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NATO, the Subjective Alliance

The Debate Over the Future

Robert A. Levine

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PREFACE

This report is part of a project entitled "Still the Arms Debate," supported by The Ford Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation, and The RAND Corporation. This report received additional assistance from the Atlantic Institute for International Affairs. It analyzes the range of differing views on national and international security policy in the 1980s. The questions asked are: *What* are the issues over which those who debate arms policy in the 1980s differ? *Why*—logically, not psychologically or politically—do they differ? *How* have these differences developed from the debates of the 1960s? The policy objective of the project is to increase understanding of the premises and lines of reasoning that cause people to disagree and, by improving the debate, to improve the making of security policy in the United States and other Western democracies where the debate matters.

The long-run antecedent for the project is the author's 1963 book, *The Arms Debate*,¹ which asked the same questions a quarter of a century ago. The report is the third of three, which together will form the basis of a new volume, *Still the Arms Debate*. The first report was entitled *The Arms Debate and the Third World: Have We Learned From Vietnam?*² The second was *The Strategic Arms Debate*.³ In addition to those reports, a paper published by the UCLA Center for International and Strategic Affairs, "The SDI Debate as a Continuation of History," discussed a current central manifestation of the debate over nuclear weapons policy and arms control.⁴

¹Robert A. Levine, *The Arms Debate*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1963.

²Robert A. Levine, *The Arms Debate and the Third World: Have We Learned From Vietnam?* The RAND Corporation, R-3523-FF/CC/RC, May 1987.

³Robert A. Levine, *The Strategic Nuclear Debate*, The RAND Corporation, R-3565-FF/CC/RC, October 1987.

⁴Robert A. Levine, "The SDI Debate as a Continuation of History," CISA Working Paper No. 55, Center for International and Strategic Affairs, University of California, Los Angeles, March 1986.



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SUMMARY

NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, is an alliance formed in 1948 and armed in the early 1950s in reaction to a perceived military and political threat to Western Europe from the Soviet Union. In the intervening three and a half decades, the perception of the threat has changed: The fear of direct military aggression has lessened, and Alliance concerns have centered on subtler Soviet pressures to drive the United States out of Europe and exploit Warsaw Pact military preponderance to gain political and economic ends in Western Europe. NATO has countered the Pact's conventional weight as well as the Soviet nuclear threat with nuclear deterrence based on the coupling of NATO defenses to U.S. strategic nuclear forces.

As the central fear has shifted away from direct aggression, Alliance debates have increasingly been based on perceptions: perceptions of the objectives and strategies of the Soviets, but, perhaps even more important, perceptions by the allies of one another. A strong NATO has been the chief counterweight to the Soviet presence, and this strength has depended on the mutual satisfaction of the needs perceived by Alliance members. In particular, the key role of the American nuclear deterrent has led Europeans to focus on ensuring that the U.S. commitment to their defense remains strong; Americans have stressed the maintenance of this commitment while reducing the risks of having to use nuclear weapons to implement it. The resulting reassurances and recriminations define the "subjective alliance" in the title of this report.

Basic to the debate has been the perception of a Soviet opponent that although it has used varying tactics has pursued a constant set of hostile objectives and a constant strategy of exploiting Alliance weaknesses. Suddenly in the mid-1980s, however, this constancy has been thrown into question by the new Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev. Gorbachev has made radical changes, at least in Soviet tactics; a central question for debate in the West is whether he has also changed Soviet objectives, moving away from hostility and toward mutual accommodation, and if so, whether it (or he) can last.

Whatever the degree of Soviet change, however, it has begun to transmute the NATO debate, as internal concerns adapt to modifications in the external environment that spawned the Alliance. Some of these internal changes have been traumatic and have led to strong recriminations within NATO. The future of the Alliance itself has been questioned, but this report predicts that it will survive in much its

current state, at least until the Soviet Union proves itself to be a very different entity from that of the last 40 years. The report's normative conclusions are that NATO's survival is crucial to European stability and Western security and that carefully considered arms control agreements between the Alliance and the Warsaw Pact, which now may be possible, can enhance both.

The schools of thought in the NATO debate are divided by the Atlantic Ocean, but neither West Europeans nor Americans form a tight-knit grouping around a unified set of viewpoints. The report divides officials and analysts in each of the two regions into a major and a minor school in terms of influence; and each major school covers a broad range of views. Indeed, European and American views overlap substantially, and the overlap is increased by "resonance," the attempt to strengthen Alliance cohesion by accepting partner members' positions that might have otherwise been opposed. Nonetheless, going-in standpoints are necessarily very different between Europeans and Americans. Europeans interpret self-preservation as including protection of their lives and civilizations from conventional conflict that could be more destructive than World War II and from nuclear holocaust, and also from Soviet domination; Americans feel threatened mainly by the potential escalation of nuclear warfare to their homeland, but they recognize a vital stake in Western Europe. These different interests lead to a different choice of salient issues, and ultimately to different policy choices. In particular, the West European concern about the strength of the American commitment, a largely political issue, is translated by the Americans into worry about the military side of the same coin, the "threshold" level at which nuclear weapons will have to be used to avoid conventional defeat. These differences are reinforced by a European historical and philosophical tendency to think of international strategies in political terms, whereas American policymakers lean toward the more directly military.

The major European school of thought is:

- *The Couplers*, which includes the governments of all European NATO members in the late 1980s, and major segments of the opposition parties at least in the three major ones, France, Great Britain, and the Federal Republic of Germany. The Couplers' defining concern is the continued coupling of the U.S. nuclear deterrent to the defense of the Alliance. Since the early 1970s, the onset of "strategic parity" between the United States and the Soviet Union has created doubts in Europe about America's willingness to honor its commitment to European defense, with nuclear weapons if necessary. More recently, these doubts have

been exacerbated by what many Europeans have seen as the erratic behavior of American presidents—first, President Carter's inconstancy about the neutron bomb, then President Reagan's yawning from the "Evil Empire" speech to the surprise of SDI, through the Libyan raid, to the second surprise, his plunge into negotiations with Gorbachev at Reykjavik without previous consultation with his allies.

The culmination for many Couplers was the "zero-zero" treaty, which did away with all land-based intermediate-range (500–5,000 kilometer) missiles on both sides. Since the late 1970s, European NATO members had been counting on the Europe-based Intermediate-Range Nuclear Force (INF) to fill a gap in the "flexible response" chain of deterrence. To mollify political opposition to INF within member nations, however, in 1981 NATO proposed the zeroing out of intermediate missiles on both sides if the Soviets would agree. The proposal was made in the sure belief that Brezhnev would not agree; he didn't, but Gorbachev did, to the shock of the Alliance. Although the treaty later gained general acceptance, at least as a *fait accompli*, the initial agreement made by the Reagan administration without consulting the allies had a traumatic effect on the perceptions of West Europeans, many of whom saw it as the first slide down the "slippery slope" of full denuclearization and removal of the American deterrent. One result of this trauma has been increasing doubt on the part of some Couplers as to the reliability of the U.S. commitment, leading to symbolic moves toward a European grouping, either as a stronger "pillar" for NATO or as a possible long-range substitute. Increased Franco-German security cooperation has been seen by some as the core of such a new grouping, but differing national interests have kept this cooperation largely symbolic. In any case, not all German Couplers, and few in Britain, share either the fears of U.S. decoupling or the need to grasp at a potential European substitute.

On more strictly military issues, the Couplers have understood American fears of setting the conventional-nuclear threshold too low, with NATO conventional capabilities so meager that, if the Soviets were to attack, the president of the United States would be faced with an almost-immediate decision to accept Alliance defeat or escalate to nuclear weapons. Most Couplers favor raising the threshold, if for no other reason than the fear that an immediate decision by the president might be a decision to give up Europe to preserve the American homeland. Others, however,

counter with the possibility that too high a threshold might signify decreased American willingness to go nuclear at all, thereby weakening the deterrent. In any case, most West Europeans have favored in the abstract the strengthening of conventional capabilities, although no governments have been willing to raise necessary budgets substantially. The Europeans put less weight than the Americans on potential technological remedies to the conventional imbalance, or on "deep" strategies striking at the enemy's rear. Some Couplers worry that the deep strategies may smack of NATO offensive intentions inconsistent with a defensive alliance, or that they might otherwise provoke the Soviets; this is particularly true among West Germans who are aware of continued latent fear of German aggression.

Indeed, although the Couplers tend to think as Europeans in terms of their concerns and their approaches, national differences among France, Britain, and Germany, as well as the smaller members, are also visible on several issues.

- The French act more self-sufficiently than the others, enjoying general voter support for maintenance of their completely independent nuclear force and their refusal to rejoin NATO's integrated military structure. In addition, as *philosophes* who tend to take intellectual constructs to their logical ends, the French, more than other European NATO members, fear the effect of the zero-zero agreement on U.S. decoupling. They have also feared decoupling longer than any one else, long before zero-zero or strategic parity; that is a major reason why de Gaulle created the independent deterrent. One result of recent acute decoupling fears is that the French have been ardent suitors for German defense cooperation. French guardianship of their own freedom of action, however, has made them unwilling to give the Germans absolute guarantees of mutual action against attack on Germany, although this may be changing. Nor have the French been able to wean the Germans from the integrated military structure, which would be necessary were NATO to move from its U.S.-dependent Atlantic orientation to a more purely European Franco-German core. In any case, actual French military policy has differed from announced philosophy; in unofficial ways, the French have continued military cooperation with the rest of the Alliance, and they are counted upon in case of Soviet attack.

- The British are far more relaxed about the American commitment than are the French. They see a possible gradual weakening of the commitment, and a need in any case for a strengthening of the European pillar, but these are long-run evolutions that will be affected by ongoing events. Chief among these events in the late 1980s have been the changes in Soviet policy brought about by Gorbachev, and many British Couplers take them quite seriously, believing that it is Soviet rather than American changes that may transform the character of the Alliance. Unlike the French, the British are not united over defense policy. Although the Conservative government is firmly Coupler, as is a small portion of the Labour Party on the left and much of the smaller Liberal/Social Democratic group in the middle, the majority-supported official party position of Labour opposes NATO nuclear deterrence and defense.
- The West Germans are more divided than either of the other two major European NATO nations. A large portion of the opposition Socialist Party—whether it is a majority of the party is not clear—takes a position similar to that of the British Labour Party, and the small Green Party is more extreme. In addition, the Coupler establishment itself, made up of the government coalition plus the more moderate portion of the Socialists, covers a broader range of views than in France or Britain. The right wing of the establishment combines French fears of American decoupling with their own deep suspicions of Gorbachev's motives. Other Couplers are far more relaxed, on the British model, and have welcomed the zero-zero agreement. What the German Couplers come together on, however, is the Federal Republic's continued dependence on the American nuclear deterrent and the consequent continued commitment to NATO. For this reason, although fears of U.S. decoupling push Germany toward greater defense cooperation with France, the dilemma of NATO military integration with its American connection, versus nonintegration with its French connection, has precluded moves by the Germans to a more than symbolic connection with the French. Another German consensus, based on the existence of East Germany with its common language and history, is a substantially stronger concern with the nations of the Soviet bloc than is evidenced in the rest of Western Europe. The worry of some other Europeans,

particularly French, that the Federal Republic's interest in the East might draw it away from NATO is denied by German Couplers, who are far more realistic than implied by French fears of German nostalgia for *Mitteleuropa*.

Some of the fears and inconsistencies of the Couplers can be traced back to the felt political threat of the smaller European school of thought to the left. Although it is not powerful electorally, the anti-INF demonstrations mounted by this school in the early 1980s affected the beliefs of Coupler governments about what they can and cannot do.

- *The Removers* are the European peace movement, no longer closely connected, as they were in the early 1960s, with the American peace movement. The connection has attenuated because the American movement emphasizes getting rid of U.S. and Soviet strategic nuclear weapons, whereas the Removers, parallel to the European mainstream Couplers, concentrate on European issues. The defining characteristic of the Removers is their desire to remove nuclear weapons from Europe. The radical end of the school, including German church groups, the German Greens, and the left wings of the British Labour Party and some parties in the Low Countries and Scandinavia (the school is insignificant in France), also want to get the United States out of Europe and do away with NATO. The moderates, however, including the leadership and the majority of the British Labour Party and that indeterminate portion of the German Socialists not counted among the Couplers, are interested in future electoral success, for which they feel continued endorsement of NATO is necessary. Labour, for example, contested the 1987 British election on a platform that called for doing away with the British nuclear deterrent, with the savings to go toward strengthening the British conventional contribution to NATO. They also wanted to remove all U.S. nuclear weapons from the United Kingdom, but contended that this was consistent with Alliance membership. In Germany, the Socialist Party, striking a balance between its Removers and Couplers, did not advocate doing away with nuclear deterrence in Europe, but did promise that, if elected, it would remove American INF missiles from German soil. The platform added a weaker "request" for removal of Soviet missiles, and the party was somewhat embarrassed when the zero-zero agreement went beyond them and did away with Soviet as well as American intermediate-range weapons. In any case, the Socialists continued to endorse NATO, as well as backing such militaristic devices as conscription.

In addition to their negative antinuclear stance, the Removers set forth a positive proposal for "defensive defenses" against Soviet conventional attack. The central point of this concept is the substitution of in-place antitank defenses for NATO tank forces, which could be used offensively against the Warsaw Pact.

Ironically, the American school of thought that corresponds most closely to the European Removers of the left is mainly on the right end of the U.S. political spectrum. It is far smaller in proportion to its electorate than are the Removers, but like them it helps define the bounds of the pro-NATO mainstream.

- *The Withdrawers* want the United States to get out of NATO, or at least to decrease its commitment sharply. The right-wing Withdrawers, most of those in the school, base this in part on traditional American isolationism, but in greater part on strong anticommunism. They believe that the West Europeans are soft on the Soviets, in part out of fear but also because they want to profit from doing business with the East. The Withdrawers also believe that the strong U.S. commitment to Europe dilutes American power, which should be devoted to the global anticommunist mission of confronting the Soviets in parts of the world where the danger is greater than in Europe. They also stress burden-sharing, the belief that the Europeans should be doing more for their own defense, relieving the United States of much of the cost.

Many in the American mainstream emphasize burden-sharing, and some also join the Withdrawers in the belief that the United States should pay more attention to its global interests. Some well-known Americans, notably former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and former National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, have used these views as premises for recommending a restructuring of NATO; consequently some European Couplers lump them together with the American Withdrawers. There is a sharp distinction, however: Far from advocating withdrawal from NATO, Kissinger's and Brzezinski's centrist proposals are designed to strengthen the Alliance for the long haul.

The Withdrawers of the right are joined by those few members of the American peace movement on the left who pay any attention to NATO. They do not share the anticommunism of the rightists, but for other reasons having to do with reduction of the danger of nuclear conflict starting from war in Europe, they join in the withdrawal prescription. Also in the Withdrawer school

are some advocates of a strong Navy who believe that American power worldwide should be sea- rather than land-based.

The mainstream American school covers a broad band of American officials and analysts, including those who disagree strongly with one another about such non-NATO matters of defense policy as strategic nuclear weapons and policy for the Third World.

- *The Maintainers* comprise the large majority of the Americans who participate in the NATO debate. They are defined by their desire to maintain the American commitment, including the ultimate nuclear commitment, to the deterrence of Soviet attack against Western Europe and to the defense of Europe if need be. Although the Maintainers differ with one another on many NATO-related matters, as well as disagreeing strongly on other security issues, they come together on three propositions related to the Alliance: first, that the conventional-nuclear threshold should be kept as high as possible to preclude an American president from having to make the choice between losing in Europe or commencing nuclear war; second, to do this, NATO's conventional capabilities should be increased (but how to pay for it is difficult to say); and third, that the American commitment to the Alliance is and should remain strong.

The first proposition concerning the high threshold, the American military analog to the European political focus on the U.S. commitment, is particularly important to the Maintainers. They do not want the commitment to NATO to draw the United States into a premature nuclear war; they want NATO to be able to defend itself conventionally well enough to avoid such a war, or at least long enough to avoid an immediate nuclear decision. To this end, the Maintainers pay a great deal of attention to the way in which a war in Europe might be fought and the way the threshold decision might be approached. From 1979 to 1987 they debated, first about the role of INF in deterrence in Europe, and then about the role of the INF-removing zero-zero agreement as it might affect deterrence. Some Maintainers contend that President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) raises the threshold; others disagree (as do most Couplers). A few suggest a policy of No First Use of nuclear weapons by NATO; most feel that so high a threshold for nuclear use would remove the necessary nuclear element from deterrence of Soviet conventional attack. (Almost all European Couplers take the No First Use policy more seriously than most Americans and are quite

frightened by the potential loss of deterrence.) The Maintainer consensus re-forms, however, around No *Early Use* of nuclear weapons, which is another term for a high threshold, the first proposition.

The consensus also holds on the second proposition, increased conventional capabilities, as the single most important contributor to the first. Most Maintainers are convinced that current capabilities will allow little time between the onset of conventional war in Europe and the nuclear decision, and they want to improve matters. To this end, they stress the need for increased contributions to conventional defense by the European members of the Alliance. Even if this is achieved, however, few believe that NATO will pay for conventional forces that will do more than substantially delay a well-conceived Soviet attack. The Maintainers, more than the Couplers, then turn to new technologies or "deep" strategies to right the balance. Here too, however, doubts are strong. More recently, some hopes have been expressed that perhaps conventional arms controls can help.

In spite of their doubts about conventional capabilities, the Maintainers hold strongly to the third proposition, the continued U.S. commitment to NATO. Even in the 1984 Senate debate over the Nunn Amendment, which was an attempt to use the threat of somewhat decreased American troop levels in Europe to force greater European burden-sharing, Senator Nunn and others proclaimed the continued U.S. commitment, no matter what. And in the American debate before the signing of the 1987 zero-zero agreement, a chief point made by the opponents was based on transatlantic resonance: that regardless of the military facts of INF, the West Europeans considered it essential to their security and it therefore should not be negotiated away. The proponents of zero-zero took other steps to reassure the Europeans—e.g., a House of Representatives resolution to continue existing American troop levels in Europe. Indeed, one of the ironies of the zero-zero debate was that Kissinger, who a few years previously had upset the Europeans with his proposals for restructuring NATO, opposed the agreement on grounds that it would disturb the Alliance. The earlier Kissinger proposal was for some replacement by Europeans of American troops in Europe, together with a concomitant increase in European responsibilities. Brzezinski's proposal was similar. Both were attempts to strengthen the Alliance; neither envisioned any weakening of the ultimate American commitment to the defense,

including the nuclear defense, of Western Europe. And neither has been taken very seriously by other Maintainers; and considering the eminence of their authors, that indicates general Maintainer satisfaction with the Alliance as it is.

The Kissinger and Brzezinski proposals may imply some conscious building of the "European pillar" of the Alliance, but as Americans, the Maintainers tend to avoid explicit comment on the European concept or the Franco-German version. Implicitly some seem to welcome the burden-sharing implications of the pillar, others to fear the potential weakening of the American tie (and perhaps American dominance of NATO). One Maintainer attitude, however, is based on negative resonance with some Couplers: Some Europeans fear American abandonment, which leads them to proposals for European substitution; some Americans read these proposals and propose further withdrawals because of the potential European substitutions.

In any case, although resonance, positive and negative, may blur the differences between the major American and European schools, the distinction between the Maintainers and the Couplers remains quite clear. In four key areas:

- The Maintainers might accept a strengthened European pillar, but most would prefer to keep the Alliance as it is; the Couplers want to begin serious movement toward a pillar and perhaps a parallel alliance within (or, in the extreme, even outside) NATO.
- The Maintainers want stronger conventional capabilities even if it takes more money, particularly European money; the Couplers fear that they may have to spend more.
- The Maintainers believe that nuclear deterrence is necessary but dangerous, and they want to raise the threshold; the Couplers see nuclear deterrence as basic to their security, but they are willing to raise the threshold, at least in resonance to American desires, if it doesn't cost too much.
- The Maintainers believe that the United States has worldwide responsibilities; the Couplers are afraid of American diversion from Europe.

In one area crucial to all the others, although a broad range of views exists on both sides of the Atlantic, the differences do not divide the Maintainers and the Couplers. The issue is the interpretation of Soviet objectives and strategies. Before Gorbachev, views differed

widely; the differences have tended to carry over to the "new" USSR, although their relative weights may have changed. On one end, before Gorbachev, were the American and West European Sovietologists who saw every Soviet move as a tactic to disrupt the Alliance or otherwise gain the objective of dominating Europe by driving the United States out. On the other end were those who believed that the Soviets were willing to seek these objectives opportunistically, but that in recent years their primary efforts had been simply to maintain their position in Western Europe and, particularly, in their East European empire. No Maintainer or Coupler Sovietologists were willing to attribute to the Soviets any real desire to move toward a new, more stable, and balanced equilibrium in Europe.

Although some doubts existed about Gorbachev's real departure from this pattern, before and after he succeeded Chernenko, more recently nobody has questioned that he is in fact different, and makes a difference. For those who were suspicious before, the difference is that of a brilliant new set of tactics, perhaps amounting to a new strategy, and if we are not careful these tactics are likely to provide the Soviets with far more success than in the past in reaching their European objectives. For those on the other end, it *may* be that the Soviets have really changed their objectives, if not for all time at least for a long enough foreseeable future to create a new, more comfortable, and less armed balance in Europe. The emphasis must be on "may," however; nobody among the Maintainers or Couplers has been willing to place a large bet on new Soviet good will, if for no other reason than the substantial uncertainty, whatever Gorbachev's "real" objectives, as to whether he can overcome internal obstacles to their achievement or, indeed, whether he can last.

Divergent premises on the Soviet Union thus lead to conservative and less divergent operational conclusions. Rather than bringing about substantially new Western policies, the operational difference made by Gorbachev is that the agenda the Soviets might agree to is seen as far more open than ever before. This is accepted across the Maintainer-Coupler spectrum. For the suspicious, new Soviet tactics are acting on Western public opinion and politics to force it open; we must play much more carefully than in the past. For the hopeful, we must play—also carefully—because we might get what we asked for, as we did in the case of zero-zero, which was, after all, a Western proposal.

The main new agenda concerns arms control. Zero-zero was the first fruit of the new Soviet strategy, but zero-zero was unsatisfactory enough for NATO—in the way it was conceived in 1981, the way it was negotiated in 1987, and, for many, in its content as well—that it has had major effects on Alliance attitudes toward the next arms control

steps. The most important such effect commands a near-unanimous consensus among Maintainers and Couplers. It is: *be serious* this time; in both the strategic and the European arms control arenas, propose only controls that we want.

Initial serious proposals for further controls within Europe have begun to appear in NATO. Most debaters on both sides of the Atlantic would prefer to stay away from additional European nuclear controls in the near future, or to consider controls on the remaining shorter-range weapons in the context of conventional arms controls; many still fear the "slippery slope" to full denuclearization. Perhaps paradoxically, because they are most concerned about denuclearization, the Germans have suggested negotiations in the next lowest missile range, down to 100 kilometers. They argue that such missiles can only fall on Germans, East and West; more important they point to a heavy Soviet preponderance in this category. In any case, they propose only a cutting down, not a zeroing out. Unilaterally, the Alliance has begun to examine its own post-zero-zero nuclear posture, including proposals for replacing the INF missiles with sea- or air-launched missiles dedicated to NATO and capable of reaching the Soviet Union.

Because of the tendency to stay away from new nuclear controls and the belief that cutting back the nuclear deterrent in Europe makes the conventional imbalance even more important, conventional controls are being examined for their potential in assisting rebalance. One implication of zero-zero has been more stress on the desirability of unilateral strengthening of conventional capabilities, but nobody has believed that additional resources substantial enough to make a major difference would be forthcoming; most analysts agree that that would take a major increase in the Soviet threat as perceived by Western publics, and Gorbachev has provided just the opposite. Because of this unlikelihood of unilateral increases, additional attention has been paid to the possibility of rebalancing through negotiated NATO and Pact conventional drawdowns, although some warn that we should not count on arms control to achieve what we were unwilling to do ourselves. Arms controls that could help achieve this objective, or even be acceptable to NATO, would have to be highly asymmetrical, decreasing the much larger forces on the Soviet side much more than those of the Alliance. Senator Nunn has proposed a cut of 13 Soviet divisions in return for two U.S. divisions; other studies have suggested that a 5:1 ratio (measured somewhat differently) was an appropriate breakeven point, below which mutual decreases would actually exacerbate the imbalance.

In any case, these analyses and calculations were just beginning, in the wake of zero-zero.

My own conclusions about NATO are that:

- Europe has been stable, and Western Europe secure, for a long time, at least since the end of the Berlin crises of the early 1960s.
- Security and stability will be strongest if NATO remains strong.
- Both the American and the European sides of the Alliance need to avoid suspicions leading to cumulative negative resonance.
- The Gorbachev era may make possible substantial improvements through arms control, but "trust" of the Soviets has nothing to do with it. We should look for agreements that do not depend on trust and that increase both Western security and East-West stability.

The American electoral calendar is likely to make substantial new arms control agreements difficult through 1988 and part of 1989. Given NATO's record for headlong rushes in ill-thought-through directions, this will be fortunate—if the time is taken for Alliance consideration of goals, strategies, and next steps, in what may well be a new and even exhilarating era. New era or not, a strong NATO will be the keystone to Western security for a long time to come.

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I. INTRODUCTION

I don't know what effect these men will have upon the enemy, but, by God, they frighten me.

—attributed sometimes to the Duke of Wellington
and sometimes to George III

Arguments about logical consistency and conceptual neatness become the currency for intra-alliance bargaining in a manner which may exacerbate disagreement and transform difference in emphasis to disputes about theological absolutes. Fears abound that doctrinal positions have been thrown up as camouflage for disengagement, decoupling, or centralization of control. Thus NATO has at times been absorbed in great debates of strategy in a manner which has generated tensions of an order that the Russians have been hard put to emulate.

—Johan Jorgen Holst¹

There are few objective truths about the North Atlantic Treaty Organization—the Atlantic Alliance. One fact is that the Alliance was armed in 1953 in response to what was seen as a substantial Soviet military threat to Western Europe. That is history, however; although the nations of the Alliance still believe the threat to exist, it has faded and changed substantially over the intervening years. NATO today is shaped primarily by the political needs of its member nations and by the members' perceptions of the Soviet Union and of each other. For British troops two centuries ago, and perhaps for NATO today too, as Johan Holst suggested some years before he became an active participant as Norwegian Defense Minister, it is not always clear who is most frightened by which perceptions.

The Alliance is in this sense very much a subjective one, engaged to a substantial degree in analyzing itself. A broad consensus (including the author of this report) believe its continued existence to remain essential to Western well-being and to world peace, because without NATO the Soviets might still attempt to dominate Europe, militarily or politically. But the military as well as the political shape of the Alliance is based more on national and Alliance politics than on imminent military threats.

¹Johan Jorgen Holst, "Flexible Options in Alliance Strategy," in Johan J. Holst and Uwe Nerlich (eds.), *Beyond Nuclear Deterrence*, Crane, Russak and Co., New York, 1977, pp. 267-268.

This subjectivity leads to a debate over NATO's present policies and future structure that is complex and quite difficult to follow. Issues in the debate are mixtures of military and political factors; participants are officials and analysts within the member nations.² In the last half of the 1980s in particular, but more generally since at least the mid-1970s, the confusions of the debate have led to some policies that nobody liked even as compromises, and to intra-Alliance suspicions and hostilities that have presented unnecessary threats to the organization itself. The object of this study is to sort out the issues and the participants and to analyze the premises and logic leading to varying policy conclusions, not in order to evaluate which are "right" or "wrong" but to make clearer than at present what the debaters disagree about, and why. As changes in the Alliance accelerate, new postures will be based on the response of old positions to new pressures. Better understanding of underlying viewpoints may help direct change toward the preservation of NATO's strengths and halt internal erosion based on correctible misperceptions of the views of others.

The remainder of this Introduction enlarges upon the initial assertion about military and political perceptions, sets forth the four "schools of thought" into which the report divides the debaters for purposes of detailed examination of opposing contentions, categorizes the issues on which the schools agree or disagree, and concludes by outlining the several substantive themes of the report.

This introductory section is followed by a brief history of NATO and thinking about NATO. The next four sections examine in detail the views presented by the members of the schools of thought, to extract premises and logic from the open written record. These four sections analyze the underlying structure of the debate over the Alliance, particularly as it has developed through the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Force (INF) years, the period between NATO's 1979 "two-track" decision to install the missiles of the INF in Europe while proposing to negotiate them against similar Soviet weapons, and the 1987 agreement to remove both the INF and the Soviet force.

In the late 1980s, NATO may be beginning a major transformation, largely induced by apparent extraordinary changes in its Soviet and Warsaw Pact opponents, as symbolized by the 1987 agreement. Rather than trying to capture these changes in mid-flight, the final section provides an epilog, describing some of the major directions of change and suggesting the ways in which the debate and the Alliance may move.

²The material is drawn almost entirely from individual writings. Although the report provides political context, the analysis concerns the logic of ideas, not the politics of pressures and policy determination.

MILITARY AND POLITICAL PERCEPTIONS

NATO started as a fairly simple concept. It was created in the late 1940s to enable "us"—the West, clearly led by the Marshall Plan and military big brother the United States—to resist aggression by "them"—Stalin's USSR. Such aggression may or may not have been a real possibility, but it most certainly was a real fear in Western Europe. The fear was based on the military and political hegemony the Soviet Union had imposed on Eastern Europe, reinforced by the Berlin blockade, and soon put by the North Korean attack on South Korea into terms of very concrete possibilities of military invasion of Western Europe, perhaps by Soviet proxies. NATO was thus initially presented with a conceptually simple problem, mostly military (although the role of recently-Nazi Germany presented intra-Alliance political problems from the start) and only two-sided. And, almost since the beginning of the Alliance, the explicit solution to the problem has involved both conventional and nuclear military power, with nuclear weapons being the ultimate sanction against superior Soviet conventional forces as well as Soviet nuclear threats.

Forty years after the creation of NATO, and thirty-five after the decision to man and equip it as a multi-nation armed alliance, the fear of direct military attack by the Soviets has almost faded, but it has not been dismissed completely. The Soviet capability for such an attack, conventional or nuclear or both, still exists; were all Western forces opposed to such aggression to disappear or the ultimate nuclear sanction to be withdrawn, the attack or its more likely Platonic political shadow, Soviet domination of West Europe without actual invasion, could again be seen as a major danger.

The danger is not inherent in geography or political economy. Achieving a zero fear of the Soviet Union by Western Europeans is possible; such a change is not unprecedented. Canada, for example, does not fear the overwhelming military might of the United States, nor do the French worry about a German attack. In terms of a millennium of accumulated European history that is no less remarkable than would be a peaceful and permeable border between East and West Europe say 20 years from now. Were this to come to pass, there would be no more perceived need for the West to resist Soviet political pressure than there is for Canada to mount a military defense against the "American Way," or for France or Germany to bow to the other. And there would be no need for the Western military alliance; NATO would probably disappear.

That time is not yet; perhaps it never will be. Throughout the West the Alliance is seen as remaining quite necessary. The difficulty that

dominates the debate, however, is that with the fading away of the simple and direct military threat that engendered NATO initially, the military and political issues of the Alliance depend more and more on national and individual perceptions of the quality of a much more subtle Soviet threat: All those troops and tanks in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and the Soviet Union itself are not *likely* to move west; but still and all, in the absence of good defenses, they could. Western defenses, particularly nuclear, remain the necessary deterrent against Warsaw Pact attack; were the West to lack such defenses, it might be best not to upset the Great Power that controls the Pact's troops and tanks. The Soviets could thus extend political and economic constraints around the free nations of NATO, as they have around Finland.

