France becoming a target for nuclear strikes in the event of confrontation with an aggressor.⁶⁴ Consequently, the PCF is opposed to the idea of developing a replacement system for the Mirage IV bomber fleet when it becomes obsolete, although it is not clear whether or not the Party favors the Air Force plan to improve the Mirage IV with modern penetration aids which would extend its useful life into the 1990's.⁶⁵

Neither has the Party declared for or against plans to replace the S2 intermediate range missiles on the Albion Plateau with the S3 system, which will have a range of 2,100 miles (compared to 1,875 miles for the S2); will be fitted with a hardened megaton warhead to withstand the effects of antimissile explosions; will be equipped with a new penetration aid system designed to make detection and trajectory calculation by enemy defenses more difficult; and will become operational starting in 1980.⁶⁶ Since for all practical purposes the marginal range increase of the S3, as

well as its added technological sophistication, is useful only against the Soviet Union, it is surprising that the PCF has not voiced objections to the modification program. Conversely, development of a newer, longer-range (from 2,000 to 2,500 miles) submarine-launched missile with multiple warheads and new solid-propellant engines fits the PCF's demand for a *tous-azimuts* strategy.⁶⁷

What the PCF has made perfectly clear is that its top priority defense program is the development and employment of an observation satellite system. Programmed under the Fourth Law, and funded in the 1978 defense budget, a satellite system is a necessity, in the Communist view, in order to render the FNS "really independent" as a strike force as well as to give France the national means of verification required for equal participation in SALT negotiations.⁶⁸ At the same time, it is a requisite for effective counterforce targeting.

It is difficult to form a coherent picture of the role conventional forces are supposed to play, either independently or in conjunction with the nuclear forces, in PCF defense policy, for once again the Party's positions are assumed more for political purposes than for military soundness. The draft defense bill submitted by the Communist group in the National Assembly in January 1978 serves to illustrate. The national defense system advocated was to be based on a combination of three requirements: "to make our country safe from any military threat; to achieve union between the nation and its army; and to insure the unity of the French Army."⁶⁹ The emphasis on politicization of the military was unmistakable and reflected the general fear among the left-wing parties that the Army has become increasingly, as CERES describes it, a corps of "professionals, and mostly technicians, over the past 15 years in particular, which can be used against 'enemies at home' . . . and against strikers." That is, the French Army itself is feared as "the real danger which will threaten the Left if it comes to power one day."⁷⁰ Thus, the PCF draft emphasized the importance of retaining conscription, "the content and organization of which will provide the indispensable link between the army and the nation." And as the Party's daily, *L'Humanite*, went on to explain,

The PCF text grants soldiers the right to exercise freedom of opinion, information and expression and the right to belong to any political, philosophical or religious association of their choice recognized by law; sets up a higher military council "representative of all categories and democratically formed"; and specifies that "military courts can no longer sit in peacetime."⁷¹

In regard to conventional defense capability, the PCF proposals are clearly contradictory. Advocacy of a manpower intensive army raised by conscription and of a capital intensive nuclear strike force (the FNS contains only 2.6 percent of France's active military manpower), while simultaneously proposing to reduce defense spending, makes no sense at all in military terms. To complicate matters even more, Marchais called for an increase in military pay for draftees. This was nothing short of demagoguery. For as Defense Minister Yvon Bourges pointed out, the PCF's proposed economies in the defense budget "could only affect essentials: the nuclear forces and conventional equipment."⁷² But judging from their rhetoric, if given the power to choose, the PCF would cut conventional equipment. And they would do so, as Bourges reasons, because the logic of a conventional strategy for France's defense leads to a "policy of alliances," which is the one thing the PCF hopes to prevent, at least a revigorated alliance with the NATO powers.⁷³

Therefore, the single most important point to remember when evaluating Communist defense policy is that, as Edouard Depreux puts it, "the PCF is not on the Left but in the East."⁷⁴ Their goals simply are not compatible with the objectives of the Atlantic Alliance. "Every international event," Jacques Chirac writes, "brings us further confirmation of this quasi-alignment of the French Communist Party with Soviet theses."⁷⁵ Beyond that, when the PCF states that "in all circumstances, France must possess the military resources to insure its security and independence,"⁷⁶ it is thinking in terms of security against capitalist intervention in a France attempting an economic transformation on the road to socialism under a Left alliance, with the PCF in a vanguard role.⁷⁷ And when the Party speaks of reforms in the army, it is with the view of controlling the primary internal agents of force that must either be enlisted to serve the social revolution, or else, at a minimum, neutralized as an ally of

reactionary elements.⁷⁸ To quote the Party's proposed updated version of the Common Program outlining the security tasks of a France under a Left coalition government,