It is "Finlandization" rather than military occupation that NATO Europe has worried about for two or more decades. The concept of a nation operating under a democratic system in the best European sense but nonetheless making its decisions in the belief that it cannot afford to irritate a far more powerful neighbor is a difficult one. Finland is the only current example; perhaps history can provide others among nations that existed on the periphery of Nazi Germany in the 1930s (Czechoslovakia in particular), but these had only brief lives because Hitler soon regularized their status by conquering them. Nonetheless, the concept remains. Western fears tend to be confirmed by Soviet doctrines related to the "correlation of forces,"³ which assert that greater conformity to the wishes and needs of the USSR *should* in fact follow its preponderance of power. It is these fears, supported by the still-perceived possibility of the actual use of force by the Soviets, that motivate the nations of Western Europe and the United States to stay together in an alliance strong enough to deter the potential political and military threats from the East. Because of the evanescent nature of the political and military threats, however, and because of the lack of concrete and current evidence bearing on them, the debate tends toward the theological, although not so much as the debate over nuclear deterrence, where no real evidence is available.⁴

The various Soviet threats are latent, however. More important to the shaping of the Alliance of the 1980s, and more difficult to deal with than external threats, are each member's perceptions of the other members of the Alliance and of the other members' perceptions. The issue around which most of the debate rages is that

³See p. 73.

⁴See Robert A. Levine, *The Strategic Nuclear Debate*, The RAND Corporation, R-3565-FF/CC/RC, October 1987.

Americans have committed themselves to the defense of Western Europe by nuclear means if necessary, but in order to deter aggression the Soviets must believe that commitment, and in order to keep the Alliance together the West Europeans must believe it and believe that the Soviets believe it.

For Europeans, this issue is one of survival of their nations and their civilization; it is central to their security concerns. Most American officials and analysts, however, tend to take their own commitment for granted, and they talk about it less.

The difference in vital interests is not the only one, however. NATO's military posture consists of both military and political elements, and Americans and West Europeans differ over the balance between them. The most important example concerns the question of the threshold at which defense will change from conventional to nuclear. Americans treat this as being a military issue of threat, escalation, and combat; deterrence is made credible to Soviets and West Europeans by the United States maintaining the *rationality* of nuclear response as a final alternative to defeat. West Europeans treat the same problem as a political issue of U.S. will; deterrence is made credible to the Soviets and other Europeans by the *visibility* of the American deterrent force, as a manifest of that will. As a result of these and similar differences, Americans tend to raise military issues within the Alliance, Europeans react; Europeans tend to raise political issues, Americans react.

The military-political distinction raises another problem. It is very difficult to justify vast military expenditures on mainly political grounds, particularly on the basis of satisfying one's allies. In 1965, Norman Jones and I wrote that:

To preserve the Alliance, . . . a [military] posture should try to satisfy (or at least not violate) the felt needs of the members, and we thus can arrive at a set of political criteria, based on these needs. . . . Since [such] political imperatives . . . will not suffice to obtain popular and governmental support for a posture, however, some military rationale is still needed, as a binding force for the chosen posture. . . . The threat of an all-out Soviet invasion of Western Europe seems to have outlived its usefulness as a rationale, primarily because few governments or people still believe it to be realistic.⁵

Our crystal ball was clouded in one respect: After more than 20 additional years of implausibility, the all-out Soviet invasion still lives as the primary military rationale for the political Alliance. Nonetheless, the need for a military rationale to justify steps taken to satisfy

⁵Quoted in Robert A. Levine, *Public Planning: Failure and Redirection*, Basic Books, New York, 1972, pp. 121-122.

political requirements continues to affect the NATO debate, and sometimes to dominate it.

The tendency of the Alliance to be more concerned with itself than with the threat from its Warsaw Pact opponents has, if anything, been increasing over many years. Ironically, what might change this introspective orientation is the possibility that the Soviet Union under the new leadership of Mikhail Gorbachev, or after Gorbachev, might swing radically in one direction or another; and the NATO West might be forced to concentrate again on the precise nature of the threat or nonthreat from the East.

One French analyst, writing in 1986, stated that: "In the bundle of factors that have, since 1954, determined the evolution of the Franco-German dialogue on matters of security, the Soviet Union has appeared, without doubt, as the only constant."⁶ Although Soviet constancy has not been invariant in its expression—after the end of the Berlin crises of the early 1960s, for example, the possibility of direct use of military force seemed to decrease substantially—the USSR has remained a hostile opponent. Soviet hostility and opposition could be counted on, even if implemented differently under Khrushchev than under Stalin, and in still other ways under Brezhnev. Should this underlying constancy now change radically one way or another, the NATO debate could shift focus back to the Soviet Union instead of the member nations of the Alliance.

In fact, rapid change on the Soviet side has already begun. It will not be clear for many years how radical or how permanent it is—how far Gorbachev wants to or can push internal liberalization, or, for that matter, how long he will be in a position to keep trying. Equally unclear for at least as long will be the extent to which the new international approaches of the Soviet Union represent a difference of tactics rather than a fundamental shift of objectives. What is clear is that the USSR in the late 1980s appears very different from what anyone on either side of the East-West border predicted in the early part of the decade. Almost as certain is that whether the future direction is toward openness and international cooperation or repression and hostility, the Soviet Union of the 1990s will be far different from that of the 1970s. Technology, economics, and demographics will preclude simple reversion to the past, just as when Brezhnev retreated from the *proto-perestroika* of Khrushchev, the resulting Soviet Union of the 1960s and 1970s was quite different from Stalin's Soviet Union of the 1940s.

⁶Nicole Gnessoto, "Le Dialogue Franco-Allemand depuis 1954: Patience et Longeur de Temps," in Karl Kaiser and Pierre Lellouche (eds.), *Le Couple Franco-Allemand et la Défense de l'Europe*, IFRI, Paris, 1986, p. 11.

One way or another, the North Atlantic Alliance will have a new-style opponent; one way or another the Alliance will have to adapt. The Epilog to this report suggests that the NATO organism is likely to internalize the external stimuli stemming from Soviet change, shifting relationships within the Alliance rather than either breaking up or creating a radically different relationship with the Warsaw Pact. Such adaptations have begun in the late 1980s, as the Alliance and its members have reacted to radical-seeming Soviet arms control and related proposals and have tried to come up with proposals of their own designed to maintain and improve the security of Western Europe. Yet predictions going beyond the immediate future of NATO are no more certain than those attempting to lay out the future direction of Soviet change. The only certainty is change itself, with the change on both sides likely to occur much more rapidly than we have been accustomed to for at least the last two decades.

SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

A "School of Thought" is a somewhat arbitrary construct with which to analyze a debate; any debater worth considering is idiosyncratic, and policy views vary along a continuum rather than falling into discrete groups. Nonetheless, positions in most debates tend to assemble around specific issues and specific opinions on these issues. Although the precise boundaries between the schools described here are necessarily arbitrary, the lines delineate recognizable clusters of views.

Policy views consist logically of *value judgments* about desirable states of the world, *analyses* of existing and possible states, and *recommendations* about actions policymakers should take to move toward desirable outcomes within the range of the possible.⁷ Recommendations ordinarily provide the best basis for distinguishing schools of thought; and the major schools in the NATO debate are grouped around various American and European recommendations, based in part on different analyses but perhaps even more on different value weights put on potential gains and risks. To be sure, none of these differences are cleancut: Europeans differ widely among themselves over NATO

⁷For a fuller description of these logical constructs, see Robert A. Levine, *The Arms Debate*, pp. 14-27. The NATO debate is subject to one additional complexity absent from the other two segments of the American arms debate, those concerning military policy toward the Third World, and the control and use of strategic nuclear weapons. In those two, the recommendations are made to a single government, that of the United States. In the NATO debate, they are addressed to 16 sovereignties, and what is a recommendation to one—"Our government should do this"—is an analytical issue for the others—"Will they do it?"

policy, and so do Americans. Further, some Americans tend to argue like Europeans, some Europeans argue like Americans; in particular, lines tend to blur because some arguments on each side of the Atlantic are based on resonance, conscious efforts to placate the other side.

Nonetheless, the European-American distinction stands up as the crucial one for understanding this very complex debate. It stands up because European debaters start out with the preservation of Western Europe as their central value, and how to maintain the essential American deterrent role in their preservation is the major analytical issue they debate about. American debaters start out assuming the U.S. role, but how to balance deterrence of Soviet aggression against Western Europe with avoidance of strategic nuclear war is much of what they debate about. All this results in diverging European and American policy recommendations in spite of similarities on some specific issues. This European-American difference is based more on variously weighted value sets leading to different choices of salient issues than it is on major analytical or value differences on specific issues.

This report divides the NATO debaters among four schools of thought, major and minor ones (defined in terms of their effect on policymaking) on each side of the Atlantic. Most American officials and analysts come together into one major school.

- *The Maintainers.* The members of this school stress the importance of maintaining the commitment of the United States to European defense. They converge on three propositions:
 - *No Early Use of Nuclear Weapons.* Recognizing that nuclear weapons are part of the overall scheme to deter Soviet aggression in Europe, and that this implies an inherent possibility that we might have to use them, nuclear defense should be a last resort, not a first. Almost all American officials and analysts espouse a doctrine of "No Early Use" of nuclear weapons in Europe: Do everything else possible first, even though such a high conventional-nuclear threshold might conceivably be taken as an unwillingness to use nuclear weapons at all and could thus downgrade deterrence. (It might, however, strengthen deterrence by making *any* initial American response more likely.)
 - *Increased Conventional Capabilities.* To make No Early Use as plausible as possible, substantial stress should be placed on improving NATO's conventional capabilities and strategies. A corollary-by-omission of this proposition is that not much is said about how to pay for such improvements. Both

the desire for increased conventional capabilities and the economic-budgetary conundrum have deep roots in NATO's history.

- *Continued U.S. Commitment.* As noted, Europeans question this, or at least fear its erosion. Most Americans do not. They desire no diminution of the historic U.S. commitment to the defense of NATO Europe and believe that no substantial weakening has yet occurred at either the conventional or nuclear levels. Although the commitment has lacked the certainty of a doomsday machine, it has sufficed to deter Soviet adventurism in Europe for 40 years, and can continue to do so in the future in much the same manner. Commitment, measured as the *probability* of appropriate U.S. response, however, is not synonymous with the *size* of the U.S. forces in Europe, conventional or nuclear, representing that response. No consensus exists on these matters, and some Americans believe that the same commitment can be expressed more cheaply or differently.

To stress the consensus on these three propositions does not imply that the Maintainers form a single tight-knit school. On other issues in the overall arms debate, Americans divide into diverse schools.⁸ And important differences over NATO also exist, although they relate only in part to those on non-NATO issues. For example, the 1987 negotiations over zeroing out Soviet and American Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces in Europe caused substantial controversy among American Maintainers, as well as between Americans and Europeans and among Europeans. Such differences among the Maintainers are tactical and temporary, appearing more on the surface than along deep fault lines based on substantially different value judgments or analytical conclusions. Many of the Americans who opposed the INF agreement did so primarily because they were worried about the reactions of European NATO members, rather than themselves fearing that it would substantially weaken deterrence or defense, an example of transatlantic resonance based on perceptions of perceptions. Such tactical differences are the reason why the INF controversy threw together such unusual bedfellows: President Reagan and enthusiastic arms controllers favoring the zeroing out of INF; former President Nixon and Democratic

⁸See Levine, *The Strategic Nuclear Debate*; and *The Arms Debate and the Third World: Have We Learned From Vietnam*.

Chairman Les Aspin of the House Armed Services Committee opposing it. On future issues, tactics may sort the sides out differently.

The split between the Maintainers and the other, much smaller, American school that in recent years has spun off the right wing of this pro-NATO consensus is more fundamental:

- *The Withdrawers.* They want the United States to effectively withdraw from NATO. Most of them believe that Western Europe is fully capable of defending itself, is decadently unwilling to do so, and in any case is flirting far too seriously with the Soviet Union. Most Withdrawers are strong anti-Communists including many of the same individuals who want to confront the Soviet Union throughout the Third World, but they believe that the threat of Western Europe actually "going Communist" is slim, so that the United States should apply its limited military and other resources to areas where the danger is more real, as well as to such regions of growing economic importance as Japan and the rest of the Pacific Basin. *Public Interest* editor and NYU Professor Irving Kristol is one prophet here; Professor Melvin Krauss, also of NYU, is another. In addition, although most American radical disarmers of the left focus on strategic nuclear weapons and do not treat with NATO as such, the few who do enter the European thicket make policy recommendations similar to those coming from the right, and they are included in this school, as are some strong-Navy partisans who want to concentrate expenditures on seaborne capabilities rather than land forces anywhere.⁹

The Withdrawers can be considered a "minor" School of Thought in that there are few of them and their influence in the United States, even within the Reagan administration, which most of them back, is small. But they influence the NATO debate in at least one important way: Many of the European debaters take their views seriously as an indication of a future American trend toward withdrawal from the Alliance, and this conditions the views and arguments of these Europeans.

The European school most closely corresponding to the American Withdrawers comes from the "peace movement." Logically aligned

⁹The different premises from which various groups of Withdrawers arrive at similar conclusions are so widespread that, were the group more significant to policymaking, it might be divided more rigorously into subschools.

with the American nuclear disarmers, they no longer have the same close political relationship as existed in the early 1960s when the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) and the American Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE) worked closely together, and Bertrand Russell and C. P. Snow were prophets of both movements.

- *The Removers.* What they want to remove is nuclear weapons from Europe. They include the majority of the British Labour Party, the Green Party and an important portion of the Socialists (SPD) in the Federal Republic of Germany, and sizable contingents in most of the smaller NATO nations. The School is larger relative to the total electorates of these countries than are the American Withdrawers (or the American peace movement). Nonetheless, its *direct* influence on national policies is small: The peace movement participates in none of the major European governments, and political arithmetic and the electoral calendar make such participation in any near future highly unlikely; it does affect the governments of some of the smaller NATO members, but it controls none of them. Indirectly, however, the movement's ability to influence public opinion on specific issues by its arguments and by mobilizing large numbers of demonstrators keeps governments and oppositions, particularly in Germany, looking over their shoulders, thus affecting the positions of the larger European School of Thought.

The Removers fear the U.S. nuclear commitment to the old continent. The more extreme members of the school believe that the United States, at least under President Reagan, is "morally equivalent" to the Soviet Union, at least under Chairman Gorbachev, although the movement began to gather strength when Brezhnev was still Soviet leader. They want the continent, East and West, to solve their own problems in a nonnuclear way.

The more moderate Removers, including most of those in the British Labour Party and the German SPD, remain pro-NATO. They just want to get rid of the nuclear weapons in Europe, and substitute conventional "defensive defenses" incapable of mounting offensive operations across the East-West border. The British Removers want to get rid of the British independent nuclear deterrent as well as the U.S. nuclear forces based in the United Kingdom, but the movement is not important in France, the owner of the other European independent deterrent force.

The more important of the two European schools of thought encompasses the governments of almost all the European NATO members and major segments of the opposition parties as well.

- *The Couplers.* This school includes a broad range of mainstream European officials and analysts, including many in opposition as well as those in power, all of whom have some concern about the U.S. commitment. This school puts the greatest stress on mutual perceptions, starting with the perception of American intentions. In contrast to the American Maintainers, who take the continued U.S. obligation for granted, the Couplers focus on the question of whether in fact the American commitment can be taken for granted any more. They are particularly concerned about "decoupling," a weakening of the commitment that "couples" American strategic nuclear forces to the defense of Western Europe and thus provides the ultimate deterrent to Soviet aggression. The first two American propositions, on No Early Use and stronger conventional capabilities, are examined and reexamined to see whether they reveal any structural flaws in the third proposition favoring continued American commitment. For a few Europeans, particularly among the French, the question has been whether the commitment ever could be taken for granted.

Coupler viewpoints on all issues do not vary clearly by nationality. The major nations do differ on the key issues of the U.S. commitment to Europe and on the relationships among the European members, however; and the general *gestalt* of each of the big three European nations can be described, as can some of the roles in the NATO debate of the smaller members.

- The French, as *philosophes*, are the most concerned and the least troubled. Since de Gaulle, they have expressed the greatest doubts about the reliability of the American commitment, but most of the doubters also concede that the potential of their own independent deterrent stems in large measure from the possibility that its use may invoke the far larger U.S. nuclear force. French doubts about the quality and endurance of the U.S. commitment lead them, philosophically and perhaps pragmatically, toward more purely European defense concepts, in which their perceptions of the Germans in particular play a central role. So far as France's own defense policy is concerned, consensus is far stronger than in the other major NATO nations: There is broad national agreement on the need for continued independence

of the French nuclear deterrent; there is no sentiment for reintegration into the military structure of NATO; and the Remover peace movement is trivial.

- The British agree on the need for a better coordinated European defense effort, strategically and technologically, but they base this more on its positive desirability than on any fear of U.S. withdrawal of the commitment to NATO. Unlike the French, the British are divided: Although the Removers are in a distinct minority in the United Kingdom, they form the majority of the main opposition party, Labour. The British Coupler consensus, including the Conservative government and most of the smaller Liberal and Social Democratic opposition grouping in the middle, is that NATO is evolving gradually, as always, and a substantial American conventional and nuclear commitment is likely to be a feature for a long time to come.
- The West Germans have more of a division within the Coupler establishment than do the French or British, as well as a substantial debate between the establishment and the Removers of the Green Party and the SPD left wing. Within the governing coalition, the Christian Democrats (CDU), including the Defense Minister, tend toward the French fears, with their sister party the Bavarian Christian Socialists (CSU) pulling even harder in this direction. Their coalition partner, the Free Democrats (FDP), including the long-time Foreign Minister, are far less tense as are the Couplers in the SPD. The major basis for these divisions is that, far more than the French and the British, the Germans are pulled in three directions: by the close Atlantic tie to the United States, by the European stress emphasized by the French, and by the Soviet ability to turn the heat up or down on the eastern border. The Federal Republic's situation is complicated by its front-line geography, by its dependence on the strength, particularly the nuclear strength, of others, and by the existence of a Soviet-dominated country with the same language and heritage, the German Democratic Republic. In addition, the residual guilt and suspicions left over from the Nazi era place constraints, now largely self-imposed, on German military policy.
- Perhaps the only valid generalization that can be made about the smaller member nations—Canada, Scandinavia, the Low

Countries, southern Europe, and Turkey—is that they differ from one another. They recognize that their choices, including the possibility of simply opting out of NATO (which might force them to leave the European Economic Community as well) are constrained. Given this, most of the smaller members tend toward the relaxed side of the concerns over U.S. reliability. In addition, however, they contribute several specific items to the debate. One is the reminder that NATO confronts the Warsaw Pact elsewhere than on the German central front; the “flank” nations, Norway and Turkey, are the only ones having land borders with the Soviet Union.¹⁰ Another reminder is that the Alliance has severe internal problems unrelated to the Soviets or the Pact, the strong hostility between Greece and Turkey being the chief case in point. In addition, although the governments of the smaller members, except perhaps for Greece, remain firmly in the Coupler consensus, several of the nations have Remover contingents strong enough to be taken into consideration both as potential threats to some of the national contributions (e.g., of conventional forces in key sectors and of territory for military sites and supply lines) and as advocates of some military strategies based on static “defensive defenses,” which might otherwise be ignored.

ISSUES

The eight issue categories into which this report divides the subject matter of the NATO debate range is a continuum from the almost completely political to the almost strictly military. The European Couplers stress the political end, and the issue they treat as central, that of the American commitment and nuclear coupling, is largely political—a question of will and willingness. These obviously depend in some measure on the military factors that would determine the outcome if the United States were to use its forces to fulfil the commitment.

- *The U.S. Commitment to NATO.* European analysts and authorities in the Coupler school believe that it has been the U.S. commitment in general and the nuclear commitment specifically that have deterred the threat of Soviet attack and

¹⁰The other NATO member bordering directly on the Soviet Union is the United States, across the Bering Strait.

continue to do so. Although most of them would prefer to deemphasize the nuclear aspects, American Maintainers tend to agree that the ultimate risk of nuclear war plays a central role in NATO deterrence.

The detailed strategic questions raised under this rubric include: What are U.S. policies with regard to nuclear deterrence of conventional or nuclear attacks in Europe that may involve American troops but not the American homeland? Are these policies changing drastically? How do the policies and stated U.S. commitments fit with other U.S. commitments in other parts of the world? Particularly in the light of changing nuclear balances, how willing is the United States and how willing will it be to stand itself hostage against attacks on allies? And how long will current commitments last, how dependable are they, and how reliable, particularly in the light of the idiosyncracies of some recent American commanders-in-chief? All of these are matters of perceptions and perceptions of perceptions.

In addition to such matters of strategy and high policy, economic issues play a large role in transatlantic relations. One of these, burden-sharing within the Alliance, is within the purview of this report. Others, particularly issues of international trade, are peripheral here even though they may be the real determinants of the future course of the military alliance.

Closely related to the U.S. commitment is the issue of

- *The Europeans' Commitments to Themselves.* Even though "Europe and (or versus) the United States" is common phraseology, Europe is not a unit, at least not yet. Throughout the history of the North Atlantic Alliance, but increasingly now, the possibility has been discussed of a more specifically European role. This classical issue includes two rather different components: the possibility of a more indigenously European strategy, perhaps putting more weight than now on British and French nuclear weapons, and the effort to produce weapons cooperatively.

A more recent addition to the long-running discussion of a general drawing together of the European members of NATO has concerned the potential for Franco-German military cooperation. Issues that have come into serious discussion include the

extent to which the interests of both countries dictate that France's defensive frontier should be at the Elbe rather than the Rhine and the implications of such a change for both French nuclear strategy and French and German conventional forces.

One political issue is potentially more important than any of the others, even that of U.S. commitment.

- *The Soviet Role.* It is still widely believed that without NATO, the Soviets would dominate Europe militarily and politically. Most military measures are justified in terms of a much more specific threat, however, a massive Warsaw Pact attack across the Iron Curtain. Since the end of the Berlin crises of the early 1960s, the likelihood of such an attack has been increasingly difficult to take seriously. As a result, justifications have had little to do with real military steps, and this dissonance has distorted the debate. The perceived Soviet threat remains the *raison d'être* for NATO, but because the perception that Soviet hostility was low and prudent has been constant over many years, *variations* in the Alliance and in the debate have depended more and more on members' perceptions of one another. Were this to change—if Gorbachev were to convince the West that the Soviets are really substantially less hostile than in the past or, conversely, if the internal turmoil brought about by Gorbachev were to make Soviet hostility less prudent—then the USSR might replace the United States as the central consideration for NATO. In the late 1980s, such changes are beginning to have a considerable effect on the current debate.

Closely related is an issue that in the early days of NATO could not even have been described in a separate paragraph.

- *Eastern Europe.* At the start of the Alliance, the Soviet bloc was the Soviet bloc, the USSR and a collection of satellites subdued militarily and tamed by brutality. Yugoslavia broke loose early but was considered a special case. Western failure to intervene in East Berlin in 1953, in Hungary in 1956, and in Czechoslovakia in 1968 definitively demonstrated the irrelevance of NATO military force; this was the Soviet sphere of influence, and violating it was assumed to run too great a risk of starting the big war. The post-Stalin period, however,

saw the beginning of a phenomenon contemplated earlier by only a few Western Sovietologists, the gradual if uneven relaxation of Soviet dominance, to the point where almost all of the satellites have exhibited some degree of autonomy in domestic systems or foreign relations. To some extent, loosening of the Soviet grip has been allowed by NATO *noninterference* in the East; once the Soviets understood that we would not actively abet "disruption" in the satellites, they may have been more willing to allow small fires without fearing Western contributions of more fuel. In the specific case most important to the West and probably to the Soviet Union too, however, that of East Germany, West German Chancellor Willy Brandt's *Ostpolitik* initiated a set of policies much more active than before in encouraging a degree of Communist exchange with the West. The Federal Republic is literally and figuratively central to NATO, so that in that case at least, Eastern European issues assume substantial importance to the Alliance.

The final political issue in the NATO debate is one that has never dominated the discussion but has occasionally loomed large.

- *NATO and the Rest of the World.* Throughout the years of the Alliance it has been understood that the United States has had continuing security responsibilities in regions of the world other than Europe. Occasionally other members, notably France and Britain, have projected military power to other areas. Indeed, one major change from the beginning to the present has been the shift from the gradual decolonialization by the older powers encouraged by the "anti-imperialist" United States, to the more recent outcries in Europe about U.S. activities in Vietnam, Central America, and other parts of the Third World. One question raised in the debate of the 1970s and continuing strongly into the 1980s has been the role of the United States and the rest of NATO in protecting the flow of oil to the industrial nations from the Middle East. More recently, with the advent of the Reagan administration, doubts have been expressed as to whether global anticommunism weakens the American commitment to Europe.

The more military issues include the crucial link between conventional and nuclear warfare, as well as questions more specifically concerned with conventional weapons and strategies. Because American Maintainers think more in military terms than do the European Couplers,

the link is as central to them as is the U.S. commitment to the Couplers.

- *The Conventional-Nuclear Link.* This is the military side of the political question about the reliability of the U.S. commitment, particularly the commitment to use nuclear weapons if necessary. Militarily, the coupling question is that of the "threshold." At what level of conventional violence, under what conditions of imminent defeat, how, tactically, will the U.S. president permit or order NATO's Supreme Commander to use American nuclear weapons? The before-the-event planning issue here is that of Deterrence versus Defense: To what extent are conventional forces intended to defend against conventional attack by the Warsaw Pact, compared with the use of those forces, particularly American troops, as a "tripwire" for U.S. nuclear weapons? Some members of the Coupler school suggest that deterrence is everything; modern conventional defense would be more traumatic than conventional World War II and would thus be little preferable to nuclear devastation. These issues are covered by NATO's "Flexible Response" doctrine, which depends on a spectrum of conventional and nuclear responses to Pact attack. But the doctrine is so flexible and necessarily vague about what defense will be put up against what aggression that it permits a full panoply of views in the debate.
- *Conventional Weapons.* These issues include the size and deployment of forces, their sustainability over time in battle, and the quality of the Warsaw Pact armies they will face. They cover types of weapons and roles of new "Emerging Technologies." The issues also emphasize strategies: forward defense, offensive versus defensive tactics, Follow-On Forces Attack (FOFA), AirLand battle, "defensive defenses," and the like, each one of which has deep roots in NATO history and debates, and political as well as military dimensions. Much less discussed is the constraint that has inhibited resolution of each of these issues throughout the history of the Alliance—the budgetary constraint of who's to pay. Another underlying issue is whether a conventional war fought on NATO territory (mainly West German) would be much less destructive than a tactical nuclear war.

One additional issue that falls under the Conventional weapons rubric is the defense of NATO's flanks—Norway and Turkey, which border on the Soviet Union; and Greece, which has a common boundary with Bulgaria. NATO defense plans for these areas are primarily conventional; indeed, Norway has

explicitly eschewed the presence of nuclear weapons on its territory. For the most part, however, the flanks are ignored in NATO dialogue, except by the flank nations themselves.

Finally, on one set of issues, political and military considerations are not only well-mixed, as they are in all of the categories, but also almost equally balanced.

- *Arms Control and Disarmament.* On one side of the national and international debates on arms control and disarmament in Europe is the contention that mutual East-West arms reductions will in themselves assist in maintaining peace and European stability. On the other side are considerations of the effects of various measures on the military balance between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, the effects of changes in this balance on the chances of Soviet attack, and the political shadow of such an attack. The common NATO belief in overwhelming Warsaw Pact conventional superiority has raised questions about any form of nuclear arms control that might sacrifice the Alliance's capability to deter a conventional attack or oppose it with nuclear weapons. More recently, however, the possibility of using conventional controls to improve the balance has come into the debate.

THEMES

Cutting across the schools of thought and the specific issues are several themes brought out by the analysis and referred to throughout the discussion. They are presented here to help tie together the potential 32 boxes created by four schools and eight issue categories.¹¹

- *Changes always appear radical when you are in the midst of them.* This theme begins with the next section on the history of the Alliance. NATO has frequently appeared to be changing drastically and, more often than not, alarmingly. Most of the time such changes have turned out to be routine.
- *Views on Alliance policy are based on members' perceptions of the Soviet Union and of each other.* This has already been discussed and will recur.

¹¹The issue categories are not used in the discussions of the two minor schools, the Removers and the Withdrawers, so the actual number of boxes is somewhat smaller. The whole thing remains very complicated, however.

- *Interests and perceptions differ among members of the Alliance, and, in particular, between the European members and the United States.* That interests differ is obvious; the paramount interest in self-preservation differs according to whose self is being preserved. In large measure, different perceptions are based on these different interests. One crucial transatlantic difference is not interest-based, but stems from historically different worldviews: Europeans tend to treat the world in general and the Soviet threat in particular as being political; Americans think much more in military terms.
- *Some positions in the debate are taken in order to reconcile other debaters.* The report terms this "resonance." All of the member nations and most of the debaters value the Alliance highly and fear its erosion stemming from the disaffection of others. Thus positions are often based neither on national interests nor on considered views of the common interest, but on a desire to reconcile the assumed interests or perceptions of Alliance partners. Frequently this is constructive; the metaphor of marriage has been used. Sometimes, however, fear-based resonance leads to a crescendo of misunderstanding and self-fulfilling prophecies. The metaphor may apply here too.
- *Fading fears, over the last 25 years, of direct Soviet military attack have accentuated intra-Alliance differences, political considerations, the role of perceptions, and negative resonances.* Hence the functioning of NATO as a "subjective alliance" and the substitution of fear of "Finlandization" for fear of military aggression. Were the East-West border characterized by massed forces on high alert, life would be simpler but a lot more dangerous.
- *Potentially major changes in the Soviet Union are inducing potentially major changes in the Alliance.* These changes, particularly those in Soviet external policy most relevant to the West, are perceived as being far more radical than those of the preceding quarter century. If they were seen as militarily threatening, they might recreate the dominance of military over political considerations in the Alliance. Because they are apparently moving in the opposite direction, they are more likely to affect the political structure of NATO. Political changes, however, should fall far short of either ending the Alliance or starting it in a radically new direction. This is what the Epilog is about.

II. HISTORY

I can recall, from the early days of NATO, an air force colonel who kept on his desk a rubber stamp that said: "In this perilous moment in the history of the alliance. . . ." He used that stamp with great frequency.

—James Schlesinger¹

In retrospect, the history of NATO has moved along a fairly smooth curve, even though the retrospective curve may be made up of the stringing together of what seemed at the time to be recurrent perilous moments. In its three and a half decades, however, the Alliance has undergone one substantial change in character, with the change taking place mostly in the 1960s.

NATO was created to cope with two problems—the potential for future Soviet aggression in Europe, and the history of past German aggression. These problems dominated throughout the 1950s; but with the ending of the Berlin crises in the early 1960s, Europe and the world began to settle into safer patterns. The Soviet military threat perceived by West Europeans changed from active to latent; German aggression became a matter of record and memory, but no longer a menace for the future.

The Berlin Wall solved the problem of population flight for the Soviets and East Germans and ended the perennial confrontations around that city; the Cuban missile crisis and the subsequent disappearance of the unpredictable Khrushchev stabilized U.S.-Soviet military relations. Later in the decade, the advent of West German Socialist Willy Brandt, first as Foreign Minister and then as Chancellor, had two major effects: His *Ostpolitik* openings to the East confirmed the settling down of relations with the Soviets and the East Germans; his impeccable and active anti-Nazi record finally put to rest most Western fears of the future reverting to the past. In addition to these two major changes in the Soviet and the German problems in the 1960s, the American entrapment in Vietnam signalled the shift within NATO from a reactionary Europe whose decolonization needed prodding by an anti-imperialist United States to something that appeared to be 180 degrees away.

At the same time, an issue that had been germinal at most in 1951 when the U.S. commitment of troops cemented the military alliance,

¹James Schlesinger, "An American Perspective," speech reprinted in the *Congressional Record*, June 20, 1984, p. S7749.

the connection between conventional defense and nuclear deterrence, grew, by the late 1950s and the 1960s, to become the dominant question in the NATO debate. The building of the British and French nuclear deterrents in the same period, and the 1966 departure of France from NATO's military structure, were based in large measure on the issue of the nuclear threshold and U.S. commitment.

By the 1970s, then, NATO had changed from an Alliance about the Soviet Union of the present and the Germany of the past to an organization that was operationally much more concerned with itself and the specific needs of its individual members although still based on the perceived need to counter the Soviet military threat and its political consequences. It had become the "subjective" alliance. The key issue toward which the NATO debate was oriented became, as it remains today, the certainty or uncertainty of the American commitment and how the United States and the other nations cope with this less-than-perfect guarantor of West European security.

The next portion of this brief history provides a quick chronology of the NATO past and relevant surrounding events, not as a substitute for the excellent histories that have been written,² but as an impressionistic reminder of the way we were, in order to lay out the background for the development of the major NATO issues over the period. The division of the chronology into decades is, of course, arbitrary, but it does apportion the history into digestible segments.

THE 1950s: INITIATION

Within NATO, the organization, put together in the late 1940s as a somewhat symbolic response to Soviet pressures, became a military alliance with the commitment of American troops in 1951, in substantial measure as a response to fears created by the North Korean invasion of South Korea. The recognition that West German troops would be needed for defense of the West led to the creation of the European Defense Community (EDC), intended to create a European army that would include German soldiers under the command of others; but the 1954 failure of the French to ratify EDC put West German forces directly into NATO. The 1952 Lisbon conference set forth conventional force goals so high (96 active and reserve divisions) as to be far out of the reach of NATO wills and budgets, and the recognition of this unreality led to a belief in overwhelming Soviet conventional superiority as a permanent matter. As a result, nuclear deterrence of

²See, for example, Alfred Grosser, *The Western Alliance*, New York, Vintage Books, 1982.

Soviet aggression in Europe became the central emphasis of the Alliance. In 1954, the MC 14-2 plan put into NATO doctrine the concept of (American) massive retaliation, but British and French unwillingness to bet their existence on the American commitment led to the start of the two independent deterrents.

Among the member nations, the strong leaders were Eisenhower (and John Foster Dulles) and Adenauer. The British shifted between the two major parties and the French drifted. American nuclear strategy consisted of massive retaliation; and the United States, after finishing the Korean War, was economically comfortable if frequently mildly depressed. Boosted by the Marshall Plan, European economies recovered rapidly led by the German economic miracle; by the end of the decade Germany was able to make a major military contribution to the Alliance. In 1957, the Treaty of Rome initiated the European Economic Community (EEC), the Common Market, but without Britain. Within several NATO nations, notably France and Italy, Communist parties were large and considered a real threat.

The Soviet Union moved from Stalin through Malenkov to Khrushchev, who, while more personable and less ominous than Stalin, proved to be just as hostile in different ways. Although the Russians agreed to a peace treaty permitting a free Austria, the suppression of the Hungarian revolt in 1956 confirmed both the willingness of the Soviets after Stalin to preserve their East European hold and the unwillingness of the West to intrude into the Soviet sphere of influence. The initiation of the Warsaw Pact formalized the Soviets' multinational response to NATO multinationalism, but no doubts were allowed about who was in absolute control of the Pact. The launching of Sputnik in 1957 demonstrated to the West that it could not depend on technology to outrace the Soviets militarily.

Outside of Europe and North America the major relevant trend was the rush of the nations of West Europe to decolonize their possessions and contract their spheres of influence. Frequently this was voluntary, as it had been for the British in India in the 1940s, but Dienbienphu and Suez illustrated some less willing withdrawals.

THE 1960s: REFORMULATION

Within NATO, the decade of change began with the Soviet testing of Western wills as they tried to use military pressures to end the Western occupation and free status of West Berlin and finally gave up when the building of the Wall stanching the flow of East German refugees to the West. Together with other events and the continuation

of economic growth, the termination of the Berlin crises strengthened the Federal Republic of Germany, and by the end of the decade it was a "regular" member of the Alliance, emotionally as well as juridically. France, however, became much less regular, as de Gaulle in 1966 withdrew his nation from NATO's integrated military structure, revising both force plans and lines of communication and pushing Alliance headquarters from Paris to Brussels. By the end of the decade, the Alliance had adapted to this partial French withdrawal. American troops in Europe were increased for the Berlin crises and then decreased as they were withdrawn for Vietnam; some of Defense Secretary McNamara's American systems analysts endeavored to show that NATO could match Soviet conventional capabilities at acceptable costs. The British nuclear deterrent developed as part of NATO, and the French *Force de Frappe* came into being as a more independent entity; but these did not satisfy the felt needs of the Europeans for a stronger connection to American strategic forces, certainly not the needs of the West Germans who were proscribed from owning nuclear weapons. Various devices attempted to fill these needs, the most notorious of which was the Multilateral Force (MLF) by which Polaris-carrying ships would be manned by multinational NATO crews, although the American president would retain final control of the nuclear warheads. The scheme collapsed of its own political weight and implausibility.

Later, in 1967, MC 14-3 replaced the massive retaliation of MC 14-2 with "Flexible Response," a doctrine that relied for deterrence and defense on a spectrum of potential replies to various Warsaw Pact aggressions. Although the specific responses to specific provocations were not set forth, nuclear responses played an important and explicit role, including a role in opposition to initial nonnuclear Soviet attacks. In the same year, the Harmel Doctrine broadened NATO's role from a purely military alliance to one that could also search, organizationally, for disarmament and détente. At the end of 1969, the Alliance was perhaps no less strong, but it was very different from what it had been at the beginning of 1960.

Among the member nations, the leadership of the leader nation began with John Kennedy, who, centrally interested in NATO, played a major personal role after a false start in his Vienna meeting with Khrushchev; and after the Cuban missile crisis showed his real strength. Lyndon Johnson, however, turned his foreign interests (always secondary to his domestic ones) to Vietnam, as did Robert McNamara, the strong Secretary of Defense through most of the two administrations. By nearly monopolizing American attention through most of the decade, Vietnam worried the other NATO nations both

because it distracted from Europe and because, having withdrawn from colonialism themselves, the Europeans disapproved of what they saw as American neocolonialism. U.S. Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield worried the West Europeans even further by pushing his resolutions to reduce American troop levels in NATO, putting more of the burden on the now-well-off European members. In the meantime, McNamara, in spite of his growing preoccupation with Vietnam, did find the time to put forth two changes in strategic nuclear doctrine, both highly relevant to NATO deterrence. The first, set forth in his 1962 Ann Arbor speech, moved the United States from Dulles' massive retaliation toward a discriminating counterforce strategy; the second, five years later, qualified the first by restressing the crucial deterrent nature of the (perhaps inevitable) nuclear risks to cities. The new flexibility on both counts was embedded for NATO in MC 14-3. The dominant figure in European NATO was de Gaulle, who took France on its almost independent way militarily while keeping Britain off the continent by keeping it out of the Common Market, but the de Gaulle era in France ended with the student riots of 1968, as it had begun with the Algerian riots of 1958. In the Federal Republic of Germany, meanwhile, the change over the decade was symbolized by the shift of the Chancellorship from Konrad Adenauer, a strong and strongly anti-Soviet and anti-Communist leader, through several weak successors to Willy Brandt, another strong leader who initiated the *Ostpolitik* rapprochement with the Soviets and the East Germans. One facilitating factor for *Ostpolitik* was that the internal Communist party was never serious in the Federal Republic, but by the end of the decade such parties were no longer considered as serious threats to stability even in Italy and France.

The Soviet Union got rid of Khrushchev after, and in part because of, the Cuban missile crisis. Even before the Cuban affair, however, the ending of the Berlin crises with the building of the Wall marked a step back from the overhanging threat of real military aggression in Europe. Under Brezhnev, the Soviet Union built its military strength with multiple-warhead missiles (MIRVs) at the strategic level, and adventured throughout the world; but after Berlin, it refrained from hostile gestures across the European curtain. In Eastern Europe, however, Prague in 1968 reiterated that there had been no change from Budapest in 1956. Within the Communist world as a whole, the very major change was the shift from the Soviet-Chinese alliance that many in the West in the 1950s had thought of as worldwide monolithic Communism, to implacable hostility by the end of the decade. This was not only strategically important in itself, it presaged similar but lesser changes in the face of Communism in Europe.

Outside of Europe and North America, the 1960s saw the end of European colonialism. More important, Vietnam signalled major changes in the American relation to the Alliance. Together with the changes in NATO itself and in the other nations, it meant that by the end of the decade, U.S. leadership of NATO was much weaker than it had been at the beginning, thus setting the stage for the difficulties of the 1970s and the 1980s.

THE 1970s: DOUBTS

Within NATO, the membership structure remained stable and the threat of Soviet aggression in Europe remained minimal, but the 1970s were characterized by growing questioning of fundamental tenets, particularly of the quality of American leadership of the Alliance (or, perhaps, the basic stability allowed the luxury of such questioning). The decade started with the SALT and ABM agreements on U.S.-Soviet strategic arrangements, which, although they were approved of by the West Europeans, began to throw additional doubts on America's ability or willingness to put its own homeland at risk by using nuclear weapons against the Soviets in response to aggression in Europe. These doubts increased substantially through the period, as the Soviets gained effective strategic parity—the ability to put the United States at about as much risk as the USSR in any nuclear exchange. Politically, Watergate, the defeat in Vietnam, and the weak presidencies of Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter eroded U.S. international as well as domestic leadership. Carter began his administration by pushing the neutron bomb on European governments made reluctant by domestic opposition, and then backing off the bomb. As a result mainly of this and of worries about strategic parity, Helmut Schmidt, who had succeeded Brandt as Chancellor after having been his Defense Minister, took a proposal initiated by NATO's Nuclear Planning Group to reinstall American intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Europe, and made it into a political test for the United States and the Alliance. At the end of the decade, the Schmidt proposal resulted in the two-track decision: to install in Germany, Britain, Italy, and the Low Countries the Intermediate Nuclear Force (INF) of Pershing II ballistic missiles and cruise missiles but (mainly as a bow to peace movement Removers in Europe) to negotiate with the Soviets over the mutual reduction of INF and the corresponding SS-20 force, which the Russians had begun to install.

Among the member nations, the United States had a weak presidency from the beginning of Watergate in 1973 to the end of the decade. Particularly after the deflation of Nixon, the dominant figure

in American foreign policy through 1976 was Henry Kissinger, but the ultimate fiasco in Vietnam together with decade-long economic problems weakened both foreign and domestic policy. In Germany, without discontinuing Brandt's *Ostpolitik*, Schmidt added an Alliance-oriented personal military expertise. Giscard d'Estaing was a somewhat charismatic but not strong French leader. The British Labour leadership of Harold Wilson and James Callaghan remained pro-NATO. For Britain and for the other European members of the Alliance, the major event was that the United Kingdom finally committed itself firmly to Europe by joining the Common Market. For Western Europe as for the United States, however, the 1970s were filled with bad economic news, mainly because of the rapid increases in petroleum prices as the OPEC cartel took hold. In spite of economic sourness, however, the internal Communist threat, which had decreased in the 1960s, virtually disappeared. In Italy and in Spain, which had moved toward NATO after the post-Franco democratization, Communist parties became "Euro-communist," under partial control from Moscow at worst. The French party became so tame that François Mitterand initially included it in his Socialist government with little distress in NATO.

The Soviet Union remained firmly under the leadership of Brezhnev, with little internal change. The confrontation with China continued, exacerbated by the rapprochement between the United States and China. The European satellites began to differentiate themselves, within limits, from the Soviet Union and from each other, culminating in the birth of the Solidarity movement in Poland. Militarily, as noted, the Soviets achieved effective strategic parity, which, together with the installation of the SS-20 missiles in Europe, upset NATO considerably. At the end of the decade, the occupation of Afghanistan poisoned East-West relations, although NATO came to no agreement on how to treat with it.

Outside of Europe and North America, the major phenomenon was OPEC's taking control of petroleum markets and prices. The consequent many-fold increase in the world price of oil dominated the decade economically and was largely responsible for the overall political sourness of the period as well. Additionally, the rapid growth of the Japanese economy presented substantial competitive problems for the West.

NATO thus entered the 1980s, the "current" period of the debates analyzed in this report, in a state of some disarray and a mild degree of psychological as well as economic depression. The politics of depression led to major political changes in the Western nations. Because the previous leadership had been to the left, the new leaders were almost all conservatives: Ronald Reagan coming in for Jimmy Carter

in the United States; Margaret Thatcher for James Callaghan in Britain; and Helmut Kohl for Helmut Schmidt in Germany. The major exception was France, where the Socialist François Mitterand replaced Giscard as president, but after a few years Mitterand was forced to accept the conservative Jacques Chirac as Prime Minister. In the Soviet Union, Brezhnev was followed by two short-lived successors, and then came Gorbachev and major change.

In NATO, initial installation of INF commenced over substantial domestic opposition. The political ability to actually install the INF missiles was taken as a successful test of NATO's manhood, a perception that set the stage for the debate later in the 1980s about negotiated removal of the missiles. The initial basis for the removal negotiations of 1987 was that to mute the internal political opposition in 1981, NATO had offered the Soviets the zero option of removing the entire INF in return for removal of all Soviet SS-20s, in the sure belief that Brezhnev would turn it down. He did turn it down, but Gorbachev accepted it, throwing the Alliance into disarray. The disarray had begun, however, when as president of the United States and nominal leader of the Western Alliance, Ronald Reagan, alone and then in combination with Gorbachev, went through a series of events—the "Evil Empire" speech, SDI, the Libyan raid, Reykjavik—that left the Europeans muttering about unpredictability and lack of consultation.

All this provides the meat for the debate with which this report is concerned. The remainder of this section briefly takes up the development of the eight major issues listed in the last section, as they have developed through NATO's history.

At least until Gorbachev, discussion of most of these issues had changed very little since the Alliance reformulation of the 1960s. Two of the issues, in fact, changed hardly at all since the early 1950s. The first of these concerns *The Soviet Role*. This debate might be characterized, slightly unfairly, as George Kennan versus George Kennan. In his seminal 1946 paper, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," prepared as a commentary for Secretary of Defense James Forrestal and then published over the nom de plume, "X", Kennan wrote:

[I]t is clear that the main element of any United States policy toward the Soviet Union must be that of a long-term, patient but firm and vigorous containment of Russian expansive tendencies. . . . Soviet pressure against the free institutions of the Western world is something that can be contained by the adroit and vigorous application of counterforce at a series of constantly shifting geographical and political points, corresponding to the shifts of Soviet policy, but which cannot be charmed or talked out of existence.³

³X, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," *Foreign Affairs*, July 1947, reprinted in *Foreign Affairs*, Spring 1987, pp. 861-862.

Kennan contends that the Soviet pressure against free institutions he discussed was not military. "In no way did the Soviet Union appear to me, at that moment, as a military threat to this country."⁴ And a careful reading of the "X" paper bears him out; but from the point of view of the debate, what is more important is that the analysis was widely interpreted as calling for military containment, and this interpretation was a major influence on subsequent American policy. It provided the intellectual backing for the Truman Doctrine, which was used initially to defend against Soviet-backed incursions in Greece and Turkey, and for the subsequent extension of the Doctrine to other areas. In Europe, it formed the basis for the military alliance, particularly after the Berlin Blockade and then the Korean invasion demonstrated that Soviet pressure could indeed be explicitly military as well as political. This interpretation of Kennan's "containment" concept governs one Western view of the Soviet Union down through the debates of today; the opposing view, however, is the one Kennan himself has taken for many years and takes now:

It is entirely clear to me that Soviet leaders do not want a war with us and are not planning to initiate one. In particular, I have never believed that they have seen it in their interests to overrun Western Europe militarily, or that they would have launched an attack on that region generally even if the so-called nuclear deterrent had not existed. But I recognize that the sheer size of their armed forces is a disquieting factor for many of our allies. . . . For all of these reasons, there is now indeed a military aspect to the problem of containment as there was not in 1946; but what needs most to be contained, as I see it, is not so much the Soviet Union as the weapons race itself.⁵

In any case, what is important for this report is that these two positions on containment have governed the two major views of the USSR incorporated into the NATO arms debate since the start of the Alliance—from Stalin through Malenkov, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Andropov, and Chernenko; through cold war, crisis, blockade, and détente. It may be that Gorbachev is different enough from his predecessors that the Soviet Union will *really* change this time; the possibility has begun to affect the debate.

The second issue that has changed but little is that of *Conventional Weapons*. The Lisbon conference of 1952 called for 96 divisions, some 60 of them active, to defend Western Europe conventionally against overwhelming Soviet troop strength. Neither the wealthy United States nor the poor nations of Europe were willing to pay for them; the

⁴George F. Kennan, "Containment Then and Now," *Foreign Affairs*, Spring 1987, p. 885.

⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 888-889.

NATO conventional force has consisted of roughly half those numbers ever since. Those numbers have long since gone by the board, but every NATO supreme commander since Lisbon has asked for substantially more than he had, to enable him to fulfil his conventional defense responsibilities; and many analysts in a position to be more objective have called for similar increases. But neither the wealthy United States nor the now-wealthy nations of Europe have been willing to pay.

The first force goals of the 1950s were not closely linked to the threshold at which conventional defense would have to be abandoned in favor of nuclear weapons, but by the early 1960s the connection had been established, and the issue of *The Conventional-Nuclear Link* has remained a constant in the debate ever since. Two statements from 1960-61 apply almost as well in the late 1980s.

From [the Russian] standpoint the problem of successful aggression in Europe is to find a level and kind of attack large enough to be useful, but small enough to be well below the threshold risking American nuclear response. . . . It is becoming more and more widely accepted among critics of NATO that the most important task for the alliance today is to raise by conventional means the threshold of attack that the Russians would have to launch in order to be successful.⁶

and

If NATO is not willing to make the effort required for a conventional defense, its other option would be to rely more heavily on tactical nuclear weapons. . . . Deterrence would be achieved not by protecting against every contingency, but by confronting the Soviets with the prospect of a conflict with incalculable consequences.⁷

The authors of the two statements, both still members in good standing of the Maintainer school in the current NATO debate, would not necessarily take the same points of view today, but both would agree that the issue of the conventional-nuclear link remains central. So would those in the other schools who might want to treat the link differently (the European Couplers) or do away with it entirely (the American Withdrawers and the European Removers).

Indeed, for the Couplers, the issue is less that of the precise conventional-nuclear threshold than of the feared attenuation of the link connecting American strategic nuclear weapons to European defense and deterrence—the issue of *The U.S. Commitment to NATO*, which for them remains central to the NATO debate. Pierre

⁶Albert Wohlstetter, "Nuclear Sharing: NATO and the N+1 Country," *Foreign Affairs*, April 1961, pp. 381-382.

⁷Henry A. Kissinger, *The Necessity for Choice*, Harper, New York, 1960, p. 526.

Lellouche, one of the leading prophets of the end of the American commitment, quotes François Mitterand (before Mitterand was elected president of France) as saying: "The Alliance rests on a fiction: American intervention in Europe in case of Soviet aggression."⁸ Lellouche himself stresses the role of strategic parity in weakening this commitment:

This new menace of a Soviet counterforce strike (rather than solely anti-city) has for the moment no more than a limited effect on the security of the American continent as such. This is because of the conjectural character of a Soviet surprise attack against American silos, and the second-strike capacity which the Americans would retain even after such an attack. In contrast, this menace would have different consequences for American *extended* deterrence in Europe. The risk of seeing its ICBMs preventively destroyed adds to the already great uncertainty that already weighs on the employment of strategic systems by the American president in case of conflict in Europe.⁹

But (as Lellouche points out) the French expressed almost identical doubts long before the advent of strategic parity. General Pierre Gallois, the theorist of de Gaulle's independent deterrent wrote in 1961:

And how believe that the Strategic Air Command would use its weapons of massive destruction for the sake of a third party, if America thereby risked, in reprisal, a setback of two centuries from the extent of the damages suffered! Then what becomes of the indispensable credibility of the reprisal against aggression?¹⁰

The point is not that nothing has changed. Rather, it is that although much has changed in 25 years, the debate over the crucial issue of the U.S. commitment has changed very little. The European Couplers have always been afraid that the American fear of opening the Pandora's box of nuclear war might prevent the Americans from using nuclear weapons in behalf of even their closest allies. The quarter-century of changes, including the onset of strategic parity, has added only one more element to the mutual fears and doubts that have resonated across the Atlantic almost since the beginning of the Alliance.

Four of the issues—*The American commitment*, *The conventional-nuclear link*, *conventional force levels*, and *The Soviet role*—are thus old ones, having been debated in much their current form since the

⁸François Mitterand, interview in *Le Monde*, July 31, 1980, quoted in Pierre Lellouche, *L'Avenir de la Guerre*, Mazarine, Paris, 1985, p. 39.

⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 68-69.

¹⁰Pierre Gallois, *The Balance of Terror*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1961, p. 191.

beginning of the Alliance in the 1950s or at least since its reformulation into its present shape in the 1960s. The other four issues are somewhat newer, at least as they are now discussed.

Discussions of *The Europeans' Commitments to Themselves* might have moved into their current form in the 1960s, as fears of Germany past faded in the minds of the other NATO members. But de Gaulle's difficulties in reconciling a *Europe des Patries* with a more unified version under distinct French leadership postponed such changes, and the debate did not really take its current form until the suspicions of the United States induced by Carter, Reagan, and strategic parity grew stronger in the late 1970s and the 1980s.

Before and after the Soviet suppression of the Prague spring in 1968, the primary assumption about *NATO's role in Eastern Europe* was that NATO did not have a role in Eastern Europe. Militarily that remains the case, but from the advent of *Ostpolitik* through the rise and fall of Solidarity, it has become increasingly clear that NATO members and to some degree the organization itself can and want to play a political role in the differentiating world of what are now seldom called the "Soviet satellites." This role has become the subject of a changing debate.

The issue of *NATO and the Rest of the World* has taken on many different shapes, from the American involvement in Vietnam, through the rise and decline of OPEC, to the terrorism and Persian Gulf scenarios of the 1980s.

Arms Control and Disarmament have been debated throughout the period. In the early 1960s proposals related to Europe took the form of "disengagement" of NATO and Warsaw Pact forces in central Europe. This was not taken very seriously by the American Maintainer and European Coupler establishment, and it faded. From the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s, "serious" arms control discussions concerned the strategic weapons of the two superpowers and eventuated in the ABM treaty and SALT I and II. So far as European arms control was concerned, the establishment used ongoing negotiations to provide a political sop to the Remover peace movement. The second track of NATO's 1979 INF two-track decision—the offer to negotiate down the levels of intermediate missiles being installed—and the 1981 offer to zero them out if the SS-20s were also removed, were offered in the belief that they were not serious because the Soviets would never agree. When Gorbachev did agree in 1986, the issue and the debate became very serious indeed and turned out to have an intimate relationship to the central issue of the American commitment.

The NATO debate of the late 1980s thus turns on the old issues, in somewhat but not very new forms. The American commitment

remains pivotal; the nuclear-conventional link, nuclear weapons issues, the Europeans' commitments to themselves, and the arms control-disarmament debates all depend in greater or lesser degree on understandings of what that commitment is and beliefs about what it should be. The debate over levels of conventional forces is also related to the commitment issues, but proceeds on even more ancient premises. And the question of whether Soviet policy toward the West is changing substantially has become the wild card that may well start all the other debates off in very new directions.

III. THE COUPLERS

For Germans and other Europeans whose memory of the catastrophe of conventional war is still alive and on whose densely populated territory both pacts would confront each other with the destructive power of modern armies, the thought of an ever more probable conventional war is terrifying. To Germans and other Europeans, an ever more probable conventional war is, therefore, no alternative to war prevention through the current strategy, including the option of a first use of nuclear weapons.

—Karl Kaiser, Georg Leber, Alois Mertes,
and Franz-Josef Schulze¹

For de Gaulle, the fate of the American nuclear guarantee was sealed. Sooner or later, he predicted, an "equilibrium of deterrence" would replace American superiority, and this "equilibrium" would protect only the two superpowers "and not the other countries of the world, even though they found themselves tied to one or the other of the two colossal powers."

—Pierre Lellouche²

NATO is about Europe, so the Couplers, the mainstream European School of Thought, provide an appropriate place to begin this survey. The first of the two quotations, by four Germans, including spokesmen for both the Christian Democratic (CDU) and Socialist (SPD) parties, summarizes succinctly the major common European value judgment, one sometimes forgotten by Americans: Europeans value their own self-preservation, and their historical experience leads them to fear the conventional war they have experienced almost as much as the nuclear war they can imagine.

The European dilemma, however, is based on the belief that the nuclear threat is needed to deter conventional war. The ultimate nuclear deterrent for the West is the American strategic force, and, as Lellouche's quote from a 1964 de Gaulle press conference illustrates, West Europeans have been nervous for many years about the reliability of the commitment of this force to their defense. Issues of commitment—the commitments of European nations to each other as

¹Karl Kaiser, Georg Leber, Alois Mertes, Franz-Joseph Schulze, "Nuclear Weapons and the Preservation of Peace," *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1982, p. 1164.

²Pierre Lellouche, *L'Avenir de la Guerre*, Mazarine, Paris, 1985, p. 47.

well as that of the United States to Western Europe as a whole—and of how these commitments might be implemented are central to the European portion of the debate. Indeed, it is this focus more than anything else that distinguishes the European Couplers from the American Maintainers.

The eight issue categories are analyzed in four groups:

- *Alliance political issues*, including the U.S. Commitment to NATO, the Europeans' Commitments to Themselves, and the Rest of the World;
- *Military issues*: the Conventional-Nuclear Link, and Conventional Weapons;
- *The Opponent*: the Soviet Union, and Eastern Europe;
- *Arms Control*, as one output of the East/West interaction.

This section takes up the groups of issues in the above order. (Because the Americans stress military analysis of NATO issues, the section on the Maintainers reverses the order of the first two groups.) The section ends with a summary of Coupler recommendations; in spite of the broad range of Coupler viewpoints manifested on the issues of the debate, their common stress on the central role of American nuclear deterrence in their own preservation ultimately leads them to a much narrower set of policy recommendations.

ALLIANCE POLITICAL ISSUES

The U.S. Commitment

The French, since de Gaulle, have been the most concerned about the strength of the American commitment. Lellouche, an Assistant Director of the *Institut Français des Relations Internationales* (IFRI), is at the forefront of those who contend that de Gaulle was prescient in his "sooner or later" prediction of the erosion of the American nuclear commitment. Lellouche believes that the time has come and that France and the rest of Europe must recognize this and plan accordingly:

General de Gaulle's defense system which we have inherited was essentially conceived by him at the beginning of the 1960s. Another world. A world marked by the incontestable nuclear superiority of the United States and by an unprecedented economic boom, with these elements assuring the stability of Germany and of Europe at the heart of the Atlantic Alliance, and permitting the birth of the process of European construction. . . . Nuclear arms technology

hardly hinted at its first great revolution: intercontinental missiles had only just appeared, the conquest of space had no more than begun, and guidance precision was measured in kilometers.

On all of these points, we almost live today on another planet. Not only has the USSR put an end to American nuclear superiority, but it has established in Europe an absolute superiority as much nuclear as in conventional forces, thus creating political instability at the heart of NATO.³

And, as a result:

The famous American "umbrella," though it may still retain an important political value, has lost its strategic significance. Without doubt, America will fight for Europe—but it will fight with conventional armies, without risking uncontrollable escalation to the nuclear level.⁴

Complementing Lellouche's strategic thinking, Jimmy Goldsmith, the Anglo-French publisher of the largest French weekly newsmagazine, *L'Express*, added an analysis of American demographic and economic change, and then echoed a series of arguments for reduced commitment that he had heard within the United States. In an article widely discussed in France, he wrote that:

San Antonio, Texas, is now largely Mexican. Miami is a sort of capital of Latin America. Los Angeles aspires to become the same for the Pacific. The European sensibility and heritage is on the decline. The volume of American commerce with the Pacific region has exceeded that of commerce with Europe. . . .

The debate is not limited to the left or the right; neither to isolationists nor internationalists. . . . The reasons for change are identifiable: (1) Americans have the conviction that chronic assistance to those who do not need it is injurious. . . . (2) Americans think that Europe potentially has all that it needs to defend itself. . . . (3) The softness [toward the Soviets] of European foreign policy is considered a "polluting" element for American foreign policy. . . . (4) When an alliance is made up of a dominant partner and a number of weaker ones, the distortions are evident. . . . (5) At a time when Europeans criticize the budget deficit (\$221 billion in 1986) and the balance-of-payments deficit (\$140 billion) of the United States, the cost of participation in NATO is an argument well-used by partisans of retreat.⁵

³Lellouche, *L'Avenir de la Guerre*, pp. 28-29.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 88.

⁵Jimmy Goldsmith, "Le Levier de la Défense," *L'Express*, February 17-March 5, 1987, pp. 37-38. In his role as Anglo-French financier, Jimmy Goldsmith is Sir James Goldsmith.

Lellouche and Goldsmith express a common French view of the erosion of the American commitment, but they express it somewhat more extremely than many of their countrymen. François Heisbourg, an influential French analyst and official who has become Director of the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in London, for example, contends in a review of Lellouche's book that less has changed than he implies: "That the American guarantee was categorical is not new, and France, in its time, had considered this situation sufficiently disquieting to create a national deterrent force."⁶ And several writers suggest that many of the problems are based more on the idiosyncracies of the Reagan administration than on any fundamental American tendencies.⁷

In any case, most French analysts and officials agree that either fundamental strategic changes or current ideologies will cause the United States to reduce its commitment to NATO, although a few argue that American vital interests will continue to support the commitment.⁸

This discussion began before the suddenly serious U.S.-Soviet negotiations in 1987 over NATO's nonserious (in 1981) "zero-zero" proposal to remove all U.S. and Soviet INF missiles from Europe. Zero-zero caused additional consternation, with worries centering on whether it was the first step down "the slippery slope" to full denuclearization of Europe and thus full abrogation of the American commitment. Even before the 1987 negotiations, these concerns had received a major boost from the November 1986 Reagan-Gorbachev Reykjavik meeting, where the President's failure to consult the allies, and his apparent tendency to present proposals without having thought them through, added greatly to West European insecurities. One post-Reykjavik statement, by French Prime Minister Jacques Chirac to the Western European Union, shows both the extent of disquietude and the degree to which official France was willing to put this tactfully on the record. Discussing potential removal of the intermediate range missiles, Chirac said:

If one could only be grateful for the declared intention of the Soviets to dismantle most of their SS-20s, one could but hope to avoid the possibility that the eventual removal of the American missiles would not begin a weakening of the tie between Europe and the United States. . . . We can never repeat frequently enough that the danger

⁶François Heisbourg, "Réalités et illusions," *Le Monde*, 1985.

⁷See, for example, Pierre Hasner, "L'Europe entre les États-Unis et l'Union Soviétique," *Commentaire*, Spring 1986, p. 7.

⁸For an example of the latter, see Yves Boyer, "The Development of the Strategic Rationale for United States Forces in Europe," paper presented to the Conference on Conventional Forces, jointly sponsored by The RAND Corporation, IFRI, and the Royal Institute of International Affairs, at Wiston House, England, March 1987.

to our existence presented by the formidable nuclear, conventional, and classical arsenal of the East must always be seen in its totality. Considering the inherent superiority of the Soviet Union in conventional and chemical forces on the European continent, security over the long term will continue to require the presence in West Europe of a sufficient number of American nuclear arms.⁹

In addition to its audible whistling in the dark over continuation of the American commitment, Chirac's statement is notable for the continued public agreement by a French official that, even with its own independent nuclear deterrent, France still must count on American weapons as well. It should also be noted that President François Mitterand, Chirac's political opponent but resident of the same political home in the French constitutional "cohabitation," appeared far more relaxed about the same matters.¹⁰

The British Couplers,¹¹ although concerned with the same issues, differ in tone and substance from the French. If the French are tensely worried about a diminishing U.S. commitment and believe the diminution to be the result of such objective changes as strategic parity and changing American ethnicity, the British are fairly relaxed, feeling that much of the apparent erosion is subjective and should be approached under the banner of "Come, let us reason together."

The prevailing British view has been expressed in a series of articles by Frederick Bonnart, a retired Army officer who edits *NATO's Sixteen Nations*, an unofficial journal published in Brussels. Bonnart is clear on both the need for maintaining the Alliance in something like its current state, and the cooperative way in which this should be done:

[H]owever well matched Soviet conventional power in Europe may be—and at present it is not—there can be no security for Europeans in the long term without the presence on their continent of sizable American nuclear and conventional forces.¹²

Marriages are for better or for worse, for good or for evil. Alliances may be a little more flexible. But both stand to gain by a mature

⁹Jacques Chirac, "Allocution du Premier Ministre devant l'Assemblée de l'U.E.O.," Paris, December 2, 1986, in Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Direction des Affaires Politiques, *Questions Politico-Militaires*, 2ième Semestre 1985, Année 1986, pp. 164-165.