As things stand at present, this implies retaining nuclear weapons at the minimum level required for this purpose, within the framework of an omnidirectional military strategy of deterrence which would make it possible to deal with *any* threat of aggression from *whatever* source. Real *democratization* of the army will be undertaken and carried through.⁷⁹

THE PCF AND THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE

To be sure, in their official statements the French Communists disclaim any intention of forcing France out of the Atlantic Alliance. But in view of their staunch opposition to any cooperation with NATO, their constant diatribes against the United States and West Germany, and their insistence on an "independent" foreign and defense policy, the anomaly is striking. The PCF, Kanapa asserts, "does not call for France's withdrawal from the Atlantic Alliance, any more than for her adhesion to the Warsaw Pact."⁸⁰ Yet, this is little more than a bow to the Party's Socialist allies, who insisted before agreeing to the Common Program in 1972 that the PCF accede in principle to the continuance of France's membership in the Atlantic Alliance. Since then the Communists have done no more than affirm that a government of the Left would show "respect for France's existing alliances," while simultaneously continuing to advocate policies which are antithetical to NATO's purpose.⁸¹ A statement by Kanapa published in *L'Humanite* on 5 September 1977 is illustrative:

Contrary to F. Mitterrand's assertions, we are definitely not in favor of a reversal of alliances. We want to see them respected. Having said this, if one is solely concerned about insuring the country's defense, France's military policy should not point at any particular adversary in advance. On the contrary, it should be "omnidirectional." If one has great concern for the country's independence, one must categorically refuse to participate in any possible "West European military bloc" which would put our armed forces at the disposal of Schmidt's and Strauss' Germany.⁸²

Indeed, when the PCF holds that French military planning should not be based on the assumption of a war with the Warsaw Pact states, then there is no practical purpose for French membership in NATO.⁸³

The French Communist Party Line: Coincidence or Collaboration?

Noting the PCF's "refusal to disagree with the foreign policy of the Eastern bloc countries on any issue whatsoever," the PS claimed it was really Communist objections to the "so-called 'Atlanticism' of Socialist policy" that caused the breakdown of interparty negotiations in September 1977.⁸⁴ For their part, the PCF accused Mitterand of a "cold war" attitude as demonstrated by his thinking only "in terms of one possible enemy—the socialist world," and his unwillingness "to discuss a potential threat to France from other countries, such as the FRG."⁸⁵ In short, whereas the PS was in general accord with the Giscard government's policy of maintaining the Franco-German entente, cooperating with NATO, and working for greater European unity within the framework of the Common Market, the PCF openly designated the FRG as France's number one military threat.⁸⁶

The question posed by the Socialists of the PCF's subservience to the dictates of Soviet foreign policy is not easily answered. On the one hand, as indicated earlier, the French Communists have not adopted a stance on any defense issue that can be considered as contradictory to Soviet objectives. Whether this derives from a coincidence of world views or comes at the direction of Moscow is beyond the scope of this paper; however, barring a schism over a major issue, the results are identical. That is, the Soviet Union enjoys the benefits of the PCF's behavior as it acts to weaken Western solidarity. But on the other hand, with the PCF's increased emphasis on the "national" model of Communist development, the contrast between the avowed tenets of what is now popularly termed Eurocommunism and classical Marxist-Leninist theory espoused by the Soviets has given cause for a fresh look at the long-term prospects of Party relations with Moscow. Yet, at this point the possibilities for divergence arising between the French Communists and the Soviet Union over PCF domestic policies remain more potential than real. In the 1978 election campaign, for instance, Moscow found no reason to publicly voice exception to any PCF policy, as the Kremlin generally followed a

hands-off approach. Thus, the impact of Eurocommunism on the degree of subservience or independence exhibited by the PCF awaits future developments, and it does not follow necessarily that disagreements over domestic issues will spill over to alter the PCF's present congruence with Moscow on major foreign policy and defense issues.⁸⁷