¹⁰See for example, Jim Hoagland, "A Horse Race in France," in the *Washington Post*, April 3, 1987, p. A2.

¹¹Politically, this School includes the Conservatives and a few remaining "right-wing" members of the Labour Party, although mainstream Labour is in the Remover category. The Liberal-Social Democratic Alliance has also been largely Coupler and has taken official positions consistent with this viewpoint, but much of the Liberal segment has stayed substantially on the Remover side. At this writing, however, with the merging of the two parts into a single party, which some Social Democrats are leaving, the ultimate position is not clear.

¹²Frederick Bonnart, "West Europe Ponders Soviet Aims," *International Herald Tribune*, May 6, 1987.

attitude of each partner toward the other. As in any cooperative human endeavor, the cost to each should be considered less important than the common benefit to both. In a matter of life and death, it is only that which counts in the end.¹³

This is not to say that the British believe that no movement is taking place. Historian Sir Michael Howard sees substantial change happening, with more needed, but nothing like an end to NATO or a fundamental restructuring that might, for example, shift the Alliance to a primarily European rather than an Atlantic basis. Howard stresses a common British theme—that the Alliance has been slow in adapting to change—quite different from the French idea that the world has begun to fall down around our ears as the American nuclear commitment comes into doubt. He suggests that, starting with 1949:

The American presence was wanted in Western Europe, not just in the negative role of a *deterrent* to Soviet aggression, but in the positive role of a *reassurance* to the West Europeans. . . . There can be little doubt that since 1949 changes have occurred, both objective and subjective, on a scale comparable to those between 1815 and 1854, or 1870 and 1914. . . . What is needed today is a reversal of that process whereby European governments have sought greater security by demanding an ever greater intensification of the American nuclear commitment; demands that are as divisive within their own countries as they are irritating for the people of the United States. Instead we should be doing all we can to reduce our dependence on American nuclear weapons by enhancing, so far as is militarily, socially and economically possible, our capacity to defend ourselves.¹⁴

Howard's last sentence brings up another central theme in the transatlantic debate over the U.S. commitment to NATO, that of burden-sharing. This is not much talked about by the French who, because they consider their own contribution to NATO to be an independent one, are reluctant to either criticize the contributions of others or defend their own. Many in the United States, though strongly pro-NATO, believe that the Europeans should be bearing much more of the economic and other weight; and this is much on the mind of the British. But Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe, after suggesting that sudden unilateral attempts by the United States to "equalize" burdens could turn out to be quite negative from the American as well as the European standpoint, contends that they are not badly balanced in any case:

¹³Frederick Bonnant, "Dangers of Divorce," *NATO's Sixteen Nations*, February-March 1987.

¹⁴Michael Howard, "Reassurance and Deterrence: Western Defense in the 1980s," *Foreign Affairs*, Winter 1982-1983, pp. 310-322.

[T]he most likely result of withdrawing the American "prop" might well not be to spur the Europeans to stand on their own two feet and multiply their own defense efforts. It could be more likely to make them question whether their own commitments to each other were still worth the sacrifices involved. It would certainly strengthen the platform of those (happily a small minority at present) who have always argued for European neutrality and/or accommodation with the East. . . .

Overall, the non-U.S. NATO allies do appear to be shouldering roughly their fair share. (This paragraph will not, I hope, be taken as European special pleading. Every sentence in it is taken from Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger's report to Congress of March 1984 about the balance of allied contributions.)¹⁵

And finally, many of the British agree with other Europeans that the problems of the role and commitment of the United States, whatever their fundamental basis, have been substantially exacerbated by the policies and style of the Reagan administration. The British, like the French and all other West Europeans, were deeply distressed by President Reagan's nonconsulting unilateralism at Reykjavik. Whatever remains of the "special relationship" encourages British writers to comment more directly and pungently on American politics than do the French. Even before Reykjavik, David Watt, former Director of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, wrote:

Let us put our cards on the table. There are two basic views about President Reagan's foreign policy. One, the Administration's, appears to be accepted (if the opinion polls are to be believed) by the majority of Americans. It is that the United States, after years of weakness and humiliation, has once again faced the challenge of an aggressive, expansionist Soviet Union, revived the global economy, rescued the Western Alliance and generally reasserted true American leadership in the world. The other view is shared to a greater or lesser extent by much of the rest of mankind, with the possible exceptions of the Israelis, the South Africans, President Marcos of the Philippines and a few right-wing governments in Central and South America. It is that the Reagan administration has vastly overreacted to the Soviet threat, thereby distorting the American (and hence the world) economy, quickening the arms race, warping its own judgment about events in the Third World, and further debasing the language of international intercourse with feverish rhetoric. A subsidiary charge, laid principally by the Europeans, Canadians and many Latin Americans, but frequently endorsed in the Arab world and the Far East, is that in a desperate attempt to rediscover "leadership," the United States under Reagan has reverted to its worst unilateral habits, resenting and ignoring, when it deigns to notice, the

¹⁵Sir Geoffrey Howe, "The European Pillar," *Foreign Affairs*, Winter 1984-1985, pp. 333-334.

independent views and interests of its friends and allies. It is in my experience almost impossible to convey even to the most experienced Americans how deeply rooted and widely spread the critical view has become.¹⁶

Or, put with perhaps more typical English restraint by an even stronger pillar of the Establishment, Field Marshall Lord Bramall, retired Chief of the General Staff:

The question therefore that we should perhaps be asking ourselves is whether . . . the somewhat erratic content of some of the policies that sadly have recently been evident across the Atlantic, should somehow be changing what we do. In general terms, I am sure that the answer to the . . . question is emphatically no.¹⁷

Even after Reykjavik, and even after the reappearance of zero-zero, not "changing what we do" as a West European response to actual or potential changes across the Atlantic has been the standard British response. Over the long run, moves in the direction of self-reliance are inevitable and desirable, but, as Howard points out, they should be gradual and constrained.

The German Couplers cover a broader spectrum in their views on the U.S. commitment than do the French or the British: some German views resemble the French tension of Lellouche, others the British calm of Bramall. To be sure, the German Couplers—the governing coalition of the Christian Democrats (CDU), Bavarian Christian Socialists (CSU), and Free Democrats (FDP), plus a large portion of the opposition Social Democrats (SPD)¹⁸—do all agree on the crucial importance to the Federal Republic of the continued American nuclear commitment. Opposition was widespread, for example, to the suggestion for No First Use of nuclear weapons by NATO, tentatively put forth in the early 1980s by the American "Gang of Four" (McGeorge Bundy, George Kennan, Robert McNamara, and Gerard Smith). The four Germans quoted at the beginning of this section—Karl Kaiser (Director of the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik* or DGAP), Georg Leber (an SPD Bundestag Deputy and former Defense Minister), Alois Mertes (a CDU Deputy), and Franz-Josef Schulze (a retired general and NATO commander)—wrote:

¹⁶David Watt, "As a European Saw It," *Foreign Affairs*, Fall 1983, p. 521.

¹⁷Lord Bramall, *House of Lords Official Report*, Parliamentary Debates (Hansard), Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 25 March 1987, Columns 194-195.

¹⁸How large a portion is unclear on two grounds: First, estimates vary on how many of the Social Democrats in the Bundestag or elsewhere are "moderates" like several quoted in this discussion of the Couplers; second, it is not clear how immoderate the "left wing" is. Virtually the entire SPD remains committed to NATO and to the U.S. commitment to NATO, but how to weigh this against various SPD antinuclear stances is less well defined than for, say, the British Labour Party.

The tight and indissoluble coupling of conventional forces and nuclear weapons on the European continent with the strategic potential of the United States confronts the Soviet Union with the incalculable risk that any military conflict between the two Alliances could escalate to nuclear war. . . . Not only the inhabitants of the Federal Republic of Germany but also American citizens help bear the risks, the conventional as well as the nuclear. The indivisibility of the security of the Alliance as a whole and of its territory creates the credibility of deterrence.

[T]he proposed no-first-use policy would destroy the confidence of Europeans and especially of Germans in the European-American Alliance as a community of risk, and would endanger the strategic unity of the Alliance and the security of Western Europe.¹⁹

In fact, however, this 1982 statement of principle papered over deep German worries about the U.S. commitment, which antedate the No-First-Use proposal let alone Reykjavik, and cracks in the German Coupler front, which the 1987 zero-zero revival has turned into widening fissures. In 1981, Uwe Nerlich, Research Director of the major German defense analysis institute, the *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik*, expressed great doubts about U.S. policy as it had manifested itself in the 1970s:

Given the leading role of the United States in Western affairs, the most distressing aspect of the current political reality is that the United States no longer propounds a concept of world affairs within which Western Europe could play roles at all commensurate with its inner dynamics. In fact, U.S. policies no longer follow any design; they are guided by crisis behavior as the occasions arise, without sufficient instruments to control the outcomes. . . .

If during the first Nixon term a more complex American approach put the Soviet Union temporarily on the defensive, the primacy of American domestic affairs imposed itself again with the end of the Vietnam war and the climactic events of Watergate. To make matters worse, the Carter administration painfully demonstrated that competence is the key element in all relations with the Soviet Union.²⁰

The invidious comparison between Carter and Nixon might lead some Americans to believe that this is a right-wing diatribe against American softness, but Nerlich was no right winger in any conventional sense. Six years later, he was even darker in his views of the conservative governments that then ruled all the major NATO nations:

¹⁹Kaiser et al., "Nuclear Weapons and the Preservation of Peace," pp. 1159-1162.

²⁰Uwe Nerlich, "Change in Europe: A Secular Trend?" in *Daedalus*, Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Winter 1981; pp. 71-83.

[T]he alliance tends to be engaged in a vicious circle: The weaker the political leaderships, the more security policies are victimized by domestic policies, which in turn overburdens democracies and often lowers their quality, and, of course, this exacerbates the need for political leadership, etc. The INF debate since 1986 is a case in point. Friedrich Nietzsche stated 110 years ago: "Those who aim publicly at something too large and beyond their capacity will also lack the capacity to disavow their aims publicly."²¹

A part of the 1981 paper was devoted to the contention that "the only way the Atlantic Alliance can persist is through social democratic support."²² This was apparently a shot in the civil war to save the soul of the social democratic SPD for then-Chancellor Helmut Schmidt's strongly pro-NATO, pro-nuclear policies. Schmidt lost the war and the chancellorship, the SPD lost the government for at least a decade, and the cracks in the Coupler consensus have become gulfs. Although many members of the SPD remain Couplers in that they continue to support NATO—perhaps a majority, depending on the precise line used to delineate the School—even the moderates differ substantially on nuclear issues from the CDU and from Nerlich, as will be seen below in the discussion of German attitudes toward the zero-zero arms control proposals.

One reason for the SPD civil wars is that the West German Couplers must keep on looking back over their shoulders at the Remover peace movement, with its profound distrust of everything American and nuclear. This is discussed in a 1983 analysis by Christoph Bertram, former Director of IISS, now political editor of *Die Zeit* of Hamburg:

While the [German] antimissile movement had acquired an unprecedented depth and articulation, it nevertheless remained the manifestation of a minority. The efforts within the SPD to prevent the party from drifting into opposition to the Atlantic Alliance reflected this. They were motivated not only by the conviction of the leadership that there was no alternative to NATO, but also by the realization that no party opposed to the security link with the United States would stand a chance with the conservative, security-minded German electorate.²³

In any case, by 1987 the zero-zero negotiations caused, or revealed, the great gap between the two sides of what had once been the German

²¹Uwe Nerlich, "Conventional Arms Control in Europe: The Objectives," in James Thomson and Uwe Nerlich (eds.), *Conventional Arms Control and the Future of Europe*, Westview Press, Boulder, 1988.

²²Nerlich, "Change in Europe: A Secular Trend?" p. 81.

²³Christoph Bertram, "Europe and America in 1983," *Foreign Affairs*, Winter-Spring 1984, p. 627.

Coupler consensus. Both sides remained committed to NATO, to dependence on the United States of the Alliance in general and the Federal Republic in particular, and to the crucial role of the American nuclear deterrent. But whether to endorse zero-zero, what would happen if and when it was adopted, and what to do next were all subjects of major contention. On a political level, the issue divided the government coalition, with FDP Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher favoring the zeroing out of all intermediate-range missiles; and CDU Chancellor Helmut Kohl, who strongly opposed the removal of the 500-1000 kilometer-range weapons (the Short-Range Intermediate Nuclear Force, or SRINF), being dragged into acquiescence by Genscher and by American pressure. This will be discussed in the arms control section below.

With regard to its effect on coupling, however, the anti-zero-zero view is expressed analytically by Nerlich, who contends that the withdrawal of American INF missiles would so weaken the link with the United States that European deterrence would have to depend on French and British nuclear weapons:

The zero option—a treaty agreement not to deploy U.S. intermediate-range weapons in Western Europe for some quid pro quo—raises fundamental questions about the maintenance of NATO's deterrence strategy and for the foreseeable future can in no way be justified on strategic grounds. However, were such an agreement, a treaty of whatever kind resulting in a withdrawal of the American INF, nevertheless to come about, then the French and British nuclear forces would have to acquire completely new functions.²⁴

But Gert Krell, the Director of the Peace Research Institute of Frankfurt (which, in spite of its name, is not part of the antinuclear peace movement), believes that the effects of zero-zero on the U.S. commitment have been vastly overblown:

It is very difficult to understand that there should still be resistance against this package in the West. . . . The objections are . . . not credible. They sound schizophrenic when raised by French leaders who complain about what they see as decoupling by the United States, but who hold on to France's own and long-standing decoupling from the defense of Europe. . . . Coupling the United States to Europe through nuclear escalation linkage is not a question of hardware but of deterrence politics and metaphysics. Security through extended deterrence cannot be enforced by the deployment of nuclear weapons—of which there will be an abundance even after

²⁴Uwe Nerlich, "La force de dissuasion nucléaire française et la sécurité de la RFA," in Kaiser and Lellouche, p. 187. The volume was published simultaneously in German; this and other quotations here are translated from the French version.

LRINF withdrawal on European soil or in the adjoining waters. More important are the political unity of the alliance and the presence of U.S. troops.²⁵

Being fully dependent on the United States nuclear deterrent, the Germans on both sides of these issues may just have thought about them more thoroughly and more pragmatically than the philosophers in the other major European members of NATO.

The Europeans' Commitments to Themselves

It has been abundantly clear since the beginning of the Alliance that no other member than the United States had any individual capability to stand up to Soviet military power. The independent nuclear forces of France and Britain might enable those two nations to keep the Soviets on the proper side of the Rhine and the Channel by mounting essentially suicidal threats behind the deterrence of "the strong by the weak," in the phrase used by the French. But implementation of the threats would be a fatal remedy for a fatal disease, and for that reason use of the independent nuclear forces for national purposes was uncertain; pledges for Alliance purposes were even more uncertain in the case of Britain, unmade in the case of France. These deterrents were thus of little comfort to the rest of NATO, particularly to the Federal Republic of Germany, the only large European nation bordering on the Iron Curtain.

It has been equally clear since at least the 1960s when Western Europe became economically strong that if the nations to the west of the Elbe became a unity instead of a loose confederation, they could command enough economic and military power to deter the Soviets, defend against them and probably, if need be, defeat them.

Western Europe remains confederal at best, which Americans frequently ignore when thinking in terms of "the European contribution." In recent years, however, European uncertainties about the U.S. commitment, American prods to share more of the burden, and economic incentives to produce more weapons in Europe have combined to bring various steps toward defense unity into consideration. Discussions have had two foci: the broad one of a West European "alliance within the Alliance," or at least more of a common contribution and strategy; and the narrower possibility of a specifically Franco-German arrangement at the center.

²⁵Gert Krell, "Reykjavik and After," Peace Research Institute, Frankfurt, April 1987, mimeographed, pp. 13-14.

For *the Germans* and *the French*, it is this central arrangement that dominates the debate, even though few of either nationality would dissent from the longer-run objective set forth by Peter Schmidt of the *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik*: "the renewed interest of France in cooperating more closely with the Federal Republic of Germany could be used as a 'moving force' to improve the state of European integration."²⁶ More recently, in 1987 after zero-zero turned serious, French analyst Jean d'Aubach set forth a far-reaching conclusion of the line of thought that begins with fear of U.S. abandonment:

The probability of a diminution of the American commitment in Europe is not negligible. . . . This is the reason why Europe has no alternative solutions in the next three decades: *it must possess nuclear weapons to guarantee its security. . . . It seems that the "juxtaposition" of the French and British capabilities could reach this result.*²⁷

Few French or British—or Germans—would go that far, however.

On the other side (and somewhat earlier) former Chancellor Helmut Schmidt grumbled:

On balance, I have come to think that General De Gaulle was right in his belief that the British are not really prepared to cast their lot with the rest of the European nations. . . . The British will join the club only if they cannot prevent it from being successful. (If this sounds harsh, I apologize to the British.)²⁸

Such harshness would command less than a consensus in Germany or France.

In any case, what is more important than the specific view of Britain is the fact that that view is not very important in the debate, nor is d'Aubach's Franco-British nuclear melding: Most German and French debaters are intense about their own relationship, vague about its extension to "Europe" as a general entity, and don't think any more than do Americans about the other specific nations making up this general entity.

Virtually all the debaters hope for a stronger Franco-German relationship as a reinforcement of their mutual defense. Lellouche puts it strongly:

²⁶Peter Schmidt, "Europeanization of Defense: Prospects of Consensus?" The RAND Corporation, P-7042, December 7, 1984, p. 34.

²⁷Jean d'Aubach, "To Gather Europe for its Defense," *Commentaire*, Spring 1987 (trans. Michel Klem), pp. 1-9.

²⁸Helmut Schmidt, *A Grand Strategy for the West*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1985, pp. 52-53.

[O]ur defense—of our survival as well as our liberties—begins on the Elbe and not on the Rhine. . . . But in that case, let us be clear with ourselves, with Germany, and with the adversary. The only way to transmit this signal consists of *redeploying our forces, massing them no longer on the Rhine, but on the Elbe.*²⁹

This is particularly important to Lellouche because of his fears that a weakened American commitment will leave the Franco-German alliance as the mainstay of French defense. A secondary reason for French interest in strengthening the linkage between the two nations is that, as Helmut Schmidt puts it: "in the long run the Germans will remain on the Western side only if the French help them and bind them to the West."³⁰ This thought could be expressed more tactfully by Schmidt than by a French writer about Germany.

The hope has not been father to the relationship, however. The Germans and the French had been trying for many years. In the 1970s, Schmidt, as Chancellor, became so disgusted with President Carter's eccentricity (see Nerlich's comments above) that he tried to substitute a German-French core for American leadership of the Alliance. The concept faded when Giscard was replaced by Mitterand and Schmidt by Kohl; but in 1984, he urged it on these two successors:

Cooperation began to decline during the administration of President Carter. He confronted his European allies with surprising "lonely" decisions, taken without consultation. The situation was not eased when he made a number of subsequent corrections, since some of these were put into effect just as surprisingly. . . . [The] vacuum in transatlantic leadership was filled in considerable degree by the close cooperation on foreign and economic policy between Giscard d'Estaing and the German Chancellor [Schmidt]. With Giscard's departure in the spring of 1981 and the accession to office a few months earlier of Ronald Reagan, the situation worsened again. . . .

Valery Giscard and I had it in mind to establish a considerably closer link between, on the one hand, France's nuclear power and its conventional army and, on the other, conventional German military forces and German economic power. This goal today is a task for Mitterand and Kohl.³¹

At about the same time, he made all this much more concrete in a Bundestag speech, where he proposed 18 German and 12 French divisions, under French command, with some financial support for the French effort coming from Germany. French-born Harvard Professor

²⁹Lellouche, p. 281.

³⁰Helmut Schmidt, *A Grand Strategy for the West*, p. 56.

³¹Helmut Schmidt, "Saving the Western Alliance," *New York Review of Books*, May 31, 1984, pp. 25-27.

Stanley Hoffman reported that "The speech was barely discussed in France."³²

In fact, starting in 1982, two years before the Schmidt proposal, Chancellor Kohl and President Mitterand had begun a formal attempt to move their two nations' security structures and strategies closer together. It did not work well; Pierre Hassner evaluated the results of this effort, much more modest than Schmidt's proposal, in a terse phrase: "Never so much talk, never so little progress."³³

The summary statement of a joint volume sponsored by the German and French institutes, DGAP and IFRI, illustrates the problems and the issues in this, or any, substantial Franco-German defense arrangement, as seen from both sides. As put by the editors, Lellouche and Karl Kaiser:

Four years after the "new start" in cooperation in the realm of security, it must be conceded that the Franco-German defense partnership is still a long way from achieving real substance. . . .

From the French side, the dominant impression is that the major French initiatives toward the Federal Republic, in principles, in political platforms, and more concretely in technological, military, and space policy, have paid hardly any return. . . .

From the German side, the same impression of frustration dominates. In spite of the positive movement seen by the French, the feeling of distrust and deception lives on, reinforced by French defense concepts still viewed as nationalistic. . . . While France has taken a substantial step to fill German needs for consultation on French tactical nuclear weapons . . . it is clear that rather than tending toward greater cooperation on nuclear matters, forward movement has come up against a barrier created by the convergence of psychological pressures (on both sides), and by military considerations concerning the conditions for employing French forces and tactical nuclear weapons, as well as the political fallout of Soviet-American arms control negotiations.³⁴

Why these frustrations? Perhaps the general answer is that put by Dominique Moisi of IFRI: "France and West Germany have deeply

³²Stanley Hoffman, "The U.S. and Western Europe: Wait and Worry," *Foreign Affairs*, Spring 1984, p. 647.

³³Pierre Hassner, "La Cooperation Franco-Allemande: Achille Immobile à Grand Pas?" in Kaiser and Lellouche, p. 171.

³⁴Karl Kaiser and Pierre Lellouche, "Synthèses et Recommendations," in Kaiser and Lellouche (eds.), pp. 311-312. Their volume, *Le Couple Franco-Allemand et la Défense de L'Europe*, provides an excellent binational multivoiced treatment of the history and possibilities of Franco-German defense cooperation.

different visions of the world. France at heart is a status quo power; West Germany belongs to the revisionist camp."³⁵

The more specific answers are based on this asymmetry. What the Germans want from the French is basic but unachievable at least for now; without it the partnership is likely to progress only incrementally. What the French want from the Germans is less basic and more achievable; but because the French needs are themselves marginal, their effects, if achieved, are also likely to be incremental at most.

What the Germans want from the French, as summarized by CDU Bundestag Deputy Markus Berger, is that:

We must assume in common—and, in the interests of the Federal Republic, as long in advance as possible and under the best possible conditions—a tight joining of Alliance contingents for a forward defense [of Germany's Eastern border].

France must participate there with all its forces. Any distinction between a zone protected and defended by the global power of France, the French homeland for example, and a strategic rampart defended by conventional forces, where France will participate only on its own decision and with selected contingents, is in the interests neither of the Germans nor of French security.³⁶

French Prime Minister Chirac, however, maintains the distinction between the inner and outer zones, taking the French commitment to the Federal Republic as far as it can be taken in words alone, but making clear that it does consist largely of words:

[I]f the survival of the nation rests at the frontiers of our land, its security rests at the frontiers of its neighbors.

But

Crisis situations for which we must prepare so that deterrence remains strong are, in truth, largely unpredictable. That is why France attaches so much importance to conserving her freedom of action—to avoid the deterioration of her forces in automatic engagements for which they are badly adapted.³⁷

More recently, Chirac told the West Germans that if they are attacked by the Soviets, France will come to their aid "immediately

³⁵Dominique Moisi, "As the Pillars of Postwar Stability Shake, Europe Looks for Shelter," *International Herald Tribune*, April 4, 1987, p. 4.

³⁶Markus Berger, "La Force de Dissuasion Française et la Sécurité de la République Fédérale d'Allemagne," in Kaiser and Lellouche, p. 198.

³⁷Jacques Chirac, *Discours du Premier Ministre Devant l'Institut des Hautes Études de Défense Nationale*, September 12, 1986, mimeographed, pp. 13-14.

and without reservation,"³⁸ which is a stronger statement but still leaves French forces under French command and retains the decision to use nuclear weapons for the president of France, as President Mitterand pointed out at the same time. One French battalion has joined a new Franco-German brigade, but that is far short of the 12 French divisions contemplated by Schmidt, or of the French redeployment desired by Lellouche. (And even the mild step-up of symbolism marked by the Chirac statement and the brigade have caused visible upsets to other member nations, particularly Italy, one more obstacle to real movement.)

In any case, conserving freedom of action by maintaining the independence of the French deterrent and by keeping out of NATO's integrated command structure is nearly unanimous among the French. The Germans and the French are both realistic nations: They understand that this is essentially unchangeable, that it is inconsistent with the German goals as outlined by Berger, and that these facts put a severe constraint on strengthening the Franco-German coupling.

A strong German central premise puts an equally binding constraint on the coupling, and it is equally well recognized by the French: the need of the Federal Republic for maintenance of the full NATO and the full American connection. As put by Lothar Ruehl, a Minister of State in the Ministry of Defense:

It must be impossible for the Warsaw Pact to mount an attack that will allow it to isolate German forces and to seize German territory without immediately engaging the entire Alliance, and, in particular, American and British forces. . . . The allied defense within the NATO framework thus has the *absolute* priority over all other military cooperation.³⁹

This emphasis on the Alliance as a whole and the United States in particular is why Nerlich can write: "The French nuclear force remains for the Federal Republic a second-order question."⁴⁰

Although the German-American tie constrains Franco-German possibilities, it is well understood by the French who recognize that they too depend in part on the American strategic deterrent. Several other German-imposed constraints that annoy the French, while by no means trivial, are less central. One is based on the fact that since Willy Brandt the Federal Republic has been looking East toward the German Democratic Republic. Benoit d'Aboville of the French Foreign

³⁸Quoted in the *Boston Globe*, December 23, 1987, p. 9.

³⁹Lothar Ruehl, "1982: La R elance de la Cooperation Franco-Allemande," in Kaiser and Lellouche, p. 38. Italics added.

⁴⁰Nerlich, "La Force de Dissuasion Nucl eaire Fran aise," pp. 175-176.

Office mentions that "for a large fraction of French opinion, it is the Germans who, in the name of *Ostpolitik*, insist on the pursuit of dangerous chimeras."⁴¹

The most basic French complaint about the Germans is more economic than political. It concerns German cooperation in coproduction of weapons. Heisbourg is generally upbeat about Franco-German cooperation in weapons production, but his title, "Cooperation in Matters of Armaments: Nothing is Ever Achieved," reveals certain doubts,⁴² and in another piece published about the same time (1986) his exhortation for the future exhibits some signs of pessimism:

There is little time for Europeans to put their act together, both in terms of organization and of funding, if they wish to be true partners in developing the combat systems of the 1990s—this is especially true for West Germany. Even though the Federal Republic's military R&D funding has increased by close to 30 percent in 1985, it will take several years for Bonn to catch up with the French or the British in this realm.⁴³

The summation of the Franco-German debate over the Europeans' Commitments to Themselves is that it is positive and limited. The flirtation warms and cools but, as is inherent in a flirtation, it is essentially symbolic; both sides understand that it remains far from a consummation. In the same 1987 issue of *L'Express* in which Jimmy Goldsmith mentioned his doubts about the American commitment, staff writer Jérôme Dumoulin started off an enthusiastic article about the future of the Paris-Bonn defense arrangement by quoting the next-to-last sentence in Kaiser and Lellouche's summary of their Franco-German volume: "The hour has come to make the great leap toward tying together the destiny of the two lands."⁴⁴ What he does not quote is the next sentence—the very last of the book—"It remains to be seen if the occasion will be seized."⁴⁵

The British, properly enough, do not write about the special Franco-German relationship; they certainly do not seem to fear it. Rather, unlike the Germans and the French, they devote some

⁴¹Benoit d'Aboville, "La France, la RFA et le Contrôle des armements: des Malentendus à la Coopération," in Kaiser and Lellouche, p. 248.

⁴²François Heisbourg, "Coopération en Matière d'Armements: Rien n'est Jamais Acquis," in Kaiser and Lellouche, pp. 117-130.

⁴³François Heisbourg, "Conventional Defense: Europe's Constraint's and Opportunities," in Andrew Pierre (ed.), *The Conventional Defense of Europe: New Technologies and New Strategies*, Council on Foreign Relations, New York, 1986, p. 99.

⁴⁴Jérôme Dumoulin, "Paris-Bonn: ce que demandent les Allemands," *L'Express*, February 17-March 5, 1987, p. 39.

⁴⁵Kaiser and Lellouche, p. 325.

attention to the more general and abstract concept of a broader European military alliance within (or in the limit as a substitute for) the North Atlantic Alliance.

One motivation, existent although far less ubiquitous in Britain than among continental writers, is fear of American withdrawal, particularly after Reykjavik. Lord Gladwyn, as Sir Gladwyn Jebb, a long-time high-level British diplomat, exhibits a perceptible sense of panic about:

retreat as it were, into Fortress America. . . . In such distressing circumstances, short of having arrived at a credible form of European political unity, there is every reason to suppose that Western European governments would be found willing and able to enter into some arrangements which would leave the Soviet Union in a position to exercise a sort of hegemony over the whole Continent. . . . There are elements in Germany which might favour such a solution. Indeed we should probably dismiss the classic German *Drang nach Osten* as they call it, at our peril. The only way to eliminate this danger is for us to favour the genuine embodiment of Western Germany in an operative European political union which, at the moment and unlike the French, we seem as a government to be far from favoring.⁴⁶

Most British officials and analysts take the American aberrations of the mid-1980s more in stride, as being transitory. British interest in greater unity on defense is longer run and lower key. Hedley Bull, an Australian turned Oxford Professor, had an early-1980s vision of the need for greater West European defense unity that was taken as a possibly appropriate direction for the long run; it still is by many Britons:

There are three reasons why the countries of Western Europe should explore a Europeanist approach to their security. First, the old formulas of North Atlantic unity do not adequately recognize the differences of interest, both real and perceived, that divide the United States from its European partners. . . . Second, the policies advocated by the [European peace movement], while they are based partly on a correct perception of the differences of interest between the United States and Western Europe, would expose the latter to Soviet domination. . . . A third reason why Western Europe should explore this new course relates to what may be called its dignity. . . . [It] is demeaning that the rich and prosperous democracies of Western Europe in the 1980s . . . should fail to provide the resources for their own security and prefer to live as parasites on a transatlantic protector increasingly restless in this role. . . .

[A] Europeanist policy is not viable unless the nations of Western Europe can develop some appropriate form of unity. This is the greatest uncertainty of all. . . . The object should be a West European military alliance—an alliance within an alliance, preserving the

⁴⁶Lord Gladwyn, *House of Lords Official Report, Parliamentary Debates (Hansard)*, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 25 March 1987, columns 190-191.

wider structure of NATO. There might ultimately be a European alliance without NATO.⁴⁷

For other Britons, however, more pragmatically oriented toward the short run, such an alliance, within or instead of NATO, is more of a fantasy than a vision of the future. As put by Bonnart, a few years after Bull's piece:

When the [European Community] has overcome the problems of the common agricultural policy, the integration of new members, Irish neutrality, growing unemployment, industrial stagnation, and a few others, it might well, in the next century, be ready to tackle its own common defense. . . . Before such an EC defense could be created, however, the [NATO] alliance would likely disintegrate rapidly, with its members falling like ripe plums, one after the other, under the domination of the one superpower then left on the Eurasian continent.⁴⁸

Bonnart is more typical of the British than is Bull. The most serious part of the debate over the Europeans' commitments to themselves takes place on the continent and concerns the Franco-German connection. And unless the American commitment goes as sour as Lellouche predicts, both the French and the Germans recognize that progress is likely to be slow.

The Rest of the World

The debate over the appropriate relationship of the Alliance to the "rest of the world"—the two-thirds of the earth's population living south of the Mediterranean, the Caucasus, Siberia, and the Rio Grande—has undergone a sharp reversal since the beginning of the Alliance. In the early 1950s, the French, Portuguese, and Belgian empires were still close to their pre-World War II sweeps; so was the British, except that it had lost the jewel in the crown and the *raison d'être* for the rest, India; and the Dutch alone had shed their imperium, the Dutch East Indies having become Indonesia. Before the Vietnam war—the American Vietnam war of the 1960s, not the French war of the 1950s—the NATO debate consisted in large measure of anti-imperialist nagging from west of the Atlantic, and the debate within the United States centered on the question of how much risk we should take of weakening NATO in the name of anticolonialism. In 1959, for example, former Secretary of State Dean Acheson wrote:

⁴⁷Hedley Bull, "European Self-Reliance and the Reform of NATO," *Foreign Affairs*, Spring 1983, p. 875-892.

⁴⁸Frederick Bonnart, "NATO Is an Alliance that Should Not Be Disbanded," *International Herald Tribune*, September 24, 1986, p. 4.

The most important objective today . . . is to hold together those sources of strength we possess. These sources are North America and Western Europe . . . This . . . immediately draws the usual objections: "But you will throw in your lot with the colonial empires. . . ." If we would approach life from the point of view of formal moralistic rules, this caveat may be interesting. But if we approach our problem from the point of view of solving it, then these considerations are not at all important.⁴⁹

The combination in the 1960s of European shedding of most of the remnants of empire and American fiasco in Vietnam reversed the direction of moralizing and condescension. By 1987, Frenchman Jimmy Goldsmith could be as understanding of American interests in the Third World as Acheson had been of European interests 28 years earlier.

In fact, the question of NATO's role outside of Europe—and, even more important, the American role as it affected the commitment to the Alliance—while on such occasions as the American bombing of Libya it may have weighed more heavily on public opinion on both sides of the Atlantic than it did on officials and analysts—was a serious one. Like other issues south of the Mediterranean, however, it did not preoccupy most West European officials and analysts.

Peter Stratmann of the *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik* does take the issue up in order to caution that it ought not misdirect NATO:

Many statements made by defense and foreign-policy experts in the current Western and, in particular, American, debate on strategy convey that Soviet strategy may have undergone a significant change. . . . [T]he focus of Soviet political ambitions and strategic preoccupation has shifted to third-world regions outside the NATO area. . . . Many analysts are so fascinated by the challenge to "prepare for the unexpected" in the Third World that they tend to neglect or deemphasize the all-too-familiar "eurocentric" scenarios of "Soviet aggression against NATO." The indisputable fact that the Soviet Union continues to accord priority to the enhancement of its offensive capabilities directed against NATO has apparently had little effect on their views.⁵⁰

And Former Chancellor Schmidt picks up another common European strand, that the United States oversimplifies and knows not what it does in the Third World. To the south:

⁴⁹Dean G. Acheson, "The Premises of American Policy," *Orbis*, Fall 1959.

⁵⁰Peter Stratmann, "NATO Doctrine and National Operational Priorities: The Central Front and the Flanks: Part II," in *International Institute for Strategic Studies*, Adelphi Paper 207, pp. 35-42.

West Europeans have a clear interest in peaceful solutions in Central America. If the problems cannot be solved peacefully, then, in the European perception, the danger might arise that the traditionally good and close relations between Europe and Latin America might be jeopardized. The credibility of the United States as the Western leader might also be damaged in the eyes of a considerable part of the West European public, and this would add a strain to the European-America relationship.⁵¹

To the east—the Middle East:

In my view there is no chance that the West, or the United States, can bring about a "solution" for this troubled region that could possibly bring about a stabilized peace. The truth is that no one in the world can defend the Persian Gulf oil. . . . The best we can do is to try from time to time to shift our weight a little bit to one side or the other.⁵²

The questions of the appropriate Third World role of the Alliance and of the United States within or outside the Alliance have continued unsolved and indeed not even completely defined. In themselves, they remain an abrasive rather than a major determinant of European NATO policies or of the European side of the NATO debate; but they provide another indicator of European fears of American desertion, or at least distraction. The prevailing view is Stratmann's—keep your eye on the center ring of the circus—but European Couplers are aware that events in the Third World or American reaction to those events could pull the action into the outer rings, particularly in the Middle East, and that European or American public opinion could focus there no matter what is going on in the center.

MILITARY ISSUES

The Conventional-Nuclear Link

The conventional-nuclear link represents the military side of the issue of the U.S. commitment. The political question discussed above was: How strong is the American commitment to use nuclear weapons if necessary? The military question is: How will the commitment be implemented if necessary? European positions on the conventional-nuclear link, unlike positions on the more political aspects of the debate, do not fit easily into national categories. The major disagreement on the link is the one *between* Europe and the United States, and

⁵¹H. Schmidt, *A Grand Strategy for the West*, p. 83.

⁵²*Ibid.*, pp. 93-95.

even that is more a distinction in ways of thinking about the issue than in recommended solutions.

The European-American difference can be described in the terminology of operations analysis as a question involving two variables: The European Couplers want to maximize one variable subject to constraints imposed by the other; the American Maintainers consider the second the variable to be maximized, the other as the constraint.

- The West Europeans want a strategy that will maintain the credibility of the link between any potential conventional war on their continent and the American nuclear weapons that are counted on to deter the war's outbreak in the first place. The constraint is that the link to American nuclear forces cannot be so automatic as to scare the Americans away from the initial engagement.
- The Americans want a strategy that will avoid invoking nuclear weapons. The constraint is that this must be done without breaking the link completely, so that the nuclear deterrent to Soviet aggression in Europe will remain credible enough to do its job.

The two major American schools in the strategic nuclear debate contain those who, like Albert Wohlstetter, stress the controlled use of nuclear weapons for deterrence, damage limitation, and warfighting; and those who think it likely that such control will fail and that deterrence is, in McGeorge Bundy's term, "existential," depending on the uncertainties associated with the very existence of nuclear weapons.⁵³ Parallel to the American nuclear-control school are those Europeans who recognize the distinction between conventional and nuclear weapons and the importance of the threshold between the two, but espouse a carefully conceived strategy including controlled nuclear use as a potential defense and hence as a deterrent. Stratmann argues:

Given the comprehensive nature of the Soviet military challenge, it is unfortunate that the Western debate on force development programs has been based on a purported dichotomy between conventional and nuclear options. What is required in my view is a more complementary, integrated approach rather than the sweeping rejection of the utility of nuclear weapons which is in fashion now. Of course, in order to reduce NATO's current dependence on early employment of nuclear weapons stronger conventional capabilities are mandatory. But the availability of capable nuclear forces can significantly contribute to the stability of conventional defense.⁵⁴

⁵³See Levine, *The Strategic Nuclear Debate*.

⁵⁴K.-Peter Stratmann, "The Conventional Balance of Forces in Central Europe," in Netherlands Institute of International Relations, Clingendael, *Conventional Balance in*

And Lellouche adds an argument for the doctrine closest to the hearts of the American nuclear controllers, targeting of nuclear strikes on the enemy's military forces rather than trying to deter him by threatening his cities.⁵⁶

This contrasts with Norwegian Johan Holst's view of NATO deterrence, which draws on Bundy's existentialism:

The need to preserve a system of conventional denial and residual nuclear deterrence in Europe . . . does not imply the elimination of nuclear weapons, only a strengthening of the presumption against inevitable use. As long as nuclear weapons exist and are deployed in survivable and controllable fashion, no aggressor could have high confidence that he could push his conventional advantage with impunity. The residual capacity for nuclear response provides a kind of existential deterrence.⁵⁶

From a similar point of view, SPD Bundestag Deputy Karsten Voigt echoes the American arms controllers' doubts about the deterrent utility of controlled counterforce strategies: "So long as it is even faintly conceivable that a threat of selective nuclear strikes could lead to a major nuclear war and thus to mutual destruction, the threat itself [of a controlled response]—by rational standards—is not credible."⁵⁷

The European debate has many layers. NATO's "Flexible Response" doctrine, official Alliance policy since 1967, is summarized succinctly by the German foursome whose statement about Europeans' indifference between conventional and nuclear war waged on their territory headed up this section:

The strategy of flexible response attempts to counter any attack by the adversary—no matter what the level—in such a way that the aggressor can have no hope of advantage or success by triggering a military conflict, be it conventional or nuclear. The tight and indissoluble coupling of conventional forces and nuclear weapons on the European continent with the strategic potential of the United States confronts the Soviet Union with the incalculable risk that any military conflict between the two Alliances could escalate to nuclear war.

Europe: Problems, Strategies and Technologies, Zoetermeer, The Netherlands, May 11-13, 1984, p. 13.

⁵⁶Lellouche, pp. 259-260. Atypically among Europeans, Lellouche's nuclear concept is close to that of the Americans of the Wohlstetter school, who contend that their opponents favor counter-city targeting. Americans of the Bundy school deny this, asserting that the threat to the cities is an existential fact of life, not a preferred policy. See Levine, *The Strategic Nuclear Debate*.

⁵⁶Holst, "Denial and Punishment: Straddling the Horns of NATO's Dilemma," p. 69.

⁵⁷Karsten D. Voigt, "Nuclear Weapons in Europe: A German Social Democrat's Perspective," in Pierre, 1984, p. 103.

The primary function of nuclear weapons is deterrence in order to prevent aggression and blackmail.⁵⁸

But of course the simple military statement covers a host of political as well as military subtleties.⁵⁹ Flexible Response was as much a response to the allies' inability to agree on a precise strategy as it was to the Soviet threat as such. Voigt points out that:

The contradictions and conflicting interests inherent in the strategy of flexible response have never been fully discussed. They have been covered over by a NATO doctrine that views the resulting strategic ambiguity as an added factor of risk and thus an additional element of deterrence against the Warsaw Pact. But this is of dubious value for Alliance politics: it presents the Soviet Union with the opportunity to exploit unresolved conflicts of interest among the Atlantic allies thereby causing considerable strain in the Alliance.⁶⁰

The Kaiser-Leber-Mertes-Schulze statement and that of Voigt exemplify the pattern of European discussions of the conventional-nuclear link: Explicit agreement is expressed in military terms centered on the Flexible Response doctrine; the explicit agreement, however, papers over implicit political disagreements that can frequently be detected around the edges.

The central example is the question of *the threshold* at which NATO might make the choice to turn to nuclear weapons in order to avoid defeat at the conventional level. In the writings of recent years at least, it is difficult to find disagreement with the 1983 expression of French diplomat François de Rose, that: "The key task is to create the capabilities that can lift from the Alliance, in the event of a crisis, the incubus of early resort to nuclear weapons in order to avert certain defeat on the conventional battlefield."⁶¹

NATO Information Director Wilfried Hoffmann, however, expresses doubts about too high as well as too low a threshold:

If NATO were to have too few conventional forces, the East could come to the conclusion that the West no longer seriously contemplated a military defense because its failure to take steps to avoid an

⁵⁸Kaiser et al., p. 1159.

⁵⁹One such subtlety apparently lies in international semantics. The ordinary rendering in French of "Flexible Response" is "*Riposte Graduée*." The primary English-language meaning of *graduée* is, not surprisingly, "graduated," but this is not synonymous with "flexible." Graduation seems to imply, for example, always starting at a low level of violence, which is not necessarily implicit in flexibility. None of this seems to be commented on in the literature, however.

⁶⁰Voigt, 1984, pp. 101-102.

⁶¹François de Rose, "NATO's Perils—and Opportunities," *Strategic Review*, Fall 1983, p. 23.

early recourse to *nuclear* weapons could be seen as a reluctance to undertake any kind of self-defence, by either nuclear or conventional means. If however, NATO were to build up its conventional forces beyond a certain limit, the East could conclude that the West was in fact deterred by its own nuclear weapons, and at least secretly no longer relied on them.⁶²

More frequent is an agnostic but conservative position, "Why Change?" as expressed, for example, by Heisbourg's statement that "one could conclude that NATO's present force posture in Europe is reasonably satisfactory because it provides a relatively cost-effective mix of nuclear weapons (for deterrence) and conventional forces (destined to lend credibility to the threat of nuclear deterrence and to deal with limited contingencies)."⁶³

Former French Prime Minister Raymond Barre, while advocating a high threshold, brings up another key point in European doubts about the concrete steps needed to raise it—the cost:

West Europeans should aim to raise their overall defence capability and strengthen their immediate capacity for resistance. This concerns the whole of the Alliance and, in particular, my own country. It is difficult for a medium-size power such as France, as Britain well realizes, to do everything: simultaneously to maintain a nuclear deterrent at the best level possible, to keep conventional defence forces capable of acting alongside our allies on the European continent, to secure civil defence, and to maintain the forces needed to honour commitments outside Europe. And yet, this must be done!⁶⁴

As Americans have discovered in other contexts, however, exclamation points provide no clear solution to budgetary problems. Kaiser, Leber, Mertes, and Schulze run into a similar dilemma: "an energetic attempt to reduce the *dependence on an early first use* of nuclear weapons must be undertaken. . . . In sum, we consider efforts to raise the nuclear threshold by a strengthening of conventional options to be urgently necessary,"⁶⁵ but earlier in the same article, "We believe that the authors [of the No First Use proposal] considerably underestimate the political and financial difficulties which stand in the way of establishing a conventional balance by increased armament by the West."⁶⁶

⁶²Wilfried Hoffman, "Is NATO's Defence Policy Facing a Crisis?" *NATO Review*, August 1984, p. 7.

⁶³François Heisbourg, "Europe at the Turn of the Millenium: Decline or Rebirth?" *Washington Quarterly*, Winter 1987, pp. 48-49.

⁶⁴Raymond Barre, "Foundations for European Security and Cooperation," *Survival*, July/August 1987, p. 298.

⁶⁵Kaiser et al., pp. 1169-1170.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, p. 1163.

The No First Use proposal marks a conceptual upper bound on the threshold: Never use nuclear weapons unless the Warsaw Pact uses them first. As discussed in the section on the Maintainers, few Americans take No First Use literally as a current policy proposal. (The initiating article by the American "Gang of Four" proposes discussion of the concept, aimed at possible future implementation.) For many West Europeans, however, it is taken more seriously, as a threat. In addition to their fears about its effect on the American commitment, the German four who answered the Americans expressed a broad West European consensus in regard to the effects of a No First Use doctrine on the Russians and on the Alliance. Were the doctrine adopted by NATO:

Even in the case of a large-scale conventional attack upon the entire European NATO territory, the Soviet Union could be certain that its own land would remain a sanctuary as long as it did not itself resort to nuclear weapons. . . . [Thus] the proposed no-first-use policy would destroy the confidence of Europeans and especially of Germans in the European-American Alliance as a community of risk, and would endanger the strategic unity of the Alliance and the security of Western Europe.⁶⁷

Their manifesto opposing No First Use is not a right wing or militarist document; Leber is an SPD deputy; and Voigt, a sometime SPD spokesman on defense policy, advocates no more than "a Western defense strategy capable of renouncing the early use of nuclear weapons,"⁶⁸ thus avoiding endorsement of No First Use in all cases. This is not to say that the entire SPD would accept Voigt's implicit residual First Use strategy; but those members who remain in the Coupler consensus rather than being part of the more radical Remover school (not only No First Use, but No Nuclear Weapons) do not completely disown first use.

Indeed, it is difficult to find a current West European endorsement of No First Use, except by the Removers. Within the Coupler consensus, Holst has consistently advocated a high nuclear threshold, and in 1983 he came close to an endorsement of No First Use: "An NFU pledge [by NATO] could contribute to stability provided both sides take steps to reduce the vulnerability of their nuclear postures in Europe and to withdraw weapons that are likely to exert pressures for

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 1162.

⁶⁸Karsten D. Voigt, "Strategic Policy Options and the Implications for Arms Control, Stability and East-West Relations," in International Institute for Strategic Studies, *Adelphi Papers* 206, London, Spring 1986, p. 39.

early and massive use."⁶⁹ But by 1986, shortly before he became Defense Minister of Norway,⁷⁰ he qualified it a bit more: "The marginal arms-control benefits of a no-first-use doctrine—as compared to a doctrine of no early use—must be considered in relation to possible marginal costs in terms of deterrence and Alliance cohesion."⁷¹ And, as Defense Minister, he has taken a step farther back, although Norwegian policy is strongly antinuclear. In describing this policy, which eschews nuclear weapons for Norway or in Norway, he nonetheless makes it clear that:

NATO's strategy neither prescribes nor rules out the use of nuclear weapons. Norway places emphasis on developing a credible conventional defence system which would transfer to her opponent the burden [that] consideration of the possible employment of nuclear weapons would represent. Such employment is deterred by the Alliance's capacity to retaliate.⁷²

The Couplers' approach to the Conventional-Nuclear Link is further illuminated by their attitude toward INF. The zero-zero negotiations leading to the removal of INF will be taken up under the Arms Control heading. The discussions about initial installation, before the zero-zero proposal was taken seriously, however, throw light on the European primacy of political thinking over military, particularly the role of INF in maintaining the U.S. commitment, for this strategic issue as elsewhere.

A military justification for INF is very difficult to find in European writings. University of London Professor Lawrence Freedman comes closest:

[The] location of the new NATO missiles dispels any Soviet illusion about containing the consequences of a nuclear strike in Central and Western Europe and as such performs a valuable function. There really does seem to be some substance to the idea that the physical presence of U.S. weapons on European soil not only pro-

⁶⁹Holst, "Moving Toward No First Use in Practice," 1983, p. 194.

⁷⁰In several places throughout, this report uses the phrase "officials and analysts" to describe the participants in the arms debate. Holst is one of the few individuals describable as an "official and analyst." American Under Secretary of Defense Fred Iklé is another, as is his predecessor in office Robert Komer, and House Armed Services Committee Chairman Les Aspin.

⁷¹Holst, "Denial and Punishment: Straddling the Horns of NATO's Dilemma," in *International Institute for Strategic Studies, Adelphi Papers* 206, p. 69.

⁷²Holst, "Security and Low Tension in the Northern Regions," lecture at a seminar arranged by the Advisory Council on Arms Control and Disarmament of the Norwegian Government, Bodo, 12 June 1986, p. 3.

vides reassurance to the Europeans but also significantly affects Soviet calculations.⁷³

This argument, however, is not based on the utility of the missiles for carrying out some military mission better than other weapons; it is rather that they strengthen U.S. coupling to NATO deterrence. As put by Freedman: "LRTNF modernization was thus requested by West Europeans to increase the risk to the United States."⁷⁴

And the official German position on INF installation, as presented by Ruehl, makes clear several national political imperatives in addition to the demands of coupling:

The government of the Federal Republic of Germany focused on three demands regarding TNF [Theater Nuclear Force] modernization: 1) the emphasis of the TNF structure may not be placed on tactical nuclear weapons and tactical options; 2) the modernization may not effect massive additions to long-range delivery systems; 3) the Federal Republic of Germany may not occupy a special position in Europe. The first two demands together produced the third. However, this third demand, the *central demand* of TNF policy, as determined by strategic-operational as well as psychological factors, surpassed in its breadth the combined effects of the first two: It has as its goal the distribution of the burden within the Alliance and in particular among the NATO partners on the European mainland: The burden of LRTNF deployment should not rest on German soil.⁷⁵

The Germans still fear becoming the Teutonic knights facing the Slavs, alone on the eastern marches.

Unlike INF, President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) proposal for an American Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) system, was on its face an American rather than a European issue, but for Europeans it has raised similar threshold questions. West Europeans oppose SDI in part for economic reasons because they believe that it will give American research and development a boost that Europe cannot match. On the strategic side, many European analysts, like many Americans, have doubts about the feasibility of SDI as much more than a partial defense against missiles; nonetheless, they must take a potential strong ABM capability seriously, just in case.

Freedman, for example, is concerned with the effects on the Alliance of the shift toward American withdrawal that SDI seems to signal:

⁷³Lawrence D. Freedman, "U.S. Nuclear Weapons in Europe: Symbols, Strategy and Force Structure," in Pierre (ed.), p. 63.

⁷⁴Lawrence D. Freedman, *The Price of Peace: Living With the Nuclear Dilemma*, Firethorn Press, London, 1986, p. 65.

⁷⁵Lothar Ruehl, *Mittelstreckenwaffen in Europa: Ihre Bedeutung in Strategie, Rüstungskontrolle und Bündnispolitik*, Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, Baden-Baden, 1987, p. 180.

Governments, which have spent much of the 1980s trying to reassure their voters that nuclear deterrence not only worked effectively in preserving the peace but could endure for many decades, have been irritated to find the President echoing the claims of the anti-nuclear movement that nuclear deterrence is immoral and unstable. . . . To the West European governments, the President's rhetoric could be viewed as an indication of a desire to release the United States from risks attendant on its nuclear commitments. If the "technical" fix of SDI failed, was not the logical next step to withdraw from the commitments?⁷⁶

This summarizes succinctly the Couplers' political-strategic fears about SDI. The West European opposition to the ABM system invokes a tighter consensus than do most threshold issues, uniting debaters across the range, from such low-threshold writers as Heisbourg to such high-threshold advocates as Holst and Voigt.

One final question in regard to linkage between conventional and nuclear warfare, although of concern to West Europeans in general, is primarily French. American nuclear weapons are not the only ones that might be invoked by combat in Europe; French and British weapons are also of direct concern. The concern is primarily French (the British, linked as they are into the NATO military structure, are less involved in separate strategic calculations), but the effect of independent deterrence on NATO strategy must also be considered, because escalation by NATO to nuclear levels will not necessarily be differentiated nationally by the Soviets.

French doctrine sounds quite similar to the low-threshold version of NATO-wide Flexible Response. According to General François Valentin:

It would not be correct to think that the French concept proceeds with a sort of insane willfulness to "climb" to the nuclear level; it is rather a question of not dissipating the concept of deterrence by letting the aggressor believe that he can obtain his objectives by conducting conventional operations without risk of escalation because the West would not dare to be the first to explode nuclear weapons. The French believe that No First Use and, equally, No Early Use, give premiums for aggression: in the latter case, too late a response, once the enemy has achieved multiple breakthroughs and his troops have poured into Western Europe, would cumulate nuclear on top of conventional destruction.⁷⁷

Some French writers disagree. Ambassador de Rose, for example, writes that "The whole benefit of [NATO] conventional upgrading

⁷⁶Freedman, *The Price of Peace*, p. 252.

⁷⁷François Valentin, "Cooperation Franco-Allemande dans le Domaine des Forces Classiques," in Kaiser and Lellouche, p. 155.

might be jeopardized if French forces had to resort early to their nuclear arms,"⁷⁸ and he favors No Early Use. One current problem is that the short range of the French tactical missile, Pluton, means that it must be integrated into otherwise conventional military units, but this may be solved in the future when the greater range of the oncoming Hades missile will at least make it possible to regroup nuclear weapons into their own formations.⁷⁹

Nonetheless, the official French version of their own Flexible Response does not stress the conventional-nuclear distinction. And this greatly worries the Germans, who fear not only the direct effect on themselves of independent French control of their tactical nuclear weapons, but also the effects on the allied armies defending German soil. As put by German General Schulze, former NATO Central European commander:

[F]or the possible employment of French tactical nuclear weapons to support a counteroffensive by French units, preservation of the interests of a state which is "directly concerned" is not an issue that involves German security interests alone. . . . American, Belgian, British, German, and Canadian troops would all be "directly concerned." It is thus not a question of coordination with the Germans alone, but of coordination with the Central European command.⁸⁰

The European Couplers do not all think in the same way. But they all think about the security of NATO Europe, against the military threat of conventional or nuclear war as well as against the political threat of Soviet constraints on their liberties, and that distinguishes them from the American Maintainers.

Conventional Weapons

German fears of being abandoned are exacerbated by the knowledge that the Federal Republic is a narrow country running north and south; an even partly successful attack from the east could capture most of the German population and economy in short order. As a result, NATO's commitment has always been to the *forward* defense of West Germany—the Warsaw Pact cannot be allowed any substantial penetration—which greatly complicates the already difficult problem of conventional defense of this long border.

⁷⁸François de Rose, "Inflexible Response," *Foreign Affairs*, Fall 1982, p. 148.

⁷⁹See, for example, François Heisbourg, "Europe, USA et Option 'Double Zero,'" interview in *Liberation*, April 17, 1987, p. 4.

⁸⁰Franz-Joseph Schulze, "La Nécessité d'une Réaction de Défense Immédiate et Commune," in Kaiser and Lellouche, p. 165.

The debate over the appropriate level of conventional capabilities for NATO is the oldest in the Alliance. It began with the setting forth of the Lisbon force goals in 1952, and with the subsequent ignoring of the goals, and it has changed little since.

The United States wants greater conventional capabilities for NATO, and has since the beginning. Americans also reach a consensus on wanting a greater European contribution to these capabilities. Many Europeans have agreed, at least in principle; but others have disagreed, some on the principle and some on the burden of such increases in conventional capabilities. In addition, most Europeans express doubts about the hopes held by many Americans that new high technology weapons will help restore the conventional balance, and about new "deep" strategies based in part on new technology. In this case, however, many Americans share the doubts as well.

The agreement in principle makes the European-American (Coupler-Maintainer) differences less clearcut here than on other issues. This section first takes up the nature of the Coupler side of this agreement, then the doubts and qualifications with which the Europeans condition it. The debate on principle is followed by a discussion of pragmatics: Where do the conventional capabilities of the Alliance actually stand? Then: What can be done to improve capabilities, technologically and strategically? Virtually all of these segments of the debate concern the Central Front; the section ends, however, with the much thinner debate over the conventional defense of NATO's flanks.

West European agreement to the need for improved conventional capabilities is not a national matter. Briton Jonathan Alford, until his death Deputy Director of IISS:

[T]hree factors lead to the conclusion that NATO in general and NATO Europe in particular must contribute more at the conventional level. The first derives from the change in the Soviet-American nuclear relationship. If the nuclear component of Western deterrence is generally acknowledged to have become less credible and if deterrence in Europe is the sum of nuclear risk and conventional denial, it is necessary to improve NATO's conventional ability to deny the Warsaw Pact all possible conventional objectives. Second, the Warsaw Pact in general and the Soviet Union in particular have shown no sign of reducing the rate of increase of their investment in conventional forces, reflected less in quantitative than in qualitative terms. Third, the United States, by assuming a wider conventional security burden outside Europe, tends to shift a somewhat greater security load onto European shoulders.⁸¹

⁸¹Jonathan Alford, "Perspectives on Strategy," in Steinbruner and Sigal, p. 104.

German General Wolfgang Altenburg, Chairman of the NATO Military Committee:

Because the use of nuclear weapons could lead to utter destruction, we need a greater conventional capability in Allied Command Europe in order to buy time and become less reliant upon nuclear retaliation.⁸²

Ambassador de Rose, who also suggests specific roles for his nation in the conventional buildup:

A buildup of NATO's conventional forces would therefore be a double action move: it would remedy one of our weaknesses and increase one of the Soviet Union's.

For if the Alliance, or rather the integrated forces under SACEUR [Supreme Allied Commander, Europe], are to upgrade their strength, it would be of considerable importance, if French forces are to play their role of general reserve, that they be able to hold on in conventional operations as long as those fighting alongside them. . . . Equally important would be the role that France would have to assume in the logistic field. If the Western conventional posture is to provide for a greater capacity to stem a Warsaw Pact offensive, full use of French territory, facilities, lines of communication, etc., would be required.⁸³

Even in principle, however, Europeans are far from unanimity on a conventional buildup. Ambassador de Rose (who is retired from the active French diplomatic corps) may favor the buildup, but French Prime Minister Chirac puts conventional forces in an explicitly secondary position:

To guarantee nuclear deterrence, the keystone to our system of security, is the first mission of our defense. . . . But nuclear deterrence is not everything. For many responses, France must use conventional forces—when tensions or even conflicts menace our interests or those of our friends.⁸⁴

And, going beyond principle to pragmatics, Dutch analyst Jan-Geert Siccama suggests that technological progress means that the number of civilian casualties in any future conventional war in Europe would dwarf the 23 million of World War II. He lists as reasons the urbanization and suburbanization of Western Europe; the proliferation of

⁸²Wolfgang Altenburg, "Adapting Security Partnerships to Contemporary Requirements," in *Managing Entry into the 21st Century*, Atlantic Institute for International Affairs, Paris, 1986, p. 20.

⁸³de Rose, "Inflexible Response," pp. 142-148.

⁸⁴Chirac, "Discours devant l'Assemblée Nationale—Développements touchant la Défense," in *Ministère des Affaires Étrangères*, 1986, p. 29.

poison-producing chemical factories and depositories; and the centralization of the supplies of electricity, water, and other public services.⁸⁵

Some European advocates of greater dependence on conventional defense assert that the conventional balance is not really as bad as is frequently pictured. The contention that NATO is almost able to defend against Warsaw Pact aggression has a long history, almost as long as the Lisbon-and-thereafter fear that the Alliance was nowhere near able. An entry on the optimistic side comes from the defense correspondent of the *Economist*, James Meacham. In the conclusion of a long analysis written under the headline, "Can the line be held? Yes, but," Meacham writes:

There is little doubt that the central front could be held against the first echelon of a conventional attack by the Warsaw Pact powers. But then the question marks begin to appear. Would the French lend their weight in time? Would the congestion caused by West German mobilization and the massive American and British reinforcements become unmanageable? Would the allied air force be able to give direct support to the ground battle or would it break its back pressing home attacks deep into Eastern Europe? Would the air defenses stand up to the pounding they would be sure to receive? . . .

NATO's armies and air forces would have some chance of defeating a sudden surprise attack completely and could almost certainly last for more than a few days against an attack by partially mobilized forces . . . [and] it is a fair guess that if NATO's conventional forces could hold out for two weeks they could hold out forever.⁸⁶

The more conventional view on NATO's conventional capabilities, however, is that expressed by Alford, Altenburg, and de Rose at the beginning of this section—more effort is needed. And almost as conventional, at least in Europe, is the belief that it will be awfully difficult to get there from here. Heisbourg lists as major problems budgetary constraints, demographic factors leading to sharp reductions in the numbers of men of military age, and political differences among the European allies.⁸⁷ The budgetary doubts about substantially increased expenditures for conventional capabilities are precisely as old as the Lisbon demands for such capabilities; this is *the* classical NATO issue. The political constraints change over time, but in one form or another they antedate the Alliance. The demographic issue is fairly new.

⁸⁵Jan-Geert Siccama, "Rejoinder," in Netherlands Institute of International Relations, pp. 32-33.

⁸⁶"NATO's Central Front," *The Economist*, August 30-September 5, 1986, p. 22.

⁸⁷Heisbourg, "Conventional Defense: Europe's Constraints and Opportunities," in Pierre 1986, pp. 72-78.

Given these constraints, NATO has long looked for a way in which to strengthen its conventional defense substantially without many (or perhaps any) increases in costs. Starting in the 1960s, the search has led to considerable interest in new military technologies based primarily on new guidance systems. In the earlier years the systems of greatest interest were those that it was hoped would allow an infantryman to destroy a tank with so high a probability that the Warsaw Pact's offensive armored capability could be defeated from NATO's defensive foxholes. By the 1980s, however, the "Emerging Technologies" (ETs) stressed long-range guidance systems precise enough to allow missiles to destroy deep enemy targets with conventional rather than nuclear munitions. This has led in turn to consideration of new NATO strategies based on conventional-weapons interdiction of Pact lines of communication and follow-on reserve echelons. One of these, "Follow-On Forces Attack" (FOFA) comes from Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers, Europe (SHAPE); another version is embodied in the U.S. Army's "AirLand Battle."⁸⁸ In addition, a proposal for defending the West by mounting a counteroffensive toward the east, put forth by Harvard Professor Samuel Huntington,⁸⁹ has been widely discussed.

These technological and strategic concepts are primarily American and will be discussed in the section on the American Maintainers. Most West Europeans are highly skeptical, and the European support that does exist is tentative and qualified. For example, although Heisbourg is optimistic on the technological possibilities for major improvements in the accuracy of individual weapons and in electronic battlefield control, he suggests that the Soviets are capable of keeping up technically well enough to maintain the current balance. In addition he cautions that in "practice it usually is unsafe to build vast doctrinal edifices as long as the relevant technology has not been, to some extent at least, proved in the field," which he sees as a standard American tendency.⁹⁰ The comment itself represents a standard West European criticism.