Increasing Attacks on the Atlantic Alliance

In any event, two factors served to sharpen the PCF's attacks against NATO in the last months of the 1978 election campaign. The first was a series of statements by leading members of the Giscard government spelling out details of France's new strategy of "extended sanctuarisation," which anticipates French participation in the early stages of a forward-area battle in West Germany. General Mery, in announcing the new strategy, justified it as a forward defense of France itself. "It would be extremely dangerous," he proclaimed, "for our country deliberately to hold herself aloof from such a first battle, in the course of which our own security would in fact be at stake." Since no French soldiers would be committed to NATO in advance of hostilities, France would retain its freedom of decision. But Mery stressed that France remains a "faithful and loyal ally" desirous of seeking certain interoperability and of carrying out exercises with allied forces.⁸⁸ Going further, he postulated conditions under which French tactical nuclear weapons might be used from West German soil to aid NATO's defense, an action he admitted possibly could lead to escalation in the form of strategic nuclear strikes against the Soviet Union and its allies by the FNS. Yet Mery concluded that, even with French nuclear power weighed in the NATO balance, it was "difficult to conceive of a European defense completely independent of an American alliance."⁸⁹

Giscard himself, in the wake of domestic criticism of forward sanctuarisation, endorsed Mery's pronouncements, first by promising that French nuclear power is "not only an instrument of dissuasion, it is also an instrument of battle"; and second, by reemphasizing the importance of America's military presence in Europe as a counterbalance to the Soviet Union.⁹⁰ Finally, Prime Minister Barre affirmed in June 1977 that French defense plans are based on "a European context characterized . . . by the presence to the East of a considerable military power . . . whose capacity for

influence and action we cannot ignore." Stating yet again France's intention to honor its commitments to the Atlantic Alliance, he pledged all French forces—strategic nuclear, tactical nuclear, and conventional—to the defense of "neighboring and allied territories."⁹¹

The PCF attacked forward sanctuarisation and the idea of French participation in the defense of West Germany as "proof of reintegration into NATO."⁹² In their view this was a "harmful" and "adventuristic" policy which would assign "the French Army and . . . its nuclear potential the task of 'doing battle' beside the Bundeswehr on the borders of the socialist world."⁹³ The Party was opposed to any military plan designed to "transfer launching pads of the French nuclear *force de frappe* from French to West German territory, namely, to the border of the socialist countries," a policy all the more dangerous because "there are still some influential forces in the FRG today which keep pursuing revanchist plans."⁹⁴ The FNS must be kept completely independent of the Atlantic Alliance, and to do that France could assume no defense obligations forward of her own borders. In short, the Communists saw forward sanctuarisation as evidence of Giscard's willingness to enter into "an unequal and preferential alliance with West Germany" which would turn France into a "stepping stone" for German ambitions.⁹⁵ When the Left assumed power, the PCF vowed, Giscard's initiatives toward NATO would be "corrected accordingly."⁹⁶ But all this, Marchais maintained, "is in no way inconsistent with the fact that France remains a member of the Alliance."⁹⁷

The second factor eliciting strong PFC reaction against the Atlantic Alliance was the increasing concern voiced by NATO and US officials about the likelihood of Communist participation in the French government in the event of a Left victory in the March 1978 elections. General Alexander Haig, Supreme Allied Commander Europe, and Joseph Luns, Secretary General of NATO, both issued statements warning of the serious difficulty this would create for the Alliance. Haig spoke of the manner in which Communists would "hamper the communication of top secret information" to France and the actions they would take to prompt the French government "to relegate the financing of military expenditures to the background."⁹⁸ Luns indicated that NATO would take "necessary measures" to protect the Alliance's security, but also expressed hope that, even with the PCF's entry to cabinet-level responsibility,

the defense ministry, the foreign ministry, and the ministry of the interior would be kept out of Communist hands.⁹⁹ And while Henry Kissinger was leading an attack on Eurocommunism in the US press, President Carter's visit to France in January 1978 was handled in such a way as to denote US anxiety over the prospects of the PCF sharing power in a coalition with the Socialists.¹⁰⁰

Criticizing Haig for his "inexcusable insolence" for even suggesting concern about the consequences to NATO of the Communists joining the French government, *L'Humanite* asked:

Since when does the "Supreme Allied Commander Europe" have authority over the internal political affairs—and foreign affairs too—of France? Until further notice, and whatever the president of the republic himself may perhaps think sometimes, our country is *no longer a member of the Atlantic military alliance*, and he has no right to speak on our behalf or to give France any political or military directive whatever. Once again French national independence is threatened by an American military leader who seems to think that he is on conquered territory here.¹⁰¹