⁸⁸What the difference is between FOFA and AirLand Battle is in itself the subject of some controversy, which, fortunately, is not highly relevant to the overall NATO debate. This report draws such distinctions as necessary from Boyd Sutton, John R. Landry, Malcolm B. Armstrong, Howell M. Estes, and Wesley K. Clark, "Strategic and Doctrinal Implications of Deep Attack Concepts for the Defense of Western Europe," in Keith A. Dunn and William O. Staudenmaier (eds.), *Military Strategy in Transition*, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pa., 1983, pp. 65-76.

⁸⁹See, for example, his chapter on "The Renewal of Strategy" in Samuel P. Huntington (ed.), *The Strategic Imperative: New Policies for American Security*, Ballinger, Cambridge, 1982. This is discussed below in the analysis of the American Maintainer school.

⁹⁰Heisbourg, "Conventional Defense: Europe's Constraints and Opportunities," p. 94.

Beyond the feasibility of the new technologies, many Europeans voice substantial political doubts about the deep strategies. Krell expresses the fears of those Germans who are concerned about defending West German territory without appearing to renew historical German aggression toward the east, as well as about arms control. On Huntington's counteroffensive proposal, he comments:

Samuel Huntington has asked the question, why NATO should observe operational restraint, when the Soviet Union threatened the West with a large-scale ground offensive. NATO should react in a similar way. . . . [But this would have] disastrous consequences for military and political stability. . . . A NATO strategy which threatens to put Soviet control over Eastern Europe at risk *militarily* would not only be the end of *détente*, but of the NATO alliance. It would run counter to the logic and the course of development in West German security policy and *Ostpolitik* since the early 50s, whatever its purely military rationale (asymmetry of options, e.g.) may be. In the German debate, respect for recent European history and Germany's terrible contributions to it are inseparable from such calculations.⁹¹

He provides similar criticisms of FOFA and AirLand Battle, suggesting that they are both provocative and easy for the Soviets to counter and thus would increase tensions in central Europe without increasing Western security.

It is not only nonofficial analysts in Germany who worry about these issues. The 1984 Defense White Paper, submitted by Defense Minister Manfred Woerner, a government and CDU mainstay who has since become Secretary-General of NATO, says:

The maxim of limited goals for NATO's strategy radically excludes the option of offensive defense. Neither preemptive war nor offensive or preventive operations, which lead into enemy territory in order to gain space for one's own defense, are politically acceptable or militarily feasible concepts for NATO. . . . National tactical-operational guidelines such as the U.S. AirLand Battle doctrine as laid down in the Field Manual 100-5 are valid in Europe only to the extent to which they are compatible with the principles of defense in NATO.⁹²

On the opposite side from the various proposed "offensive" solutions to the conventional imbalance are several suggestions for a "defensive

⁹¹Gert Krell, *INF, SDI, and Conventionalization: West German Approaches to Defense and Détente*, paper for the PRIF-University of California, Santa Barbara Conference on "Arms Control in U.S.-West German Relations," Bad Homburg, December 1-3, 1986, p. 25.

⁹²Ministry of Defense of the Federal Republic of Germany, *Weissbuch, 1985*, p. 30, quoted in English translation *ibid.*, p. 29.

defense," designed to strip away all offensive capabilities and instead strengthen the capability to repel the enemy by holding in place in a fairly static area defense. These have originated primarily with European Removers. Briton David Gates of the University of Aberdeen provides a series of Coupler criticisms of the concept: It precludes tactical counteroffensive as part of the defense, it is too easy for an enemy to figure out and counter, it is too dependent upon high technology as well as massive manpower and materiel. But then he suggests that it may have a place (e.g., in "enclosed and forested areas"), although nowhere near as important a one as its advocates believe.⁹³

Neither "offensive" nor "defensive" defenses find many adherents among Couplers. German analyst Joseph Joffe sums up the ordinary skeptical response to this entire range of proposals for radical change of NATO doctrine:

In the end the three conventional complements/alternatives to forward defense—no-first-use, forwardism and rearwardism—fall down where the logic of politics meets the logic of strategy. There is a reason why the messy and uncertain tenets of "flexible response up front" have survived so many powerful challenges. With all its shaky compromises between manpower needs and manpower yields, between the conventional and the nuclear, flexible response is the thin red line separating two logical alternatives that are even more unattractive.⁹⁴

All of the discussion of conventional weapons thus far presented has concerned the Central front, the West German border with East Germany and Czechoslovakia. In fact, the Germans on the Central front and the French right behind them do concentrate almost entirely on that area, to the exclusion of NATO's flanks—Norway, Turkey and Greece. Yet the flanks, both by NATO's will and by the will of the flank nations themselves, are to be defended conventionally, with no reason to believe that that defense will be easier than on the Central front.

Stratmann, in spite of the title of his paper on "NATO Doctrine and National Operational Priorities: The Central Front and the Flanks: Part II," devotes slightly less than one page out of 20 to the flanks. (Part I by an American does emphasize the outlying regions.) In it, he makes clear the prevailing central European view of the secondary nature of the flanks:

⁹³David Gates, "Area Defense Concepts," *Survival*, July/August 1987, pp. 309-315.

⁹⁴Joseph Joffe, "Stability and Its Discontent: Should NATO Go Conventional," *Washington Quarterly*, Fall 1984, p. 145.

Initial operations on the *Northern Flank* would primarily be directed at protecting the strategic assets of the Northern Fleet and securing and winning its passage through the G-I-UK [Greenland-Iceland-United Kingdom] Gap into the Atlantic. In the course of this campaign, Soviet forces would certainly attempt to neutralize and, if possible occupy NATO airbases and other assets in Northern Norway. . . . As for NATO's *Southern Flank*, major Soviet offensive operations are not to be expected during the initial phase of the war. . . .

In the view of Soviet planners, the overall strategic success will probably be determined by the rapid advance of the landfront in the [Central] area. The key objective is to penetrate NATO's forward defense and reach the Rhine and the North Sea ports within a few days.⁹⁶

The Southern flank presents substantial problems for NATO—Greek and Spanish pressure to remove American bases, Greek-Turkish tensions, and the role of Turkey in an all-out Soviet attack in Europe being chief among them—but these seldom enter the public debate, least of all in northern Europe. In 1988, when Spain forced the United States to withdraw its fighter aircraft from the Torrejon air base, the major concern expressed by Europeans to the north of the Pyrenees was the policy precedent they feared was being set for NATO's Central front.

The same tendency to set the issue aside might be true for the Northern flank were it not for the fact that Norwegian Defense Minister Holst is a member in excellent standing of the North Atlantic community of strategists, and a prolific writer. His assessment of the importance of Norway to the rest of NATO, primarily in its location astride Soviet routes to the Atlantic, is not dissimilar from Stratmann's; but Norway is not secondary to Norwegians, and Holst goes beyond Stratmann to complete the circle on his nation's role:

If Norway should fall into hostile hands the ability of the Western alliance to maintain the integrity of the sea lanes of communication—or the "sea bridge"—linking North America to Western Europe would be seriously impaired. If the Western alliance should prove unable to secure the trans-atlantic sea lines of communication, NATO's ability to hold the central front in Europe would be seriously impaired. If NATO's ability to hold the central front should be seriously questioned, the Western powers would find their negotiating position vis-à-vis the Soviet Union seriously impaired. Similarly, if NATO should not appear capable of controlling the process of escalation on the central front in the event of war, the credibility of the commitment to reinforce Norway would be seriously

⁹⁶Peter Stratmann, "NATO Doctrine and National Operational Priorities: the Central Front and the Flanks: Part II," p. 37.

impaired. Without credible reinforcement from her allies Norway's ability to defend herself against aggression would be seriously impaired. Hence Norway's participation in NATO is based on shared and reciprocal interests reflecting a basic condition of interdependence.⁹⁶

To pursue these ends, Norway and the Alliance have designed a rather intricate strategy. Holst's description of Norway's strong policy against basing or hosting nuclear weapons, which nonetheless "neither prescribes nor rules out the use of" such weapons, has been discussed above. Other restrictions are also imposed on NATO activities, but an extensive program of joint exercises is carried out with the nation's allies, including Canada, which shares with Norway the military problems imposed by a harsh northern climate.

Holst points out elsewhere that "Norway, Denmark and Iceland are allied with the Western powers in a much more encompassing and committed manner than Finland is tied to the Soviet Union."⁹⁷ In a sense, nonnuclear Norway may provide an illustration of what NATO Europe would be if all nuclear weapons were withdrawn from Europe *but* the Alliance and the ultimate American strategic nuclear guarantee remained. The picture is far more encouraging than that implied by the term "Finlandization," but the problem is that no one can guarantee that the result of such a nuclear withdrawal would be Norwegianization rather than the more constrained state in which the Soviets force Finland to exist.

THE OPPONENT

The Soviet Union

This discussion of the Couplers' views of the Soviets begins by repeating the statement by Nicole Gnessoto, the French analyst quoted in the Introduction to this report: "In the bundle of factors which have, since 1954, determined the evolution of the Franco-German dialogue on matters of security, the Soviet Union has appeared, without doubt, as the only constant."

The sentence was published in 1986; as soon as a year later, the constancy was in doubt as the world wondered whether Chairman Gorbachev's high-wire act was as real and radical as it seemed, or

⁹⁶Johan Jorgen Holst, "NATO and Northern Security," address at the opening session of the Oslo International Symposium "Perspectives on NATO and the Northern Flank," Akershus Castle, August 10, 1986, p. 3.

⁹⁷Johan Jorgen Holst, "Nordic Security Perspectives," address to Oxford University Strategic Studies Group, All Souls College, March 10, 1987, p. 3.

whether it was done with mirrors and smoke concealing the same old hostile and plodding Soviet Union, and whether, if real, it could last. If the seeming changes in Soviet external policy are mostly real, if they are really radical, and if they last, they will affect all aspects of the NATO debate, not only the direct analysis of the Soviets themselves. In particular, they are likely to change the focus of the debate from our perceptions of ourselves to our perceptions of the opponent.

Some Europeans who near the far right end of the political spectrum describe the Soviet Union in terms akin to Ronald Reagan's "Evil Empire." Jean-François Revel, for example, in a book much admired by the American right, states flatly that: "It is natural for communism to try with all its might to eliminate democracy, since the two systems are incompatible and communism's survival depends on its rival's annihilation."⁸⁸

Most Couplers see the Soviet Union as hostile and opportunistic, but prudent; the debate is over the particular mixture of these factors and how the Russians translate them into doctrine and operating practice. No matter what the Soviets do in the next several years, the Couplers will continue to observe the mixture and argue over the particulars; the arguments set forth here will not disappear, nor will they change much, although their relative weights may.

One point of consensus is as unanimous as a political or military belief can get. No European official or analyst in the last 20 years, nor any American for that matter—the American debate over perceptions of the Russians runs mostly parallel to the European—has believed that the Soviets were planning a military attack on the West in any immediate or near-term period. But this is far from a statement that military power is irrelevant. Almost as unanimously, European Couplers and American Maintainers have believed that the primary reason for the comfortable premise about the Russians is that they have been deterred by NATO power. Given this constraint, then, the Couplers believe that the Soviet intention is to use military power to exert political pressure without ever having to go to war.

Hannes Adomeit, a Sovietologist at the *Stiftung für Wissenschaft und Politik* explains the underlying basis for Soviet military-political policy:

Perhaps the most important concept for the theory and practice of Soviet foreign policy is that of the "correlation of forces." . . . Lenin constantly pointed to the necessity of taking into account "all the forces, groups, parties, classes and masses operating in a given country." . . . All this is not merely of historical interest. It is to suggest

⁸⁸Jean-François Revel, *How Democracies Perish*, Doubleday, Garden City, 1983, p. 7.

that trust in the effectiveness of combined external military and domestic political pressure to achieve Soviet objectives has characterized Soviet foreign policy in Eastern and Western Europe without interruption ever since Stalin. . . . Soviet conventional superiority in Europe and the offensive strategy connected with it have remained one of the most important military and political facts of life in Europe. Their utility as a political instrument with which to influence American and Western European perceptions and policies has never really diminished.⁹⁹

Potential Soviet exploitation of the "correlation of forces" covers a broad range of possibilities and engenders an equally broad range of Coupler views. Lellouche details the worst of West European fears based on this Soviet doctrine, arguing that the Soviets use military power "to extract political advantages, little by little"; "the USSR *must* control Western Europe"; this in turn will determine "the victor in the historic struggle between socialism and capitalism"; strategic parity has helped them to "put in train a new phase of external expansion"; and European conventional arms control negotiations in Stockholm have assisted "the establishment of an overall 'pan-European' system of collective security controlled by Moscow." His summary is that:

their European strategy is traditionally arranged around three axes: . . . to cut the nuclear umbilical cord connecting Europe to the United States . . . to progressively transform this nuclear "disconnection" to a political decoupling . . . to create sources of diversion for the United States (around the periphery of that nation—in Latin America and the Pacific).¹⁰⁰

On the other end of the Coupler spectrum, West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, in 1982, well before Gorbachev, saw a change, not, to be sure, in Soviet objectives, but a change in tactics and constraints profound enough to engender an important change for the West. He discussed:

a fundamental change in communist doctrine, a first breakthrough in a Manichaeian concept that normally regards non-Communists as nothing but class enemies. Leonid Brezhnev developed the principle of avoidability of nuclear war into a strategy of "peaceful coexistence." This does not mean that the Soviet Union has foresworn its goal of a world revolution. Rather, a policy of peaceful coexistence serves to promote Soviet predominance (effectively domination) in such a way that a major war between East and West is avoided and economic cooperation with the West is made possible.

⁹⁹Hannes Adomeit, "The Political Rationale of Soviet Military Capabilities and Doctrines," in *Strengthening Conventional Deterrence in Europe: Proposals for the 1980s: the European Study Report of the Special Panel*, Westview Press, Boulder, 1985, pp. 72-79.

¹⁰⁰Lellouche, pp. 96-105.

Hence a Soviet leadership that can expand its arms arsenal without encountering any corresponding efforts on the Western side, . . . will do so in keeping with the role it has ascribed itself. . . . But how would a Soviet leadership behave which, in pursuing such a policy, was faced with an adequate response by the West, involving a correspondingly high risk? . . .

The concept of a dual strategy provides the most effective response to the challenge posed by the Soviet strategy of "peaceful coexistence": one part of this strategy, a policy of equilibrium, is designed to bring home to the Soviet leadership that it is futile to pursue a policy of predominance. The détente part of the strategy at the same time affords the Soviet Union an alternative.¹⁰¹

Genscher went on, later in his article, to take up an economic issue of the early 1980s that was germane to NATO if for no other reason than that it upset some Americans, including several in the Reagan administration. The issue was West European assistance to a pipeline bringing Soviet natural gas to Western Europe, which a number of Americans thought gave the Soviets a strategic hold over Western Europe, financed by credits from the West Europeans themselves. Genscher contended that the net effect might actually decrease German primary energy imports from the Soviet Union.¹⁰²

The particular pipeline furor has died, but the question of economic cooperation with the Soviet Union remains. More recently, Willy de Clerq, External Relations Commissioner of the European Economic Community, the Common Market, said:

Improved trade could also, in a more general way, improve the climate of relations between Eastern and Western Europe. I sometimes feel that some Americans look at Eastern Europe from such a distance that they are only able to distinguish black and white. Here, at close quarters, we can see the various shades of gray.¹⁰³

Lellouche's opposing comment on economic détente is that it will lead to "an unprecedented expansion in transfers of technology and capital from the West to the East, with no return whatever in either the foreign policy of the USSR or the internal development of the regimes of Eastern Europe."¹⁰⁴

What difference will Gorbachev make? At the outset of his regime, Lellouche had substantial doubts:

¹⁰¹Hans-Dietrich Genscher, "Toward an Overall Western Strategy for Peace, Freedom and Progress," *Foreign Affairs*, Fall 1982, p. 47.

¹⁰²*Ibid.*, p. 56.

¹⁰³Willy de Clerq, quoted in "Western European Considers Formal Trade Ties With Soviet Bloc," *Washington Post*, August 5, 1987, p. 16.

¹⁰⁴Lellouche, p. 107.

Intuitively, I think that these new men, while they certainly will be younger, will not necessarily be "newer," in the measure that they have been molded by the same bureaucratic/ideological machinery. The powerful inertia of the system (that of the Party) to act to curb, even to block, any attempts at innovation, should not be underestimated. From all evidence, the succession crisis which has occupied the Kremlin since Brezhnev is far from over.¹⁰⁵

Experience since this passage was published in 1985 would necessarily moderate it somewhat; the evidence indicates that the Party has "curbed" at least some of Gorbachev's attempts at innovation, but it has "blocked" very few. Nonetheless, many West Europeans as well as Americans retain their suspicions of the directions and actions of the Soviet Union. One reason is suggested by Helmut Schmidt, in his book published about the same time as Lellouche's:

[T]he key point I want to stress is the deep historical roots, and resulting steadiness, of the Grand Strategy of Soviet Russia itself. It is worthwhile to look at historical maps to see how small the Grand Principality of Moscow was some five hundred years ago. . . . And look at the map of today. Russia has grown and grown and grown. . . . For over five hundred years, all the Tsars pursued a policy known as "Gathering of the Russian Lands," which, practically speaking, meant conquering other people's land and afterward russifying the inhabitants. This Grand Strategy of cautious but continuous expansion has been continued and carried forward by the Soviet leadership of Russia.¹⁰⁶

Traditional Russian history looms large among West European analysts. Even so strong an anti-Communist ideologue as Lellouche starts his chapter on Soviet expansionism with a quote from the Tsar's Prime Minister of 1905.¹⁰⁷ Although Americans come out at about the same place, they tend to stress the Communist roots of Soviet behavior rather than the Russian roots. In any case, however, a 500 year perspective like Schmidt's, which makes Peter the Great and Lenin into blips on a long-run trend, is likely to reinforce doubts about a Gorbachev turn in the trend.

Nonetheless, Gorbachev has made a difference in Coupler thinking about the Soviets. One of the most upbeat statements is by Lord Carrington, retiring Secretary General of NATO:

Whatever may be said about Mr. Gorbachev's public relations, his remarkable capacity for dealing with the press and his new style, it is equally evident that he is, in substance, seeking a different path, a

¹⁰⁵Lellouche, p. 109.

¹⁰⁶Helmut Schmidt, *A Grand Strategy for the West*, pp. 24-25.

¹⁰⁷Lellouche, p. 93.

more modern path for the Soviet Union. This is not of course a non-Marxist path, but a new route to Marxism through greater efficiency and the better use of resources. To achieve that, he will wish to spend less on defence and to transfer resources to the civilian sector. . . . We witnessed some remarkable developments at Reykjavik. Remarkable, because only a few weeks before it would have been unthinkable for concessions of the kind proposed by the Soviet Union to have been made.¹⁰⁸

In a later piece, in which he worried about the effect of the then-imminent zero-zero agreement on the Alliance he had shepherded so long, he qualified his earlier enthusiasm: "But there is also room for skepticism about Mikhail S. Gorbachev's foreign-policy goals."¹⁰⁹

Earlier in 1987, former French Prime Minister Barre also exhibited substantial skepticism:

Mr. Gorbachev has broken sharply with his predecessors on several major issues: a younger generation of political leaders, better social discipline, the drive for improved economic efficiency, the many steps taken to reduce intolerance and promote greater freedom of speech, and the start made in the release of political prisoners. We must welcome these changes and not belittle them, while suspending judgment as to whether they will ultimately turn out to be marginal or fundamental. . . .

It should also be borne in mind that in the field of foreign policy, Mr. Gorbachev has essentially taken up where his predecessors left off. . . . New disarmament plans are being advanced in rapid succession, but in fact seem to be inspired by the traditional Soviet objectives going back to the 1950s. And above all, Soviet military capacity . . . continues to grow.¹¹⁰

The Couplers' perception is that the Soviet Union is changing. The degree and the speed of the change are highly uncertain, and until these are clearer, the change cannot be fully factored into the debate. What may hasten its inclusion, although perhaps on a temporary basis only, is that although the perception of Gorbachev is moving one way, the perception of Reagan is moving the other. As put by Dominique Moisi of IFRI:

In the East-West confrontation, images are as important a part of reality as the objective factors such as the arms race. On this count the Soviet Union lately has fared better than the United States. Here in France the combination of Reykjavik and the Iran arms

¹⁰⁸Lord Carrington, "Requirements for Stable Security Relationships," in Atlantic Institute for International Affairs, 1986, pp. 34-35.

¹⁰⁹Lord Carrington, "Picturing Soviets as Sirens Over European Landscape," *Los Angeles Times*, September 27, 1987, Part V, p. 1.

¹¹⁰Barre, p. 293.

scandal has helped revive an old negative image of the United States. At the same time, the Soviet Union is enjoying a new and more positive image under the impulse of an energetic and dynamic leader who is beating Ronald Reagan at his own game of public relations.¹¹¹

This gradual relative movement of Reagan and Gorbachev is the mild Coupler version of the belief of some European Removers in the "moral equivalence" of the United States and the Soviet Union. In any case, the comparison may be temporary because unlike Gorbachev's, Reagan's tenure is distinctly limited, and a new American president may not only compete with Gorbachev in dynamism but may overcome some of the negative images of the United States and its presidency that have bedevilled Alliance relations throughout the 1980s and before.

Perhaps the best European summary on the new Soviet opponent is the agnostic one provided by Bertram:

Gorbachev is the first Soviet leader to talk of "common security" (unlike Stalin), to abstain from saber-rattling and dramatic Third World adventure (unlike Khrushchev) and to emphasize the Soviet need for international stability as a function of his desire to promote domestic reform at home (unlike Brezhnev). Indeed if the statements made by the general secretary were to come to reflect a committed, sustained policy, this would be the kind of attitude that the West has always sought. . . .

The problem is that even if these expressions of intent are genuine, Soviet power will be of a profoundly ambiguous nature for a very long time to come.¹¹²

It is the potential change in the Soviet Union, real as well as perceived, that may change the Alliance and the NATO debate even more rapidly than any perceived change in the United States.

Eastern Europe

The Couplers' discussion of Eastern Europe provides one of the clearest illustrations of the NATO debate as depending as much on different emphases as on different views. In this it resembles many of the differences between the Couplers and the American Maintainers.

There are, in fact, few differences among Coupler views in regard to the bloc of Soviet satellites. Nobody believes either that they can be "liberated" or that they are any longer simple microcosms of Soviet

¹¹¹Dominique Moisi, "U.S. and Soviet Images Shift in France," *Los Angeles Times*, February 4, 1987, Part II, p. 5.

¹¹²Christoph Bertram, "Europe's Security Dilemmas," *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1987, pp. 944-945.

Russia, unable to vary because of fear of the Red Army. The consensus picture is somewhere in between: NATO policy can affect the nations of the Warsaw Pact and within strict limits can help increase their autonomy and their internal ease. *But* few in most of the European NATO nations care enough to write about it; indeed, the multi-ethnicity of the United States leads more Americans than West Europeans to concentrate on Eastern Europe.

Except for Germans. The German Democratic Republic (GDR) is in many ways the second most important member of the Soviet Bloc; although it is exceeded in population by Poland, it has a far stronger economy, an apparently more loyal tie to the USSR, and it lies along most of the East-West border. It also shares a language, a culture, and a history, as well as the border, with the Federal Republic of Germany. West Germans are acutely aware of the very different situation of their relatives across that border; indeed, the goal of reunification is written into the constitution of the Federal Republic.

The West Germans of today are also comfortable realists who recognize the limits of cross-border brotherhood and the risks of too much of it. Reunification as such sometimes comes up on special occasions—in May 1987, for example, pique at the pressure being put on the Germans to agree to zero-zero led a CDU Bundestag deputy to call for negotiations on the issue with the Soviets—but the occasions are rare and what little sound and fury there is quickly disappears. Rather than political reunification, the operational goals of most West German officials and analysts tend toward liberalization of the East, economic cooperation, and relaxation of border-crossing restrictions. Krell describes the breadth as well as the substance of agreement within the Federal Republic to subordinate or ignore reunification:

[F]or a long time the idea of reunification was the framework in which the other issues were defined. . . . Gradually the primacy of reunification has lost its force. Hope for restoration of the territories east of the Oder-Neisse [now in Poland] has waned almost completely, as has the support for legitimacy of that hope. As for reunification with East Germany, no political group sees it as a near-term prospect. There is a broad consensus that living with and improving the *status quo* between East and West is the order of the day. And it is now also widely accepted that any chance for improving the political and economic situation of the Germans in the GDR requires the active support of that *status quo*. Working for more freedom for the East Germans (and East Europeans) on the basis of a definite territorial *status quo* has gained priority even over the long-term prospects of reunification. Even the non-desirability of reunification can now be discussed. The Germans are rediscovering that throughout most of their history the German nation has lived in separate states,

and that this may have advantages, not only for the international order, but for the Germans themselves.¹¹³

True, the basic consensus receives different expression from different portions of the German political spectrum. On the right, Walther Kiep, a leader of the CDU, starts off with a manifesto, but moves quickly to realism:

The German question is unresolved. It will remain on history's list of unfinished business until all Germans have had a chance to freely exercise their right of self-determination. Until then, we in the Federal Republic will maintain our unswerving view that the German question must be resolved by achieving unity through peaceful means. Keeping the question open, Germany's legal status must not in any way be placed in question or otherwise rationalized away. . . .

For West Germans, however, the yardstick of the quality of relations with the G.D.R. continues to be the measure of the freedom of movement that can be attained for the people in both parts of Germany. . . . It will only be possible to reduce . . . tensions by bringing about a steady improvement within divided Germany. This is the specific contribution the two states in Germany must make in support of the détente and peace process in Europe as a whole.¹¹⁴

Professor Richard Lowenthal takes more account of the internal motivations of the GDR, suggesting that their political mood is growing more similar to that of the Federal Republic, accepting the division of Germany, and with at least the leadership valuing superpower protection of their status. He sees, on both sides of the border: "a common acceptance of both the achievements and the recognized horrors of a common past and . . . a growing pride in a common contribution to détente and peace—expressed in the phrase, used equally on both sides of the border, that 'no war must ever arise again from German soil.'"¹¹⁵

That "no war must ever arise again from German soil" is not only a German slogan. It still rises to the surface on occasion when other NATO nations consider German reunification. In 1984, for example, Italian Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti, in the midst of a fight over the use of the German language in the Northern Italian provinces bordering Austria, contended sharply that "There are two German states now, and there should be two in the future."¹¹⁶

¹¹³Krell, *Ostpolitik Dimensions of West German Security Policy*, Peace Research Institute, Frankfurt, December 1986, pp. 32-33 (mimeo).

¹¹⁴Walther Leisler Kiep, "The New Deutschlandpolitik," *Foreign Affairs*, Winter 1984/85, pp. 317-318.

¹¹⁵Richard Lowenthal, "The German Question Transformed," *Foreign Affairs*, Winter 1984/85, p. 303.

¹¹⁶Quoted in Michael H. Haltzell, "Germany Has Its Own Priorities," *Los Angeles Times*, August 31, 1986, Part V, p. 2.

One of the few non-German European Couplers to write on these issues is Pierre Hassner, a French analyst of East European origins, who cautions about the limitations of the possible within the satellite nations.

The formulation of François Duchêne at the beginning of the 1970s: "The Soviets cannot leave Eastern Europe because of the political control function of their troops, and while they are in Eastern Europe, Western Europeans need the American presence to balance them," still remains the best summary of the situation. . . .

Seen from Europe, probably the most favorable situation would be that in which, within each of the two alliances, the European states exercise, in parallel or in concert, an influence on their respective leaders and, by maintaining contacts at the appropriate level, prepare the outlines for dialog at the summit. . . . But this model, the most realistic, is also the most limited. It does not take account of tensions and conflicts between societies and states, between small and medium states and superpowers, or of the profoundly asymmetric responses to these challenges from the two systems.¹¹⁷

Hassner's realism summarizes a West European consensus on an issue that few officials or analysts brood about outside of Germany.

ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT

The *incremental* policy edge of all these discussions is the gradual change of weapons systems, strategies, budgets, and arrangements within the Alliance. Potentially much less incremental is the chance of substantive and substantial arms control agreements affecting weapons and postures in Europe. This section primarily examines the debate over the zero-zero agreement as it suddenly became real in 1987. That agreement led to far more serious consideration than before of potential subsequent European arms control measures, both conventional and nuclear.

When Gorbachev picked up the dormant NATO zero-zero proposal, and when U.S. Secretary of State Shultz negotiated it to near reality in Moscow and then brought it back to NATO in Brussels, the reactions of most European Couplers were between qualified and negative. To be sure, one reason was the process by which it had come about, beginning with American unilateral and apparently not-thought-through negotiations at Reykjavik, and continuing with the failure to consult meaningfully until Shultz returned with a putative agreement. But Coupler doubts centered also on the substantive effects of the

¹¹⁷Hassner, "L'Europe Entre les États-Unis et l'Union Soviétique," pp. 6-9.

agreement on nuclear deterrence in Europe; and both the process and the substance led to the fear that this would be merely the first step toward full denuclearization and withdrawal of the American guarantee.

The doubters included almost all French analysts and many German Couplers. In March 1987, when the negotiations were beginning to be understood as being quite serious, former French Premier Barre expressed a series of doubts:

First: implementation of the zero option could weaken . . . NATO's ability . . . to offset the conventional and chemical superiority of the Warsaw Pact. . . . *Second:* also to be avoided is the probability that the zero option, by removing an intermediate stage of escalation, could weaken NATO's capacity for Flexible Response, thereby bringing about the dilemma, if not "all or nothing," at least "all or too little." . . . *Third:* . . . just as the credibility of extended deterrence by the United States implies the physical presence of American forces, those forces can only stay in Europe so long as they remain protected by extended U.S. deterrence. . . . All this suggests that it would be far preferable, as a first step, to achieve a substantial reduction of both strategic nuclear forces and medium-range missiles. This would avoid the decoupling of Europe's defense from the United States.¹¹⁸

This was a standard French view. The Germans were more divided. Hans-Dietrich Genscher had been Foreign Minister in the government of SPD Chancellor Helmut Schmidt when the two-track option was agreed to and the zero proposal for INF extended; he was still Foreign Minister in the government of CDU Chancellor Helmut Kohl when the negotiations became serious; and he still backed them, as did many other German politicians, including some in the CDU. The defense analysts (and appointed officials, particularly in the Ministry of Defense) were far more concerned with the loss of NATO's INF missiles, however. Joffe treated it as a Soviet conspiracy:

Needless to say, Gorbachev knows what he is doing. First, in offering double-zero, he invited NATO to get rid of its most modern weapons, the Pershing II and cruise missiles, and to forgo deployment on the next level down. . . . The second catch is conceptual. Nuclear weapons in Europe, especially those that could pierce the Soviet sanctuary, represented the core of Western Europe's defenses. . . . The third catch is psychological. In the age of "parity" . . . the Europeans have always sought safety in nuclear arrangements that obliterate the distinction between local and global war. Pershing II and cruise missiles standing in the path of a Soviet advance might just go off (whereas a Minuteman III stationed in

¹¹⁸Barre, p. 296.