Similarly, Marchais branded President Carter's comments regarding US preferences for a non-Communist government as "scandalous" interference in French internal affairs.¹⁰² Likening Carter's statements to the Brezhnev doctrine of limited sovereignty, only this time applied to the capitalist countries of Western Europe, he raised the specter of direct US intervention in the style of "Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Chile and the other countries, and elsewhere by more subtle, disguised action by means of intermediary 'national' politicians." And the inference followed that Giscard was just such an "intermediary" for Washington's purposes. "France's policy must be determined in Paris," Marchais declaimed, "and in Paris alone."¹⁰³

Yet the PCF assiduously denied any desire to terminate French membership in the Atlantic Alliance, at least not until both military blocs could be dissolved. Kanapa gave the Party line as follows:

We have accepted France's continuation in the Atlantic Alliance as a fact. We have always been against the policy of blocs. We remain in favor of the dissolution of

blocs. We will fight for the dissolution of blocs. We do not want to be under a foreign umbrella, whatever kind it may be. But this does not contradict bilateral or multilateral alliances. . . . To end the dispute existing between Communists and Socialists . . . [we] declared that we would not make the Atlantic Alliance issue a condition of our alliance with the PS . . . and the PCF has never varied since then.¹⁰⁴

Once in the government, Kanapa asserted the PCF would do nothing to jeopardize the balance between NATO and the Warsaw Pact upon which detente rests. Indeed, it was not the Communists, he claimed, who were raising questions of the Atlantic Alliance's compatibility with a Socialist/Communist governing coalition; rather, it was the spokesmen of the United States and the other NATO allies. "If this poses a *problem for them*," Kanapa continued, "we believe that a democratic French government should declare itself ready to renegotiate the terms of this alliance if the other signatories of the treaty wish it." Moreover, he concluded, "this would be opportune and sensible, more than a quarter of a century after the treaty was concluded, in a world which has profoundly changed."¹⁰⁵ Thus, in Kanapa's view the initiative for change, though a good idea, would have to come from the other Alliance states. But in light of the PCF's declared foreign and defense policies, clearly there would be little common ground left for renegotiating the Atlantic Treaty.

CONCLUSIONS

With the elections of March 1978 ending in a decisive victory for the Giscard coalition, the problem of possible Communist participation in the French government has receded into the background of Western concerns. Depending largely on the future of the PCF's alliance with the Socialists, it may or may not loom again in the urgent proportions witnessed during the 1978 election campaign. Indeed, judged by the acrimony aroused between these ostensible partners over foreign policy and defense issues, combined with the disappointment of the Socialists in their efforts to gain a clear advantage over the Communists in electoral strength, the probability of a meaningful coalition, as opposed to an election alliance, appears to have diminished. The gap in their viewpoints, a dichotomy which thus far even their mutual desires

for power have proven incapable of bridging, likely will remain insurmountable. Whereas the Socialists are not willing to sacrifice French security ties with the West for the sake of closer harmony with the PCF, the Communists are equally reluctant to subordinate their foreign policy objectives in the name of PCF-PS unity. This was the real lesson of the 1978 election campaign, which exposed the Left alliance as a facade incapable of generating the unity of purpose required for effective government.

But one must exercise caution in thinking of PCF maneuvers, and thus evaluating their successes and failures, in the conventional terms of consensus politics. In this regard, it is unlikely that the PCF formulated its new defense doctrine in hopes of winning Socialist acceptance, or even as the basis for starting interparty negotiations. On the contrary, the elements of their sanctuarisation policy seemed designed more to distinguish than to blur fundamental differences with the PS. If this served to keep the PCF's identity intact during the election campaign, it also has carried over as a barrier to any post-election cooperation among the Left on defense matters. Though the PCF has put itself in a position of having to support, for the sake of consistency, at least some of the government's nuclear armament programs, on all other defense issues (save conscription) it has isolated itself from the government as well as the other opposition parties (with the possible exception of some recalcitrant Gaullists). Meanwhile, the PS has moved much closer to President Giscard's defense objectives as outlined in the Fourth Program Law. With the present alignment of French political forces, over the short run this can only strengthen Giscard's hand in the realm of defense and foreign policy. But for the PCF, this is clearly an acceptable alternative to the possible adulterations of Party goals which could result from a real partnership in a Left coalition.