Montana might not), destroying along with Kiev any dream of a war neatly confined between some Central European "firewalls."¹¹⁹

Joffe's view was particularly bitter; the more typical attitude of the French and German Couplers was summarized in the headline over an editorial in *Le Monde*, "Euromissiles: the resigned "yes" of Europeans."¹²⁰

The British were, in general, more relaxed than the French and the CDU Germans. Lord Bramall, former Chief of the General Staff, expressed a common view:

As someone who has been connected with the problem for seven or eight years, I firmly believe that in the light of Mr. Gorbachev's so-called initiative—which only seems to say what many in the West have been wanting for some time—it makes considerable sense to start by mutually reducing or eliminating medium-range missiles, which have always had more useful political and bargaining potential than real military value.¹²¹

Other Britons favored other starting points, and most had substantial doubts about the process, beginning in Reykjavik, that initiated the negotiations culminating in the zero-zero agreement. University of Southampton Professor Phil Williams' negative summary, however, described continental fears more closely than those of British Couplers:

There are several aspects of the process which bother many Europeans. The first is that there was little or no consultation about the negotiations. . . . Another aspect of the process which worried the European allies is that the Soviet Union seemed to be far better prepared for the negotiations than the United States. . . . West European concerns about the negotiating process are accompanied by alarm about the assumptions that President Reagan brought with him to the negotiations. The European allies see a growing trend in U.S. thinking toward the deemphasis of nuclear weapons. . . . The president's Strategic Defense Initiative and, in particular, his emphasis on the transition from an offense-dominant to a defense-dominant world, is seen in Europe as destabilizing and decoupling. . . . What makes the zero-zero option even more unpalatable to European governments is that it was accompanied at Reykjavik by President Reagan's proposal to eliminate all ballistic missiles over a 10-year period. . . . Although the United States would still be able to deter attack on its own territory, there would be additional question marks over extended deterrence.¹²²

¹¹⁹Joseph Joffe, "Cruisin' for a Bruisin': The INF fallout," *New Republic*, October 5, 1987, pp. 17-18.

¹²⁰*Le Monde*, May 28, 1987, p. 1.

¹²¹Bramall, Column 195.

¹²²Phil Williams, "West European Security After Reykjavik," *Washington Quarterly*, Spring 1987, pp. 39-42.

When zero-zero became a *fait accompli*, acceptance, at least on the official level, became general and even enthusiastic as the debate moved on to next steps. Ongoing developments will be discussed in the Epilog; but one basis for such developments, in addition to zero-zero, will probably be a series of proposals produced in Europe in the early 1980s when any real agreements with the Soviets looked unlikely, but some arms control and disarmament advocates kept on trying.

Their major proposal, for a nuclear-free zone in central Europe, is associated with the Coupler wing of the German SPD. In 1984, Bundestag Deputy Karsten Voigt first made clear that he was not a Remover unilateralist:

Even if the United States were to renounce unilaterally the deployment of land-based, intermediate-range weapons in Western Europe, the West would still possess a sufficient nuclear deterrent. But for primarily *political* reasons NATO should not agree to renounce such deployments until the Soviet Union is ready to reduce its nuclear arms adequately.¹²³

And then he went on to discuss the nuclear-free zone:

Theoretically, it is conceivable that a devastating war could be fought in Central Europe with only conventional and short-range nuclear weapons without any greater risk of escalation. From the perspective of deterrence, anti-demolition munitions and nuclear artillery contribute little to NATO's military capability. . . . The Palme [late Swedish Prime Minister] Commission proposed a nuclear weapons-free zone extending approximately 150 kilometers in each direction from the border between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Agreement on such a zone should be sought even if compliance with it, particularly at a time of rising tensions, would be difficult to control. . . . [This] proposal reduces the risk of a nuclear war restricted to Central Europe.¹²⁴

This proposal has not been taken up by other segments of the Coupler community in Germany or elsewhere; it may have been made obsolete by the fact that zero-zero removes most other nuclear weapons, leaving the short-range battlefield systems the major remaining nuclear tripwire for the American strategic deterrent, thus making their removal unlikely. The nuclear-free zone proposal nonetheless illustrates the direction of thinking coming from the portion of the Coupler school that is centrally interested in arms control and disarmament.

Among the Couplers in general, nuclear arms control is looked at skeptically because of the fundamental belief that nuclear arms remain

¹²³Voigt, "Nuclear Weapons in Europe: A German Social Democrat's Perspective," p. 106.

¹²⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 114-115.

the essential deterrent against Soviet conventional as well as nuclear power. By the same token, conventional arms control should be of more interest, although until very recently it has not been a serious topic; 15 years of negotiations in Vienna that never got off dead center have induced some cynicism. In the wake of zero-zero, and the fears that the removal of nuclear weapons will accentuate the conventional imbalance in Europe, such controls are being taken very seriously indeed.

SUMMARY: COUPLER RECOMMENDATIONS

One thing this section has demonstrated is that the Couplers do not form a close-knit School of Thought, nearly unanimous on all matters; far from it. It is remarkable, then, that in spite of the wide differences and vigorous disputes within the school, they do reach consensus—not unanimity, but consensus—on several broad policy recommendations:

- Europe should move at “all deliberate speed” toward forming a stronger second pillar for the Alliance. This is agreed upon both by those most frightened by the prospect of a weakened U.S. commitment and those most relaxed.
- It is necessary to spend *some* more on conventional capabilities, if for no other reason than to satisfy the United States, but not a lot more. And when the finance ministers say “No,” the answer is acceptable.
- Nuclear deterrence, particularly American nuclear deterrence, is what keeps the bear from the border, and must be maintained.
- The “rest of the world” outside of Europe is important but not very important, and the United States should not be diverted from the preservation of Europe.
- Arms control is A Good Thing, which we should all favor, but we should also all be suspicious, particularly when the super-powers agree between themselves. This conclusion may become more positive, as the implications of zero-zero for conventional arms control in Europe become clearer.

These all stem, one way or another, from the central value judgment that the preservation of Europe is the most important objective for Europeans, and the central analytical premise that the American commitment continues to be necessary for that preservation. The corresponding policy recommendations of the American Maintainer school stem from different premises, and turn out considerably different on each count. And all the premises and recommendations on

both sides of the Atlantic may change, given enough real change on the other side of the Elbe.

Before crossing the Atlantic to the American Maintainer mainstream, this analysis turns to the two minority schools that help define the mainstreams—the European Removers and the American Withdrawers.

IV. THE REMOVERS

At our 1986 Annual Conference, my Party once again committed itself—by an overwhelming vote of 5 to 1—to our country's full membership and participation in NATO. . . .

The size and location of our country means that using nuclear weapons would always be pointless or self-destructive, or both.
—British Labour Party Leader Neil Kinnock¹

This confession of our faith is incompatible with the development, deployment and use of weapons of mass destruction. Such weapons are capable of exterminating the human race which God has loved and elevated, and of devastating all of Creation.
—Reformist Federation (German Reform church)²

The views of the European peace movement, the Removers, cover a broad range. On the moderate end are the politicians who, both by conviction about the requirements for defense and because they are striving for electoral success with an electorate that can be both antinuclear and pro-NATO, argue for change within the Alliance. On the more radical end are the church and other peace movements, which, like the American disarmament movement, simply want to do away with nuclear weapons. But it is the central desire to move away from nuclear defense and deterrence, within the Alliance or outside of it, slowly or rapidly, conditionally or unconditionally, that defines the Remover school.

The Removers form a considerable minority in Britain, where they dominate Labour, the leading opposition party, and also include many Liberals; and in West Germany, where they include the environmentalist Green Party with up to 10 percent of the electorate, and are strong, although not dominant, in the SPD, which leads the opposition. Their minority status in both countries was confirmed by elections in 1987, and electoral arithmetic and calendars make it extremely unlikely that they will have another chance at gaining power until at least 1991.

¹Neil Kinnock, Address to the National Press Club, Washington, D.C., December 4, 1986, pp. 3–11.

²*Das Bekenntnis zu Jesus Christus und die Friedensverantwortung der Kirche. Eine Erklärung des Moderaments des Reformierten Bundes*, quoted in Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Final Respite' or 'Unconditional No'? The Church and Questions of Peace in the Federal Republic of Germany," *Bulletin of Peace Proposals*, Vol. 15, No. 3, 1984, p. 209.

Further, public opinion surveys as well as voting data in both Britain and Germany imply that the prospects for both Labour and SPD (or a not very likely federal-level coalition between the SPD and the Greens) are directly proportional to the degree of their moderation on defense issues. The voters in both countries have strongly and consistently favored the Alliance and the American tie.³

Nonetheless, public opinion can change. And votes in these countries (as in the United States) are ordinarily swayed more by domestic conditions than by international relations. Major economic difficulties before the next election, for example, could bring to power in either Britain or Germany governments dominated or at least substantially influenced by Removers. Whether or not events move in this direction, the Remover minorities are strong enough to keep the Coupler governments looking back over their shoulders.

The 1979 decision to deploy INF, for example, added the second track—the offer to the Soviets to trade INF reductions for SS-20 reductions—because European governments wanted to keep the peace movement at bay. In the event, when the INF missiles were brought to Europe, the movement took to the streets and commons, but failed to prevent entry; had it not been for the second track, the Removers might have been strong enough to impede installation of the weapons. As has been discussed, the price the INF Couplers paid for the second track was the turmoil caused by Gorbachev's unexpected acceptance of the offer to trade down.

Moreover, in addition to the United Kingdom and the Federal Republic, the Removers are strong in some of NATO's smaller member nations, notably in parts of Scandinavia and the Low Countries. They have been in the minority there too, but in multiparty situations that are sometimes quite volatile. And each of these countries, although not contributing major military power to the Alliance, is important because of location and politics.

For all of these reasons, the European Removers are politically far more important in the NATO debate than is the radical opposition in the American debates over strategic nuclear issues and Third World policies. The following discussion does not analyze the Removers' views in the same categories (e.g., U.S. Commitment, Conventional-Nuclear Link) as have been used for the Couplers and will be for the American Maintainers. With the Removers as with the other schools, the choice of issues is as important as the viewpoints on these issues. This analysis follows the natural contours of the Removers' discourse,

³See, for example, Gregory Flynn and Hans Rattinger (eds.), *The Public and Atlantic Defense*, Rowman and Allenheld, Totowa, N.J., 1985; and Gebhard L. Schweigler, "Anti-Americanism in Germany," *Washington Quarterly*, Winter 1986.

taking up first their negative arguments—what they are against, particularly nuclear deterrence and defense in Europe—and why; and then moving to their positive proposals for “defensive defense.”

The German Reformist church statement at the head of this section is radical in the religious pacifist mode that has informed part of the international peace movement since the invention of nuclear weapons and, indeed, long before. As a statement of personal faith it stands with the eloquent words of the American Quakers’ precept expressed in their uncompromising position on nuclear and other war-peace issues: “Here I stand. Regardless of relevance or consequence I can do no other.”⁴ As an argument on policy, the Reformist statement is part of the religious debate on nuclear morality centered in some measure around the more equivocal statement of the American Catholic bishops, who reluctantly endorsed continued nuclear deterrence while arguing against almost all uses of nuclear weapons.⁵ The German Catholic bishops took a similar stand as did the Evangelical Church, much the largest Protestant denomination.

Political radicalism within the West German peace movement is expressed as advocacy of “nonalignment of the German states, withdrawal of all foreign troops from Western and Eastern Europe, dissolution of the NATO and Warsaw Pact military blocs,” and sees these policies not only as leading to elimination of the nuclear threat but also as a step toward German reunification:

In this way the German question will become an instrument of peace for Europe; a withdrawal of the two German states from the military blocs will create a real *détente* zone and at the same time facilitate closer cooperation between the two German states. . . . A confederation between the two German states would be conceivable as a state in the process of attaining national unity.⁶

This is by no means an expression of the views of all the German Removers. The more moderate wing—perhaps a majority depending on where one draws the line between the moderate Removers and the more radical of the Couplers within the SPD—wants to remain within NATO while moving away from nuclear deterrence. In its 1986

⁴American Friends Service Committee, *Speak Truth to Power*, Philadelphia, 1955, p. 68.

⁵National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *The Challenge of Peace: God’s Promise and Our Response*, Washington, D.C., 1983.

⁶Both of these are quoted in Walther Leisler Kiep, “The New Deutschlandpolitik,” *Foreign Affairs*, Winter 1984–85, p. 319. The first is from the Berlin Green Party, *Thesen für eine grüne Deutschlandpolitik*, January 1984, in *Reader zum deutschlandpolitischen Kongress der GRUENEN*, March 1984, p. 131; the second from P. Brandt and H. Ammon, “Patriotism von Links,” in W. Venohr (ed.), *Die deutsche Einheit kommt bestimmt*, Bergisch Gladbach, 1982, pp. 159f.

resolutions, the SPD, as political parties do, balanced its platform between its two wings. On one key statement, however, concerning removal of the INF missiles (which had been brought in initially at the urgent behest of former SPD Chancellor Schmidt), the Removers clearly won out:

[T]he SPD: appeals to the United States immediately to stop delivery of further Pershing II and Cruise missiles and to remove those already deployed; appeals to the Soviet Union to remove the missiles counterdeployed in the GDR and Czechoslovakia and drastically to reduce its SS-20s to the 1979 level. With a view to achieving these aims an SPD federal government will . . . [reverse] the Bundestag decision of 22 November 1983 in order to remove the parliamentary basis for the deployment of such weapons for which permission was granted by the present conservative government.⁷

The seeming symmetry of language on Eastern and Western missiles does not really obscure the facts that not only are the Western missiles to be eliminated while the Eastern ones are to be reduced to former levels; but that the Soviet Union is *appealed to*, whereas the Bundestag, were the SPD to gain control, would *require* the removal of the American missiles. Indeed, when, some months later, Gorbachev agreed to an arms agreement eliminating all of his SS-20s in return for all of the Western Pershing IIs and cruise missiles, the SPD was left in the embarrassing position of having to "retreat" from unilateral Western withdrawal to bilateral withdrawal, which would remove the Soviet missiles as well.

Nonetheless, the SPD firmly endorsed the Federal Republic's links to the West:

The Federal Republic of Germany is politically and militarily integrated into the European Community and NATO. For as long as the Soviet Union remains an excessively armed superpower in Europe the West Europeans will need to be linked with the military counterbalance of the United States.⁸

And in several other ways—for example forward defense and continuation of conscription—it shows itself to be far from pacifist or other radicalism.

The British political left is quite similar. Labour Party Leader Kinnock's balance, set forth in his statement quoted at the head of this section, is expressed in terms of strongly antinuclear policies backed by strongly pro-NATO arguments:

⁷Social Democratic Party of Germany, *Peace and Security*, Resolutions adopted by the Party Conference, Nuremberg, 25–29 August 1986, p. 13.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 2.

Britain must choose between effective conventional defense and its own nuclear weapons, and we in the Labor Party hope that it will choose conventional defense even if Britain has to take unilateral action to renounce the nuclear program. Moreover, a careful strategic assessment of United States nuclear weapons systems in Britain leads us to the conclusion that these nuclear systems should be withdrawn. . . .

Our entire effort in the Labour Party is dedicated to ensuring that our country is effectively defended and that our alliance with our fellow democracies remains strong. To those ends, we want to make the transfer of precious funds from expenditure on Polaris and Trident nuclear forces to improved conventional capabilities, thereby enhancing both our domestic defense and the quality of our NATO contribution. Moreover, we want to insure that real progress is made toward changing the "first use" NATO strategy which currently contradicts the interests of common security between East and West.⁹

Kinnock's then-Shadow Foreign Secretary and former Labour Defense Minister Denis Healey (he left the shadow position after Labour lost the June 1987 election, because of his age), after presenting a similar set of arguments for the same positions, concluded on a rather different note:

The main objective of a Labour government in NATO would be to persuade its allies to cooperate in building an effective conventional deterrent in Europe. . . . Yet we recognize that we cannot change NATO strategy unilaterally and that NATO strategy must be indivisible. So we shall continue to cooperate in the existing strategy until we succeed in changing it, as the Kennedy Administration did in the 1960s.¹⁰

The last passage sounds very much as if, had Labour won the 1987 election, at least the plank about ousting American nuclear weapons from Britain would have been implemented very slowly indeed.

Much of the analytical basis for Labour's Remover political policies lies in a study entitled *Defence Without the Bomb*, prepared in 1983 by the Alternative Defence Commission made up of academics, clerics, union officials, and others. As in the German case, the intellectual base is far more radical than the political cutting edge represented by Kinnock. The study is, in fact, a rather radical analysis with a few members of the Commission being even more radical than the consensus that wrote the document. In sharp distinction to Healey's "we will teach them patiently," the group's position is:

⁹Neil Kinnock, "How Labor Would Defend Britain," *New York Times*, March 27, 1987, p. 31.

¹⁰Denis Healey, "A Labour Britain, NATO and the Bomb," *Foreign Affairs*, Spring 1987, p. 726.

The Commission is unanimous that a nuclear disarmed Britain could not accept NATO's current nuclear-based strategy. It debated at length whether it would be better for Britain to stay in NATO and seek to influence its policy in a non-nuclear direction, or to leave the Alliance altogether. The majority reached the conclusion that Britain should seek to initiate a process of nuclear disarmament in Europe by staying in the Alliance subject to the condition that NATO does move decisively toward abandoning any reliance on a nuclear strategy. The goal of de-nuclearising NATO strategy implies the following steps: (1) Acceptance by NATO of a policy of no-first-use of nuclear weapons. (2) Withdrawal of short-range, "battlefield," nuclear weapons. (3) Withdrawal of "theatre" nuclear weapons. (4) The decoupling of the U.S. strategic deterrent from NATO by ending reliance on U.S. nuclear weapons as an element in NATO strategy. . . .

If NATO was not willing to renounce nuclear strategies, Britain should withdraw from the Alliance. It could then explore the possibility of alternative approaches to collective security in Europe, or adopt a non-aligned position. Some Commission members thought that from the outset Britain should adopt a non-aligned approach.¹¹

The study provides a variety of arguments and proposals in its 300 pages. One thing it does not go in for is America-bashing. Although it is obviously quite critical of American nuclear policies, the nearest it comes to hostility is in terms of future possibilities, and slightly shamefacedly at that: "If Britain went non-nuclear and left NATO, we would be less directly threatened by Soviet nuclear strategy, but we might also need to ask whether the USA posed any kind of military threat,"¹² a theme not expanded upon. In fact, although peace-movement hostility to the United States and belief in the "moral equivalency" of the United States and the Soviet Union is a theme frequently written *about*, it is one that is hardly ever written down by those who espouse it.¹³

The Alternative Defence Commission volume provides little assessment, hostile or otherwise, of the United States. Its discussion of the Soviet Union is more extensive, falling within the "on-the-one-hand, on-the-other-hand" frame that was the most optimistic anyone was willing to get in the pre-Gorbachev era. One contradiction to a standard and central Coupler belief is set forth, however. It concerns "Finlandization."

¹¹Alternative Defence Commission, *Defence Without the Bomb*, Taylor and Francis, London, 1983, pp. 8-9.

¹²Alternative Defence Commission, p. 56.

¹³For a Danish third-person version, see Monitor, "SDP Successor Generation Less Sympathetic to U.S., E.C. Goals," *Berlingske Tidende*, April 28, 1986, p. 12.

The term Finlandisation tends to be used in a way that oversimplifies the degree of control exercised by the Soviet Union over Finland. Though Finland is obliged to observe a neutrality which in some respects leans towards the Soviet Union, and limits its criticism of the Soviet Union, it undoubtedly retains independent democratic institutions, and its economic links with the USSR benefit Finland and do not prevent it from trading freely with the rest of the world. . . . A comparison with Panama's relationship to the United States . . . puts Finland's position into better perspective. As a country small in population bordering on a powerful neighbor, and occupying a position of strategic importance to it, Finland enjoys a reasonable degree of autonomy.¹⁴

It may be noted that Britain does not border on any such "powerful neighbor." West Germans may take less comfort from the "reasonable degree of autonomy," however.

The Alternative Defence Commission also takes up and extensively discusses the *positive* theme of the Removers—nonnuclear defensive strategy, centered largely on "defensive defense." The Commission advocates:

preparations for military resistance which would deny an easy victory to an invading force. This aim might be met either by having the ability to hold an attacking force for several weeks by an in-depth deployment which would ensure serious attrition of advancing forces. It . . . means possessing few, if any, offensive missiles or long-range ground-attack aircraft, and limiting the number of tanks to those required for a mobile defense.¹⁵

Another exclusion (in addition to offensive missiles and long-range aircraft) suggested by a Danish analyst, contrasts sharply with the technological hopes of the Couplers: "without entirely abandoning advanced weapons systems, we have to put the main emphasis on older and more primitive weapons which are not dependent on radar and which, therefore, are not as accurate but which, on the other hand, cannot be put out of action electronically."¹⁶ Coupler David Gates' previously cited critique of defensive defense, however, suggests that, in contrast to the Removers' ethos of militia defense of home and hearth, they would, in fact, also have to depend on high technology to be militarily effective.

The issue of defense on the continent is of more specific interest for the Germans (and for the Danes) than it is for the British. Andreas von Bulow, a defense analyst and spokesman for the SPD, admires Swiss and Swedish defenses and argues for a similar German system:

¹⁴Alternative Defence Commission, p. 76.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 179-180.

¹⁶Ole Koefoed, "Aspects of 'Defensive' Military System Discussed," *Bertingske Tidende*, December 23, 1985, p. 9.

A look at the Swedish and Swiss structures strikingly shows that these certainly not militarily incompetent nations put a considerable emphasis on the infantry. . . . For their defense the Swiss and the Swedes have thus set up relatively tight-knit configurations in order to stop attacking, highly-mechanized units; behind these stand defense forces with strong tank components that can be used at points of main effort where there is a danger of breakthrough. These forces are not sufficient, however, to be used for territory-taking operations. In contrast, at the center of NATO's armament is the great mass of tanks. . . .

The Federal Republic will be able to maintain a balanced defense commitment in the 1990s only if military structures are radically changed. . . . A more static defense requires a great deal of manpower in case of war. This personnel, especially for a network that is strong on anti-tank defense, should by no means be manned by conscripts, but rather, as in Sweden and Switzerland, by reserves.¹⁷

Von Bulow's ultimate objective for Western defenses, aside from the denuclearization of Europe, is surprisingly like that of some of the French Couplers. He wants Western Europe to defend itself.

By the turn of the century, at least, the conventional defense of Western Europe should be in the hands of the West Europeans. A certain reliance on the U.S. nuclear umbrella, possibly also a limited physical presence of conventional U.S. troops, for example, in geotactically precarious Berlin, might still be necessary. The East European communist regimes should by then be able to stand on their feet. Their own security system should no longer be dependent on the Soviet Union.¹⁸

The Removers are some years at least from power in the major European NATO nations, Britain and West Germany. (They are virtually nonexistent in France.) In some of the smaller member nations, notably Denmark and the Netherlands, the combination of the inherent political instability associated with large numbers of small parties maneuvering for position and with vocal Remover contingents means that such issues as denuclearization and defensive defense loom quite large in the arms debates and sometimes in the national political debates. In Denmark in particular, former Social Democratic Prime Minister Anker Jorgensen, whose party did well enough in the September 1987 elections to allow him to jockey for return to the Prime Ministership (he did not make it) took a stand a year earlier in favor of defensive defense:

¹⁷Andreas von Bulow, "Defensive Entanglement: an Alternative Strategy for NATO," in Andrew Pierre (ed.), *The Conventional Defense of Europe*, pp. 136-147.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 151.

A nonthreatening nonoffensive defense structure is a defense system which by its structure demonstrates peaceable nonoffensive aims, but which at the same time possesses the capacity to work together with other nations in order to inflict on an attacker such losses in and from one's own sovereign territory that attack cannot be assumed beforehand to result in a successful outcome for the attacker.¹⁹

One of the ways that the Social Democrats proposed to implement this policy was to move the Danish NATO brigade in Schleswig-Holstein (West Germany) to Jutland-Funen (Denmark).

More broadly, an organization called Scandilux, made up of the Social Democratic parties of Benelux and the continental NATO members of Scandinavia, has, according to Danish Professor Nikolaj Petersen, coalesced around a set of ideas that can serve as a summary of Remover recommendations. They are:

the concept of "common security" . . . between the NATO and Warsaw Pact countries. . . .

the concept of a larger and more independent European role in Western defence. . . .

an alternative NATO strategy for the defence of Western Europe, including the following elements: (a) reduction of the role of nuclear weapons in NATO strategy, including a large-scale removal of . . . tactical nuclear weapons, the adoption of a no-first-use doctrine, . . . and the establishment of nuclear-free zones . . . (b) opposition to "deep-strike" strategies . . . (c) formulation of a so-called "defensive" concept for the defence of Western Europe.²⁰

It is not clear what the political prospects are for the Removers, either in Scandilux (where, for example, Norwegian Defense Minister Holst, a member of the Social Democratic government, remains a charter Coupler), or in the larger countries (where the possibilities before the 1991/92 elections are limited). What is clear is that the European Remover school has as complete and coherent a vision of policy and the future as any other. Its closeness to power (and, in the cases of Denis Healey and Anker Jorgensen at least, its experience of past power) and the depth of its support have enabled it to think through its ideas in a way not required of all radical factions in all aspects of the arms debate of the 1980s.

¹⁹Quoted in *Berlingske Tidende*, June 17, 1986, p. 4.

²⁰Nicolaj Petersen, "The Scandilux Experiment: Towards a Transnational Social Democratic Security Perspective," *Cooperation and Conflict: Nordic Journal of International Politics*, March 1985, p. 11.

V. THE WITHDRAWERS

Approaching the millenium . . . Americans are coming to realize that our front line is the skyline; America's primary national defense interest is to protect itself from the threat of incoming missiles. Our global mission is better served by investing money in a new nuclear shield than in manning old casernes in Germany.

—William Safire¹

Abroad, an assertive American foreign policy meets with great resistance from our allies, most of whom are utterly risk-averse, and some of whom believe that a grudging appeasement of Soviet power will mollify its messianic appetite. This is especially evident in Western Europe, where, under the American nuclear umbrella, national pride has softened into something that resembles national pique.

—Irving Kristol²

The American Withdrawer school is newer and narrower, and therefore less complete in its ideas, than its corresponding (in a sense) European school, the Removers. The two correspond, even though the Removers come primarily from the "left" and the Withdrawers from the "right," in that they both favor a sharp drawdown of the American commitment to NATO. Further, they both have deep historical roots: the Removers in pacifism and post-World War II European anti-Americanism, the Withdrawers in the pre-World War II American isolationism echoed by Safire and the post-war visceral anticommunism exemplified by Kristol. Indeed, although the American peace movement, on the left, pays little attention to NATO, the policy recommendations that they do make fit quite nicely with those of the right Withdrawers. They do not share the strong anticommunism, but they do share the isolationism; and they fit the defining characteristic: they want the United States to withdraw from Europe.

Avowed isolationism has been out of date in the United States since the early 1950s. True, one American undercurrent in the isolationist tradition—that, since the restoration of West European prosperity by the 1960s, the Europeans have not carried a fair share of the responsibility for their own defense—provides an important basis for the

¹William Safire, "Europe After NATO," *New York Times*, June 22, 1987, p. 21.

²Irving Kristol, "Foreign Policy in an Age of Ideology," *National Interest*, Fall 1985, p. 14.

Withdrawers' arguments. But it took cumulating feelings on the American right that the West Europeans were insufficiently anticommunist and insufficiently supportive of American anticommunism and other American global interests to reactivate their isolationism in the early 1980s.

The Withdrawers' view of insufficient European anticommunism had early roots in lack of NATO support for our war in Vietnam. In the late 1970s, some of the Withdrawers' feelings were based on the lukewarm (at best) support by our allies for President Carter's post-Afghanistan Olympic boycott; some were based on what was perceived as incomplete support for the Polish Solidarity movement; some on lack of support regarding Iran and the Persian Gulf; some, a bit later, on West European opposition to U.S. activities in Central America. A precipitating event in the early 1980s, though, took place within Europe—the bargain by the West European nations to bring in Siberian natural gas through a pipeline that some Americans contend was subsidized largely by concessions from these nations.³ NYU Economics Professor Melvin Krauss, one of the most prolific of the Withdrawers, uses the pipeline as an instance to combine the insufficient-anticommunism theme with another used by the Withdrawers that the West Europeans are too willing to compromise principle for economic advantage:

[T]he pipeline deal clearly is part of the overall European strategy of Soviet appeasement. But there is another important aspect of the deal. . . . The truth of the matter is that the Soviet pipeline deal probably had as much to do with increasing employment and profits in a severely depressed European industry as it did with paying tribute to the Kremlin.⁴

At another point, under the subhead "European Defense Free-Riding," Krauss asserts that "The reason we allocate a greater portion of our economic product to defense than the Europeans is not that we are more warlike than our allies, but that we subsidize Europe's defense needs,"⁵ and he defends this analysis with numbers. Burden-sharing is a common American theme, and not only among the Withdrawers; as has been noted, Europeans cite other numbers to argue the point.

Krauss and fellow NYU Professor Kristol, editor of the neoconservative *Public Interest* quarterly, are both cited by French publisher

³See Genscher.

⁴Melvin Krauss, *How NATO Weakens the West*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1986, p. 149.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 18.

Jimmy Goldsmith as leaders of the American drive to cut the commitment to Europe.⁶ The citation is essentially accurate, but Goldsmith also mentions Senator Sam Nunn; and Nunn, as well as Henry Kissinger and former National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski who are frequently grouped with Nunn, is quite different from Krauss and from Kristol. Nunn, Kissinger, and Brzezinski are not Withdrawers; they are interested in restructuring NATO or NATO strategy precisely in order to preserve the Alliance under what they see as new conditions. As such, they form an important portion of the American Maintainer consensus quite different from the Withdrawer viewpoint.

Kristol philosophizes historically on NATO interference with America's larger mission:

When George Washington warned the young republic against any entangling alliances, the U.S. was a medium-size power, geographically distant from the Great Powers of Europe. . . . The U.S. today, however, is one of the Great Powers, not a middling power. The meaning for us, therefore, of an entangling alliance has changed. . . . In general, an entangling alliance for a superpower today is one that is more likely to inhibit or prevent its taking action that it deems to be appropriate or timely. The Soviet Union, of course, has no such entangling alliances. . . .

[T]he NATO alliance, as now constituted, is not limited to the defense of Western Europe. . . . As things now stand, the U.S. would not even have the legal right to use any of the American bases in Western Europe to support military operations in the Mediterranean, Northern Africa or the Middle East. Several members of NATO have made it quite clear that they would feel free to deny us this right, should they disapprove of our action.⁷

And what may be worse yet, according to Krauss, is that the United States has softened in response to West European softness: "The Europeans said, in effect, 'You adopt détente, or else we won't let you defend us'— and they got away with it."⁸ They also get away with opposing us in international forums: "Western Europe often votes against the United States on key strategic issues in the United Nations—Nicaragua, El Salvador, Grenada, and so forth."⁹ His conclusion on the theme of collective European softness is in the form of a rhetorical question: "[C]an there be any doubt as to the long-range

⁶Jimmy Goldsmith, "Le levier de la défense," *L'Express*, February 27–5 March, 1987, p. 24.

⁷Irving Kristol, "'Global Unilateralism' and 'Entangling Alliances,'" *Wall Street Journal*, February 3, 1986, p. 18.

⁸Melvin Krauss, "Why Has Reagan Yielded to Europe?" *New York Times*, January 6, 1986, p. A17.

⁹Krauss, *How NATO Weakens the West*, p. 27.

debilitating effect wrought by the American security blanket on European perceptions of the external danger?"¹⁰

Krauss's book has specific chapters on West Germany and France (although, surprisingly, neither a chapter nor even an index reference to Britain). On Germany: "The desire for détente is so strong in the Federal Republic that it transcends political parties and ideological allegiances."¹¹ This, however, is in large measure the fault of the United States:

[T]he idea of keeping West Germany in a militarily inferior position by having a foreign power provide for its defense and basic security needs had considerable appeal after World War II, given Germany's dubious historical record. . . . When West Germany's commitment to democracy could no longer be challenged and its economy became the strongest in Western Europe, it should have been obvious that unless there was an adjustment of its status as a militarily inferior nation, West Germany increasingly would feel estranged from those responsible for its condition and particularly from that country most responsible and upon which it was most dependent, the United States. The appeal of neutralism to the West Germans should have come as no surprise, though it did to many.¹²

And as for France, in 1983 he held up French independence as a model for what NATO should be, suggesting a separate German nuclear deterrent in addition to the French and the British.¹³ By the time of his 1986 book, however, he was more dubious:

Though the basics of official French defense policy have changed very little under Socialist Mitterand . . . there is a new revisionism gaining credibility in France that threatens the entire Gaullist defense edifice. This new French revisionism has a most unlikely spokesman in Yves Montand, the popular French actor and chansonnier.¹⁴

If it was fair for Krauss to cite Montand as a spokesman for France, it was also fair a year later for Goldsmith to cite Krauss as a spokesman for the United States.