Ultimately then, the new defense policy of nuclear deterrence elucidated by the PCF has served to illuminate the Party's true feelings toward France's participation in the Western security system and to shed some light on the rhetorical obfuscations generated by the emergence of Eurocommunism. And as this analysis indicates, despite official Communist declarations of support for the Atlantic Alliance and despite endorsements of national defense, the new policy simply reflects new tactics for pursuing old goals. Perhaps Jacques Chirac puts it most succinctly when he concludes that:

... the French nuclear striking force is acceptable to the French Communist Party only as a tool for a policy of autarky, isolationism, and neutralism as well as for a policy attempting to alter the solidarity of the Atlantic Alliance and the unity of the destinies of the people of Western Europe.¹⁰⁶

ENDNOTES

1. For a short analytical account of Kanapa's statement, see *Le Monde* (Paris), 13 May 1977, p. 1.
2. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 16 May 1977, p. 7.
3. See Charles de Gaulle, *Memoirs of Hope: Renewal and Endeavor* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1971), pp. 199-209; and France, Ministry of Defense, *French White Paper on National Defense*, Vol. 1 (Hereinafter referred to as *French White Paper*) (New York: Ambassade de France, Service de Presse et d'Information, 1972), pp. 9-12. For a detailed analysis of the forces that influence French foreign policy, see Alan Ned Sabrosky, "French Foreign Policy Alternatives," *Orbis* 19 (Winter 1976): 1429-1447.
4. See M. Valery Giscard d'Estaing, "Allocution a l'Institut des Hautes Etudes de Defense Nationale," *Defense Nationale* 32 (July 1976): 12-13. For an English translation, see "French Defense Policy: Address by President Giscard d'Estaing, 1 June 1976," *Survival* 18 (September/October 1976): 228-229.
5. *Le Monde* (Paris), 17 June 1976, p. 9.
6. General G. Mery, "Une armee pour quoi faire et comment?" *Defense Nationale* 32 (June 1976): 14. For an English translation see "French Defense Policy: Comments by General Guy Mery, 15 March 1976," *Survival* 18 (September/October 1976): 226.
7. de Gaulle, *Memoirs of Hope*, p. 202.
8. *Observer* (London), 20 June 1976, p. 10.
9. *Le Monde* (Paris), 17 June 1976, p. 9.
10. Paris Domestic Service release (Press Conference by President Giscard d'Estaing) of 1700 GMT, 22 June 1977, as cited in *Foreign Broadcast Information Service-Western Europe* (Hereinafter referred to as *FBIS-WEU*), 23 June 1977, p. K1.
11. *Le Monde* (Paris), 13 May 1977, p. 13. Also see de Gaulle, *Memoirs of Hope*, p. 209.
12. Raymond Aron, "French Deterrent Capabilities and the Atlantic Alliance," *The Atlantic Community Quarterly* 15 (Summer 1977): 161-162.
13. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 16 May 1977, p. 7. Emphasis added.

14. Aron, "French Deterrent Capabilities and the Atlantic Alliance," p. 163. For General Ailleret's views, see "French Strategy: Directed Defence," *Survival* 10 (February 1968): 38-43.
15. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 28 October 1977, p. 3. For a brief account of the French Left's appraisal of the Allende example, see P. J. Friedrich, "Defense and the French Political Left," *Survival* 16 (July/August 1974): 168-169. Also see Ronald Tiersky, "French Communism in 1976," *Problems of Communism* 25 (January/February 1976): 20.
16. See *Le Monde* (Paris), 13 May 1977, p. 13; and Paris Domestic Service release (interview with Georges Marchais) of 1100 GMT, 10 August 1977, as cited in *FBIS-WEU*, 11 August 1977, p. K3.
17. Graeme P. Auton, "Nuclear Deterrence and the Medium Power: A Proposal for Doctrinal Change in the British and French Cases," *Orbis* 20 (Summer 1976): 367-399; and Geoffrey Kemp, *Nuclear Forces for Medium Powers*, 3 pts., Adelphi Papers, no. 106 (London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1974).
18. For an example of the PCF's "humanist" argument, see *L'Humanite* (Paris), 30 September 1977, p. 1.
19. *Le Monde* (Paris), 24 June 1977, p. 2.
20. Paris Domestic Service release (interview with Georges Marchais) of 1100 GMT, 10 August 1977, as cited in *FBIS-WEU*, 11 August 1977, p. K3.
21. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 29 July 1977, p. 1.
22. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 25 August 1977, p. 6.
23. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 16 May 1977, p. 7. Also see *L'Humanite* (Paris), 25 August 1977, pp. 1, 6.
24. *Le Monde* (Paris), 13 May 1977, p. 13. For an official French view of Moscow's fear of a supranational Europe, see Paris Domestic Service release (interview with President Giscard d'Estaing) of 1700 GMT, 22 June 1977, as cited in *FBIS-WEU*, 23 June 1977, p. K1. For a more detailed analysis of Soviet motives, see Christoph Bertram, *Mutual Force Reductions in Europe: The Political Aspect*, Adelphi Papers, no. 84 (London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1972).
25. *Le Monde* (Paris), 13 May 1977, p. 13. Emphasis added.

26. Paris Domestic Service release (interview with Georges Marchais) of 1100 GMT, 10 August 1977, as cited in *FBIS-WEU*, 11 August 1977, p. K2.
27. See *Manchester Guardian*, 22 May 1977, p. 11; and *New York Times*, 25 September 1977, p. 1.
28. Michael M. Harrison, "The Foreign and Defense Policy of a Socialist France," *The Atlantic Community Quarterly* 13 (Fall 1975): 347.
29. See *Le Monde* (Paris), 6 August 1977, p. 4; and *Stern* (Hamburg), 8 September 1977, pp. 48, 232.
30. *Le Monde* (Paris), 27 July 1977, p. 6.
31. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 30 September 1977, p. 1.
32. For indications of the PCF's attitude toward the "American umbrella," see *L'Humanite* (Paris), 14 October 1977, p. 4; and 24 January 1978, p. 3.
33. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 30 September 1977, pp. 1, 5.
34. *Le Monde* (Paris), 9 August 1977, p. 5.
35. *Le Monde* (Paris), 11 November 1977, p. 9.
36. See *Le Monde* (Paris), 14 December 1977, pp. 1, 19; and 15 December 1977, p. 14.
37. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 15 December 1977, p. 8.
38. *Le Monde* (Paris), 9 August 1977, p. 5.
39. See *Stern* (Hamburg), 8 September 1977, pp. 48, 232.
40. See *L'Humanite* (Paris), 30 September 1977, p. 1.
41. See *Le Monde* (Paris), 9 August 1977, p. 5.
42. *Times* (London), 9 August 1977, p. 4.
43. For assessments of the Soviet nuclear threat to France and Western Europe, see Richard Burt, "The SS-20 and the Eurostrategic Balance," *The World Today* 33 (February 1977): 43-51; and Herbert F. York, "The Nuclear 'Balance of Terror' in Europe," *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 32 (March 1976): 8-17.
44. Citations from Barre's speech are contained in Raymond Barre, "Discours prononce' au Camp de Mailly le 18 juin 1977," *Defense Nationale* 33 (August-September 1977): 11-12. For an

English translation, see "French Nuclear Strategy: Two Views," *Survival* 19 (September-October 1977): 226.

45. Ronald Tiersky, "The French Communist Party and Detente," *Journal of International Affairs* 28 (1974): 190.

46. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 6 July 1976, p. 3.

47. Marie Claude Smouts, "French Foreign Policy: The Domestic Debate," *International Affairs* 53 (January 1977): 38.

48. For an analysis of what motivates the French Communist vote, see Neil McInnes, *The Communist Parties of Western Europe* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp. 28-35. For a brief account of the basis for PCF agreement with orthodox Gaullists over defense policy, see Jean Klein, "France, NATO and European Security," *International Security* 1 (Winter 1977): 21.

49. Michael M. Harrison, "A Socialist Foreign Policy for France?" *Orbis* 19 (Winter 1976): 1478.

50. After failing to reach an agreement in September 1977 on an updated version of the Common Program, both parties looked upon the March 1978 elections as an opportunity to improve their bargaining position in the Left alliance, which also includes the much smaller Left-Radical Party of Robert Fabre, by increasing their percentage of the total vote. This led to serious competition between the PS and PCF for the left-wing vote, a battle which the Socialists had high expectations of winning. But with the Socialists failing to improve their relative position with 23 percent of the vote and the Communists holding their own at 21 percent in the first round of the election, the two parties will enter the post-election period with rough parity. Whether this will cause the Socialists to be more amenable to compromise on defense issues remains to be seen, but indications are that the PS has moved even further from the PCF positions. With the Giscard government remaining in power, however, a reconciliation of PS-PCF differences is less urgent, though the shape of a PS-PCF agreement could have important consequences for the government if the Left alliance became a united opposition bloc in the National Assembly—a rather remote possibility in view of their past record of cooperation. See *L'Humanite* (Paris), 20 January 1978, p. 3; *Le Monde* (Paris), 4 February 1978, p. 8; and *The Washington Post*, 14 March 1978, p. 1; and 21 March 1978, pp. 1, 11.

51. See *French White Paper*, 1972, pp. 57-59; and France, *Ministere de la Defense, Les Armees Francaises de Demain: Programmation 1977-1982* (Hereinafter referred to as *Defense Program, 1977-1982*) (Paris: Sirpa, 1976), p. 8.
52. For a detailed account of the PCF's reasons for supporting conscription, see Michel L. Martin, "Conscription and the Decline of the Mass Army in France, 1960-1975," *Armed Forces and Society* 3 (Spring 1977): 355-406.
53. See *Defense Program, 1977-1982*, pp. 6-11; "France's Defense Policy," *Military Review* 57 (February 1977): 26-36; and Robert R. Ropelewski, "French Push Updated Conventional Forces," *Aviation Week and Space Technology* 104 (14 June 1976): 21-22.
54. See *The Military Balance, 1976-1977* (London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1977), p. 78.
55. See James O. Goldsborough, "The Franco-German Entente," *Foreign Affairs* 54 (April 1976): 502; and James Bellini, *French Defense Policy* (London: Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, 1974), pp. 12-13. For evidence that the government's increased emphasis on strengthening the armed forces derives from a perception of France's enhanced industrial and commercial status, see *Le Monde* (Paris), 20 December 1977, p. 4.
56. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 11 November 1977, p. 3.
57. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 14 October 1977, p. 4. Emphasis added.
58. *Le Monde* (Paris), 13 May 1977, p. 13.
59. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 16 May 1977, p. 7.
60. *Le Monde* (Paris), 13 May 1977, p. 13.
61. See Robert L. Ropelewski, "French Emphasizing Nuclear Weapons," *Aviation Week and Space Technology* 105 (2 August 1976): 43; and *Le Figaro* (Paris), 30 November 1977, p. 3. The increases will result primarily from the installation of higher yield and multiple warheads in existing missile systems.
62. See *Le Figaro* (Paris), 2 February 1978, p. 6.
63. See *L'Humanite* (Paris), 11 November 1977, p. 3. The fifth nuclear submarine is now under construction with an expected delivery in 1979 or 1980. A sixth submarine was originally planned for delivery around 1982, but has been delayed pending studies of

new submarine technology, missiles, and warheads. See Ropelewski, "French Pushing Updated Conventional Forces," p. 22.

64. See *Le Monde* (Paris), 19 November 1977, p. 15. Of course, in addition to not offering a counterforce target on French soil (except for its bases and communication links), the submarine has the added advantage of being more "survivable" than land-based strategic delivery systems.

65. See *Le Monde* (Paris), 13 May 1977, p. 13; and *Le Figaro* (Paris), 10 November 1977, p. 4. Without improvements the Mirage IV will become obsolete in the early 1980's.

66. Ibid.

67. See Ropelewski, "French Emphasizing Nuclear Weapons," p. 43.

68. See *Le Figaro* (Paris), 13 September 1977, p. 5; Paris Domestic Service release of 1700 GMT, 22 May 1977, as cited in *FBIS-WEU*, 27 May 1977, p. K4; French presently employ Mirage IV's for strategic reconnaissance, which imposes severe restrictions on peacetime coverage.

69. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 5 January 1978, p. 3.

70. *Le Monde* (Paris), 19 November 1977, p. 15.

71. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 5 January 1978, p. 3.

72. *Le Monde* (Paris), 10 November 1977, pp. 1, 16. Also see Centre de Prospective et d' Evaluations (ed.), *La Defense en Chiffres*, 1977 (Paris: Sirpa, 1977).

73. Paris Domestic Service release (Interview with Defense Minister Yvon Bourges) of 1100 GMT, 30 August 1977, as cited in *FBIS-WEU*, 31 August 1977, p. K1.

74. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 30 September 1977, p. 1.

75. Jacques Chirac, "France: Illusions, Temptations, Ambitions," *Foreign Affairs* 56 (April 1978): 491.

76. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 10 January 1978, p. 8.

77. See Andre Vieuguet, "Vanguard Role in the Mass Movement," *World Marxist Review* 19 (July 1977): 46-54; and Jean Kanapa, "Communism's New Policy," *Foreign Affairs* 55 (January 1977): 286.

78. See R. Neal Tannahill, "The Future of the Communist Parties of Western Europe," *World Affairs* 139 (Fall 1976): 141-154; and Friedrich, "Defense and the French Political Left," pp. 165-171.
79. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 10 January 1978, p. 8. Emphasis added.
80. Kanapa, "Communism's 'New Policy'," p. 291.
81. Harrison, "The Foreign and Defense Policy of a Socialist France," p. 354. Also see James E. Dougherty and Diana K. Pfaltzgraff, *Eurocommunism and the Atlantic Alliance* (Cambridge: Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, 1977), pp. 44-46.
82. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 5 September 1977, p. 6.
83. See *New York Times*, 31 July 1977, p. 5.
84. *Le Monde* (Paris), 1 February 1978, p. 8.
85. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 4 January 1978, p. 3.
86. For accounts of Giscard's German and European policies, see Goldsborough, "Franco-American Entente," pp. 496-510; and Michael Leigh, "Giscard and the European Community," *The World Today* 33 (February 1977): 73-80. For Mitterrand's pledge to continue the Franco-German alliance, see Hamburg DPA, 27 March 1977, as cited in *FBIS-WEU*, 28 March 1977, p. K5.
87. For a framework of analysis to evaluate the impact of Eurocommunism on PCF foreign policy, see Roy C. Macridis, "Eurocommunism," *The Yale Review* 67 (March 1978): 321-337. In short, while concluding that there is presently no evidence to substantiate PCF independence from Moscow, Macridis poses three criteria for future assessments: "(1) the time framework, (2) the policy 'stakes', and (3) the manner in which . . . [the PCF] reacts to Soviet cues."
88. France has made some positive moves to cooperate in NATO standardization. See US, Congress, House, Committee on International Relations, *NATO Standardization: Political, Economic, and Military Issues for Congress*, Report by Congressional Research Service, 95th Cong., 1st sess., (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1977), pp. 16-19.
89. For Mery's remarks, see Mery, "Une armee pour quoi faire et comment?" pp. 16-19. Also see "France and NATO: Count Us In," *The Economist* 259 (5 June 1976): 46, 49.

90. Giscard, "Allocution a l'Institut des Hautes Etudes de Defense Nationale," pp. 15-16. For a critical appraisal of forward sanctuarisation by Jacques Isnard, see *Le Monde* (Paris), 11 June 1976, pp. 1, 12. Also see an article by Michel Tatu in *Le Monde* (Paris), 12 June 1976, pp. 1, 11.
91. Barre, "Discours prononce' au Camp de Mailly," pp. 8, 14.
92. Paris Domestic Service release (Interview with Paul Laurent, member of the PCF Secretariat) of 1725 GMT, 20 July 1976, as cited in *FBIS-WEU*, 2 August 1976, p. K1.
93. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 6 July 1976, p. 3. Also see *L'Humanite* (Paris), 20 June 1977, p. 3.
94. East Berlin Voice of the GDR Domestic Service (Joint PCF-DKP Statement), 1005 GMT, 6 July 1976, as cited in *FBIS-WEU*, 7 July 1976, p. K2.
95. *Le Monde* (Paris), 13 May 1977, p. 13.
96. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 23 June 1976, p. 7.
97. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 29 July 1977, pp. 1, 3.
98. Quoted in *L'Humanite* (Paris), 30 November 1977, pp. 1, 8.
99. *Le Soir* (Brussels), 25 January 1978, p. 3.
100. See Paris Domestic Service releases of 6 and 7 January 1978, as cited in *FBIS-WEU*, 9 January 1978, pp. K3-K6. For a synopsis of Kissinger's arguments, see Henry Kissinger, *Communist Parties in Western Europe: Challenge to the West* (Washington: American Enterprise Institute, 1977). Also see *L'Humanite* (Paris), 17 January 1978, p. 8.
101. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 30 November 1977, pp. 1, 8. Emphasis added.
102. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 16 January 1978, p. 7.
103. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 14 January 1978, pp. 1, 6. Also see *Le Monde* (Paris), 14 January 1978, p. 1.
104. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 30 September 1977, pp. 1, 5.
105. *L'Humanite* (Paris), 23 June 1976, p. 7. Emphasis added.
106. Chirac, "France: Illusions, Temptations, Ambitions," p. 492.

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