More recently, Krauss has put his argument for turning nuclear control over to individual West European nations into the context of the zero-zero negotiations:

¹⁰Ibid., p. 28.

¹¹Ibid., p. 93.

¹²Ibid., p. 105.

¹³Melvin Krauss, "It's Time to Change the Atlantic Alliance," *Wall Street Journal*, March 3, 1983, p. 24.

¹⁴Krauss, *How NATO Weakens the West*, p. 130.

As pointed out by Gregory Fossedal of the Hoover Institution . . . the president could respond to Mr. Gorbachev's offer to negotiate the zero-based option by announcing his intention to give control of all U.S. medium-range nuclear weapons located on European soil to the Europeans. . . . The Europeans may or may not accept the American lead in this matter; that is for them, not the U.S. to decide. For our part, we should offer the missiles to the nation-states in which the missiles currently are located. If the Europeans want an alternative arrangement, we should stand ready to accommodate them.¹⁵

Christopher Layne, an attorney writing in *Foreign Policy* quarterly, picks up the burden-sharing theme of the other Withdrawers and comes out with similar recommendations for getting the United States out of NATO. Layne, however, does not share the ideological anticommunism of most of the other Withdrawers:

Short of war, Europe's division can best be ended by a negotiated superpower disengagement. . . . The United States has a vital interest in lessening the tensions from Europe's division: Central Europe has been the focal point of superpower confrontation for 40 years. . . . Both superpowers have an interest in reconciling legitimate Soviet security concerns with Eastern Europe's desire for greater political autonomy. The goal of disengagement, therefore, would be not to induce states to leave Moscow's security orbit but to achieve Eastern Europe's Finlandization.¹⁶

Layne is of the right; the one affiliation he uses to identify himself for his published articles, for example, is with the Cato Institute, an organization devoted to very free-market economics and associated politics. But his arguments, lacking the anticommunist tone of Kristol and Krauss, are similar to those made by Richard Barnet of the Institute for Policy Studies on the left. Barnet, one of the few American analysts on that end of the spectrum to include NATO seriously in his military-disarmament writings, suggests that neither the Soviet threat nor the American deterrent are any longer very plausible to West Europeans and that, as a result, although Europe is capable of fielding its own stronger forces, "taxpayers on the continent are not enthusiastic about supporting larger defense budgets or more conscription."¹⁷

The central policy recommendation stemming from this reasoning makes Barnet a Withdrawer:

¹⁵Melvin Krauss, "Let Europe Negotiate with Gorbachev," *Wall Street Journal*, March 6, 1987, p. 30.

¹⁶Christopher Layne, "Atlanticism Without NATO," *Foreign Policy*, Summer 1987, p. 34.

¹⁷Richard J. Barnet, "Reflections: The Four Pillars," *New Yorker*, March 9, 1987, p. 80.

Thus, the Europeans should bear the primary responsibility for their own defense. The United States should use its power to make the military environment in Europe less dangerous by negotiating the denuclearization of the military forces facing one another in Europe and by taking substantial steps toward the demilitarization of the Continent. . . . The reality is that Europe can be defended only by non-nuclear means, and the appropriate men and women to undertake that defense are Europeans.¹⁸

Layne, like the other right Withdrawers, does not share Barnett's desire for denuclearization; nonetheless, his recommendations sound similar. His withdrawal stance comes in two styles, bilateral and unilateral. The bilateral negotiated version revolves around the "reunification and neutralization of Germany" and the "dissolution of NATO and the Warsaw Pact."¹⁹ The unilateral version, which is accompanied by a West German independent nuclear deterrent force rather than German reunification, proposes: "Washington should fix an ironclad timetable for the phased withdrawal over 4 years of all ground, air, and nuclear forces from Europe. At the conclusion of its pullout, the formal U.S. commitment to NATO would end."²⁰

Not even Kristol would go quite as far as complete withdrawal of both forces and commitment. His object, like Layne's, is to put Europe on its own:

Obviously NATO—even a purely European NATO—would need a sufficiency of [nuclear] weapons . . . to deter a Soviet first use of them, regardless of any arms control treaties that might be signed. But reserving those weapons for this purpose would mean that Western Europe would finally have to face its moment of truth: the recognition that to deter the Soviets it would have to develop its conventional forces, and convincingly assert the will to use them.²¹

The "even a purely European NATO" implies that he is still open to a transatlantic alliance, were that possible under acceptable terms. His recommendation for the United States is a reduced, but not completely dissolved, American commitment to Western Europe:

This means that NATO, as currently structured, is an archaic institution, that the defense of Western Europe will become primarily a Western European responsibility, that Western Europe will have to gird itself to fight and (hopefully) win a conventional war against the

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 81-82.

¹⁹Christopher Layne, "Deutschland Uber Allies," *New Republic*, September 28, 1987, p. 13.

²⁰Layne, "Atlanticism Without NATO," p. 33.

²¹Irving Kristol, "Nuclear NATO: Moment of Truth," *Wall Street Journal*, July 9, 1987, p. 28.

Soviet Union—with American help, if needed, but not with a recourse to nuclear weapons.²²

Krauss has a slightly different summary recommendation, close to Layne but consistent with his own emphases on balanced contributions and global anticommunism:

Washington should announce a phased withdrawal of U.S. troops over a period of, say, five years . . . [but] a distinction should be made between Europe's flank states and center. Clearly, in terms of resources and the potential to hold together under duress, Europe's center is far stronger than its flanks. Scandinavia is of sufficient concern to the core states of Western Europe that they could be expected to look after the northern flanks should the U.S. depart. . . . But what is to become of the flank states like Turkey, that do not shortchange their defense and have significant strategic value to the United States? Perhaps it would be wise for the U.S. to make a separate bilateral agreement with Turkey after we leave Europe to insure its security.²³

Finally, mention should be made of a specifically naval version. Washington analyst Jeffrey Record, paralleling the reasoning of the other Withdrawers in a 1982 booklet he wrote with retired Admiral Robert Hanks, lists three recommendations:

Withdrawal of non-nuclear U.S. ground forces from Germany and attendant alterations in the U.S. Army's size and force structure.

A major expansion in U.S. naval power and seaborne force projection capabilities.

Creation of a new global strategy based primarily on sea power and sea-borne force projection capabilities, and oriented primarily toward non-NATO contingencies.²⁴

Withdrawal of U.S. ground forces implies a different direction from Kristol's willingness to extend conventional help only, but otherwise the recommendations are consistent. The naval version differs from the other Withdrawer writings too in one additional and crucial particular: the stress on global sea-borne force projection has become part of the Reagan administration's military strategy for the United States, although certainly not accompanied by withdrawal from Europe.

The Withdrawers are not all identical, not even the pronuclear right-wing Withdrawers. But where they do come together is in their

²²Kristol, "Foreign Policy in an Age of Ideology," p. 14.

²³Krauss, *How NATO Weakens the West*, pp. 237-238.

²⁴Jeffrey Record, "Beyond NATO: New Military Directions for the United States," in Jeffrey Record and Robert J. Hanks, *U.S. Strategy at the Crossroads: Two Views*, Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, Inc., Cambridge and Washington, July 1982, p. 29.

central recommendation to the United States: *Get out of Europe*. In this they are similar to most of the European Removers, but they differ from the mainstream American consensus, the Maintainers; some Maintainers want to restructure NATO and the American commitment, but they want to do it to strengthen both. "Maintaining and strengthening" is their theme, not "getting out."

VI. THE MAINTAINERS

The message is that we want to be a part of NATO; that we are going to continue to be a part of NATO whether this amendment passes or does not pass; that we will even continue to be a part of NATO if our European allies do not comply with any of the provisions of this amendment; that we will continue to have hundreds of thousands of troops in NATO even if this amendment passes and even if the allies do not comply with any of its provisions or tests. We will still have a nuclear deterrent that will not only protect this Nation but explicitly help protect our European allies. We will continue to have theater nuclear capability and commitment to our European allies. We will continue to have naval commitment. . . .

But the amendment is designed to give NATO as an alliance every incentive to improve its conventional defense. The reason we need to improve conventional defense is that the continued reliance on the early use of nuclear weapons is diametrically opposed to the national security interests of this country and the security interests of our Western European allies. . . .

[I]f we do not have allies that are going to do their part, there is no need for the American taxpayer to continue to spend billions and billions and billions of dollars. . . . We can have a tripwire—that is, having our forces basically link the American nuclear deterrent to the defense of Europe—for a lot less money.

—Senator Sam Nunn (Dem., Ga.), discussing his 1984 amendment to gradually withdraw some American troops from Europe unless the European allies made certain specified increases in their contributions to the Alliance.¹

Just as their own preservation is the central value judgment for West Europeans and the U.S. commitment to the defense of Western Europe is the focus of their debate on how to preserve their existence and independence, preserving *itself* (and the rest of the world) from nuclear holocaust is the central American value, and the Conventional-Nuclear Link—the threshold—is the how-to on which the Maintainers focus.

¹Senator Sam Nunn, *Congressional Record, Senate*, June 20, 1984, p. S7722.

For the Americans as for the Europeans, the commitment and the threshold are two sides of a coin. Senator Nunn's ringing reaffirmation of the commitment to NATO defines the Maintainer school, but the commitment is not much debated; it is assumed rather than being dissected as it is by the Couplers. Nunn's desire to raise the nuclear threshold, however, also commands a near-unanimous Maintainer consensus, and how to do it absorbs much consideration by American officials and analysts.

The three points mentioned in the introductory chapter—No Early Use of nuclear weapons, the need for stronger conventional capabilities to support this, and the continued American commitment to NATO—are, in fact, matters of consensus among the Maintainers. That is not to say that they do not argue with one another; this section brings out wide differences of opinion. Almost all of these differences, however, turn out to be on overarching issues that concern NATO but are not primarily *about* NATO—SDI and arms control, for example.² The analysis here covers the NATO-related aspects of these debates, but almost all the debates stop at the water's edge; the Maintainers all espouse approximately the same policies toward NATO Europe.

MILITARY ISSUES

The Conventional/Nuclear Link

General Bernard Rogers set forth the Maintainers' view of NATO's central military problem and the principle by which it should be solved, in one of the many statements he made as Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR):

NATO's current conventional posture does not provide our nations with adequate deterrence of Warsaw Pact non-nuclear aggression or intimidation derived from the threat of such aggression. If attacked conventionally today, NATO would face fairly quickly the decision of escalating to a nuclear response in order to try to cause the aggressor to halt his advance. . . . Credible deterrence requires NATO to attain a conventional capability that would give us a reasonable prospect of frustrating a non-nuclear attack by conventional means. . . . [This] "reasonable prospect" formula is compatible with Flexible Response.³

The Maintainer consensus on both the problem description and the need for its solution encompasses a broad range of officials and

²For discussion of these issues, see Levine, *The Strategic Nuclear Debate*.

³General Bernard Rogers, "NATO's Strategy: an Undervalued Currency," in International Institute for Strategic Studies, Adelphi Paper 205, p. 6.

analysts. Whether or how the solution can be brought about commands much less of a consensus.

The consensus in favor of raising the threshold is a strong one, including debaters who disagreed greatly on other nuclear issues. On one end of the range, Albert Wohlstetter, a leader of the group of American analysts who feel that deterrence, particularly in Europe, depends on our ability and willingness to use a variety of nuclear options,⁴ is nonetheless clear that these options are last resorts that should be avoided by being equally prepared to meet conventional force with conventional defense. In a 1987 paper, for example, he repeated the conclusion of the report of the 1961 Acheson Commission in which he participated:

It emphasized the raising of the nuclear threshold, not its removal. . . . It was more credible that we would use conventional force to repel a conventional invasion and, if our conventional forces were overwhelmed, that we would use nuclear weapons, if we could use them discriminately and for a military purpose.⁵

On the antinuclear end of the spectrum, the "Gang of Four"—McGeorge Bundy, George Kennan, Robert McNamara, and Gerard Smith—while advocating serious discussion of No First Use by the West of nuclear weapons,⁶ recognized that they were suggesting an ultimate direction, not an immediate policy proposal. In a later article, the four, as part of a larger gang of ten, espoused No First Use as a long-run goal, but No *Early Use* as an implementable step in current and developing policy:

We believe that eventually the United States, in concert with its NATO allies, should formalize its commitment not to initiate the use of nuclear weapons and should alter its deployments, war plans, and attitudes accordingly. . . .

As an initial measure, the Western alliance could adopt a policy of no early use. . . . A logical next step would be a policy of no early second use. . . . We would argue, finally, that the United States should adopt a policy of no *strategic* first use—a commitment not to initiate the use of American strategic weapons based on the U.S. mainland or at sea.⁷

⁴See Levine, *The Strategic Nuclear Debate*.

⁵Albert Wohlstetter, "Swords Without Shields," *National Interest*, Summer 1987, pp. 53-54.

⁶McGeorge Bundy, George F. Kennan, Robert S. McNamara, and Gerard Smith, "Nuclear Weapons and the Atlantic Alliance," *Foreign Affairs*, Spring 1982.

⁷McGeorge Bundy, Morton H. Halperin, William W. Kaufmann, George F. Kennan, Robert S. McNamara, Madalene O'Donnell, Leon V. Sigal, Gerard C. Smith, Richard H.

No Early Use is another name for the Maintainers' consensus goal, a threshold as high as possible. The terminology crosses the spectrum to those who remain far from the No-First-Use position. Ambassador David Abshire, for example, then the Reagan administration's representative on the NATO Council, has stressed that: "It is most important to improve conventional defense because we must never be forced to contemplate the prospect of too early use of nuclear weapons."⁸

Abshire's stress on conventional improvement to raise the threshold is also part of the Maintainer consensus, but many analysts contend that as NATO is currently postured, No Early Use is almost impossible; NATO will have to use nuclear weapons almost immediately if it is to fight at all. John Steinbruner of the Brookings Institution, for example, contended in 1983 that:

As NATO forces have evolved, the capability to use nuclear weapons has been closely associated with conventional forces. Artillery and tactical air units that provide supporting firepower for the ground armies responsible for holding NATO territory can use both conventional and nuclear ordnance and are trained to do so. The elaborate management procedures necessarily associated with nuclear weapons inhibit flexibility in conventional operations and pose hard choices for NATO commanders. In net effect the presence of nuclear delivery systems in forward units introduces a strong bias toward their use in combat, if not actually first then certainly very early.⁹

Since 1983, nobody has suggested that the threshold has risen substantially, although Robert Osgood's fear, a year later, that it was dropping rapidly, was also unjustified.¹⁰ Such ever-present fears of ever-worse conventional capabilities, provide one more illustration of the ubiquity of former Defense Secretary James Schlesinger's colonel's rubber-stamp, "In this perilous moment in the history of the alliance. . . ."

Steinbruner and Osgood doubted NATO's conventional capability to postpone the decision to go nuclear in Europe. At about the same time, William Kaufmann questioned the other end of the Flexible Response range, the potential use of American strategic nuclear forces:

Ullman, and Paul C. Warnke, "Back from the Brink," *Atlantic Monthly*, August 1986, pp. 36-41.

⁸David Abshire, Speech to the Southern Center for International Affairs, reprinted in the *Congressional Record, Senate*, June 20, 1984, p. 7751.

⁹John D. Steinbruner, "Introduction," in John D. Steinbruner and Leon V. Sigal (eds.), *Alliance Security: NATO and the No-First-Use Question*, Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C., 1983, p. 3.

¹⁰Robert Osgood, "Summation," in Netherlands Institute of International Relations, Clingendael, *Conventional Balance in Europe: Problems, Strategies and Technologies*, Zoetermeer, the Netherlands, May 11-13, 1984, p. 82.

Whatever NATO's military guidance may say, it is highly improbable that the U.S. strategic forces would ever be ordered to launch a first strike against targets in the Soviet Union in response to a conventional invasion of Western Europe. Indeed, this probability has been close to zero for at least twenty-five years [as of 1983].¹¹

He used the point to advance the cause he had been active in for most of those 25 years, including a stint as a major advisor to then Secretary of Defense McNamara, raising the threshold by increasing conventional capabilities.

Kaufmann's expressed doubt about the use of strategic weapons exemplifies a belief likely to evoke the European Couplers' worst fears, and few of the American Maintainers would go that far. Nonetheless, it is not very surprising that a respected American analyst can make a statement potentially so shocking to West Europeans; the interpretations of the link remain very different on the two sides of the Atlantic. An American view (by Washington defense analyst Leon Sloss) of the European view highlights the contrast:

Under the vague and sufficiently ambiguous formulation of Flexible Response, we witnessed the emergence of two distinct and, to a degree, contradictory objectives. Very briefly, the U.S. wants manoeuvring room and options, while Europe wants to avoid thinking about a prolonged conventional war or limited nuclear exchanges at the theatre level by threatening a much bigger war which would entail the total destruction of Europe, the Soviet Union and the United States. If the only war is a general holocaust—so goes European reasoning—then there will be no war. From this vantage point, U.S. ground troops and U.S. theatre nuclear forces . . . would not be a "firebreak" as the U.S. envisaged. Rather they would be the "fuse" which would ignite the strategic arsenals immediately. . . . All this is highly dangerous in today's environment.¹²

The question here is not whether Sloss's analysis of the West Europeans is correct; it represents a common Maintainer view of the Couplers. The Maintainers' primarily military thinking about the link is lost on many of the European Couplers; the Couplers' primarily political thinking about the U.S. commitment—the political side of the same issue—is held in contempt by many of the American Maintainers.

In the view of many of the Maintainers as well as the Couplers, the whole thing has been exacerbated over time by the onset of "strategic parity." Sloss continues his argument on the danger of "today's [1985] environment":

¹¹William W. Kaufmann, "Nuclear Deterrence in Central Europe," in Steinbruner and Segal, p. 29.

¹²Leon Sloss, "The Roles of Strategic and Theatre Nuclear Forces in NATO Strategy: Part II," in International Institute for Strategic Studies, pp. 61-62.

The enormous shift in the overall strategic balance of the last 20 years has had different consequences for the U.S. and for NATO Europe. While U.S. strategic forces have been able to maintain a rough parity with their Soviet counterparts, the same forces cannot be deemed equally able to buttress the U.S. commitment to a NATO strategy which implies first use of nuclear weapons to deter a conventional attack. And yet this is still the essence of NATO strategy and of the official role assigned to U.S. nuclear weapons.¹³

In was in this context of a strategic balance perceived to be deteriorating that INF was proposed in the late 1970s and introduced in the early 1980s. The issue to the West Europeans was less the level of the conventional-nuclear threshold than it was the width of *any* gap in the chain of Flexible Response that led from conventional defense to the American strategic deterrent. If the failure of conventional defense led to the use of short-range nuclear weapons in Western Europe, the lack of an intermediate-range force might allow a pause after the West was devastated but before the homeland of the Soviet Union was involved. And if the Soviets were to foresee such a pause, this might bring about a failure to deter their initial conventional attack.

Americans were more inclined to describe the gap in military terms. General Rogers, for example, described INF's role in NATO strategy:

NATO decided to deploy land-based long-range I.N.F. missiles in 1979 to fill a gap in our spectrum of deterrence. The gap existed because American F-111 aircraft based in Britain were then the last remaining part of the theater nuclear system that could reach Soviet soil, provided the aircraft could penetrate Warsaw Pact air defenses. The fact that the Russians began deploying SS-20 missiles in 1977 made the NATO decision more urgent.¹⁴

The political-military issue raised by some Maintainers opposed to INF is whether the location of the missile launchers or their participation in the "theater nuclear system" (given that the president of the United States must release them to the theater commander before he can use them) make a difference for Flexible Response or anything else. Jonathan Dean of the Union of Concerned Scientists expresses doubts:

The decision of an American president as to whether to respond to an overwhelming Soviet conventional attack on Europe . . . with nuclear weapons would not depend solely on the pattern of deployment of U.S. missiles in Europe. Rather, such a decision would depend primarily on the president's assessment of the overall

¹³Ibid., p. 63.

¹⁴Bernard W. Rogers, "Why Compromise Our Deterrent Strength in Europe," *New York Times*, June 28, 1987, p. E25.

situation at the time. . . . The presence or absence of land-based American missiles deployed in continental Europe would be a secondary factor in this decision—and for that matter, in its execution; many other American delivery systems are available for the purpose.¹⁵

Neither Rogers' "gap in our spectrum of deterrence" nor Dean's doubts about this gap take up the question of what would be done with nuclear weapons if deterrence were to fail. The actual fighting of a nuclear war in Europe is not much discussed, at least not on the open record. Wohlstetter, however, together with his colleague Richard Brody, does build several scenarios to illustrate the point that NATO must pay attention to the detail of localized nuclear warfare rather than throwing up its hands in the belief that such combat would mean the destruction of civilization in the major population centers of the old continent. Using as an illustration "contingencies involving a Soviet invasion of northwest Iran leading to the Gulf," and the concomitant "possibility that the Soviets might use nuclear weapons selectively to eliminate unexpected obstacles to such an invasion," they suggest that:

The foregoing scenario offers a good example running counter to the conventional wisdom that the Soviets could not use nuclear weapons to accomplish military objectives of importance to them and to the NATO nuclear powers without doing so much damage to Western population centers that the NATO nuclear powers would have no stake in exercising prudence and control if they used nuclear weapons in response.¹⁶

And although the threat is more likely on the periphery, it is not absent from the Central front in Europe:

Even Soviet nuclear strikes during an invasion through the center of Western Europe, if directed selectively only at military targets critical for the invasion, could confine damage to these targets much more extensively than is generally recognized. . . . Precisely delivered air bursts could destroy aircraft on main operating bases in Britain, France, and the Federal Republic. The collateral fatalities might be in the high tens of thousands. That would be an enormous disaster. But far less than the total destruction of Western European cities. And European leaders might anticipate that as the consequence of

¹⁵Jonathan Dean, "Military Security in Europe," *Foreign Affairs*, Autumn 1987, pp. 26-27.

¹⁶Albert Wohlstetter and Richard Brody, "Continuing Control as a Requirement for Deterring," in Ashton B. Carter, John D. Steinbruner, and Charles A. Zraket (eds.), *Managing Nuclear Operations*, The Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C., 1987, p. 159.

their own use of nuclear weapons if the expected nuclear destruction were to get out of control.¹⁷

As part of his advocacy of controlled Western nuclear options to use in (or deter) scenarios like this, Wohlstetter is a strong advocate of SDI. Among most European Couplers, SDI "is seen . . . as destabilizing and decoupling" in Briton Phil Williams's words, but Wohlstetter contends that this view is based on misunderstanding. He uses a French publication to put his pro-SDI argument into NATO terms:

Certain technicians favorable to President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative . . . have envisaged Soviet attacks which utilize 30,000 warheads . . . all directed against cities in an attack mounted as a total surprise. And they have given priority to the not very obvious objective of intercepting all the warheads used in such an absurd attack. It is more plausible, if the Soviets attack, that they will use their ballistic missiles to obtain a greater probability of destroying military obstacles (in the United States or Europe) in the way of their invasion. Faced with this menace, a more modest defense against ballistic missiles could be one of the effective elements of a solid Alliance posture, which would also have to include the offensive capacity to respond selectively against Warsaw Pact targets, including those in the USSR. . . . In this way, it would assist in deterring the Soviet attack.¹⁸

Wohlstetter's statement comparing the "30,000 warheads" to "more modest" interpretations of the demands on SDI helps explain why, on this even more than on other issues, West Europeans and Americans misunderstand each other. It is because Americans confuse the arguments in their own SDI debate. "Certain technicians" in Wohlstetter's words, but President Reagan also, talk about SDI as a universal hard-shell defense against all incoming ballistic missiles. Most military analysts dismiss this kind of defense as a dream, but some, like Wohlstetter, favor SDI for its role as part of a counterforce deterrent against a range of Soviet attacks against Europe as well as the United States. Some Europeans doubt the benefits they are to receive from this modest defense and accept the worst possible interpretation: President Reagan comes across louder than Wohlstetter, and these Europeans believe that he really wants and can get his full hard-shell defense for the United States; but they doubt that he is really very interested in getting them one. Hence, they see SDI as part of American decoupling, a retreat to a happy life under the shell, with all wars confined to Europe.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 161.

¹⁸Albert Wohlstetter, "Au-delà de la stratégie du pire," *Commentaire*, Winter 1985-1986, p. 1013.

By no means all Maintainers agree with Wohlstetter on the need for SDI or for "a counterforce deterrent against a range of Soviet attacks;" nor do they agree with Sloss on other effects of the onset of strategic parity. Kaufmann's suggestion that the probability of an American strategic nuclear strike in response to a conventional Soviet attack on Western Europe "has been close to zero for at least twenty-five years" implies that the shift to parity has been largely irrelevant for NATO deterrence and defense; things have been the same since the 1950s. And Bundy's existential statement that "What keeps the peace in Europe then, is the whole range of consequences that aggression would entail"¹⁹ contains no hint that he believes parity has changed that range in any important way.

It does not take existentialism to worry about the European reception of SDI. American opponents have been concerned about its effect on the Alliance. According to Stanford Professors Sydney Drell, Philip Farley, and David Holloway:

The prospect of revival of ABM deployments thus brings Western Europe not reassurance, but uncertainties and perhaps greater dangers should it come about. In the short-term, American interest in ABM exacerbates other concerns—the American confrontational approach to the Soviet Union, an arms buildup which many see as seeking military superiority and a nuclear war fighting capacity, and a readiness to use military power and a scorn for negotiations and political processes.²⁰

European discomfort is neither causal nor central to their case against SDI, but the Drell-Farley-Holloway statement is one of many transatlantic resonances heard among the Maintainers, arguments based on the need to reconcile and soothe our allies to preserve the Alliance. The European version discussed in the previous section was the willingness of many Couplers to try to placate the Americans by agreeing, in principle at least, to the need for stronger conventional capabilities, even though these Europeans did not really want to diminish deterrence by decreasing the likelihood of escalation to the nuclear level.

Nor is opposition to SDI among the Maintainers based on resonance alone. James Thomson of RAND questions both the president's and Wohlstetter's versions on military grounds:

¹⁹McGeorge Bundy, "The Bishops and the Bomb," *New York Review of Books*, June 16, 1983, p. 6. This was the article where Bundy first used the phrase "existential deterrence."

²⁰Sidney D. Drell, Philip J. Farley, and David Holloway, *The Reagan Strategic Defense Initiative: A Technical, Political, and Arms Control Assessment*, Stanford University Press, 1984, p. 76.

The SDI was supposed to have ushered in a new era, based on a concept of deterrence in which nuclear offensive threats would have played little if any role. . . . In the face of technological uncertainties, and perhaps European political objections, the U.S. administration appears to be scaling back its concept towards (or at least complementing it with) a concept in which the deployed SDI would contribute to deterrence by reducing the vulnerability of critical Western military assets. . . . But at the present time there are many open questions about the feasibility of this concept, as well as about the more ambitious original concept.²¹

How then do Maintainers hope to raise the threshold? Most of the proposals call for increased conventional capabilities discussed below. One set, however, centers on the No-First-Use discussion by Bundy, Kennan, McNamara, and Smith. In spite of the fears their initial article created among many West Europeans, it does fall short of a firm proposal. And the most thoroughly thought through of related proposals—by Morton Halperin, a member of the ten who signed the longer follow-on article but not of the original four—steers around No First Use as such. Halperin stresses instead the complete separation of nuclear “devices” and their stigmatization as being completely inappropriate as weapons of war:

[What] I am suggesting is not, strictly speaking, a no-first-use policy for Europe. It is a somewhat different proposal—one that focuses not on a public promise never to use nuclear weapons first, but rather on the forces and operational plans for nuclear and conventional weapons in Europe. If nuclear devices were not treated as weapons, NATO’s conventional military forces would be completely separated from the specialized units designed to deliver nuclear explosive devices should the political leadership of the Alliance ever decide to employ them. . . . The nuclear force would retain the capability to be used first, and it could be employed at the direction of the president of the United States in consultation with other NATO allies. However, NATO would no longer threaten first use, and military planning would be based on the assumption that NATO would not initiate the use of nuclear weapons.²²

The distance of Halperin’s proposal from some current military thinking is illustrated by a contrasting statement in a paper by five U.S. Army analysts writing in the publication of the Army War College:

²¹James A. Thomson, “Strategic Choices: Their Roles in NATO’s Defence Planning and Force Modernization, Part I,” in *International Institute for Strategic Studies, Adelphi Paper 205*, pp. 20–21.

²²Morton H. Halperin, *Nuclear Fallacy: Dispelling the Myth of Nuclear Strategy*, Ballinger, Cambridge, 1987, pp. 95–96.

NATO's conventional and nuclear capabilities are not separate entities, but synergistic components of an effective defense posture. One cannot replace the other and major deficiencies in one cannot be compensated for by improvements in the other.²³

Although this provides a reasonable description of NATO's current posture, it is a view seldom defended in the explicit debate, particularly among Americans. Central to the argument of those who stress the link and worry about the threshold—virtually all of the Maintainers—is the “firebreak” between conventional and nuclear combat, a different metaphor for what might be termed the threshold with the door closed. A firebreak is a forest space denuded of vegetation so that a fire cannot cross it into the part of the forest that has not been burned; the metaphorical firebreak is to keep a conventional war from jumping the lines and consuming civilization in a general nuclear war.²⁴

But for the West Europeans, a better metaphor might be the “fire door” at the threshold; fire doors are not locked, because people might have to escape through them. In this case, the people at greatest risk are the Germans. The American Four recognize German needs and fears as the potential Achilles heel of No First Use and as the key issue to be examined in their proposed study:

In such an exploration, the role of the Federal Republic of Germany must be central. Americans too easily forget what the people of the Federal Republic never can: that their position is triply exposed in a fashion unique among the large industrial democracies. They do not have nuclear weapons; they share a long common border with the Soviet empire; in any conflict on the central front, their land would be the first battlefield. . . . Having decisively rejected a policy of neutrality, the Federal Republic has necessarily relied on the nuclear protection of the United States, and we Americans should recognize that this relationship is not a favor we are doing our German friends, but the best available solution of a common problem. . . .

A policy of no-first-use would not and should not imply an abandonment of this extraordinary guarantee—only its redefinition. It would still be necessary to be ready to reply with American nuclear weapons to any nuclear attack on the Federal Republic, and this commitment would in itself be sufficiently demanding to constitute a powerful

²³Boyd Sutton, John R. Landry, Malcolm B. Armstrong, Howell M. Estes, and Wesley K. Clark, “Strategic and Doctrinal Implications of Deep Attack Concepts for the Defense of Central Europe,” in Keith A. Dunn and William O. Staudenmaier (eds.), *Military Strategy in Transition*, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pa., 1983, p. 73.

²⁴The firebreak concept has existed since nuclear weapons were first discussed publicly. It was formalized by Thomas Schelling in *The Strategy of Conflict*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1960, Appendix A.

demonstration that a policy of no-first-use would represent no abandonment of our German ally.²⁵

Again resonances, undoubtedly heart-felt ones.

Few Maintainers, aside from the ten including Bundy and McNamara who signed the follow-up article, take No First Use very seriously, even as a study proposal. One reason is resonance to the strong negative reaction from European Couplers. Even more important is the unlikelihood of increasing conventional capabilities enough to support it, a need the Four explicitly recognized. No First Use and related proposals, like Halperin's, depend on either an increase of conventional capabilities or an assessment that they are already sufficiently balanced. This is also true for virtually any means of raising the threshold; in order to work, they depend on conventional capabilities—improved, reassessed, or rebalanced through arms control. Without such improvements or reassessments, the Maintainer debate over the link and the threshold, although central, is also rather theoretical, and the five Army officers' description of the synergistic link between conventional and nuclear capabilities will remain an accurate description of current reality.

Conventional Weapons

Senator Nunn's words, quoted at the head of this section, "The reason we need to improve conventional deterrence is that the continued reliance on the early use of nuclear weapons is diametrically opposed to the national security interests of this country and the security interests of our Western European allies," provide the central theme for the Maintainers' consideration of conventional weapons. The better we can defend conventionally, the higher the threshold, the less likely we will face the nuclear decision and, indeed, for the Maintainers more unanimously than the European Couplers, the stronger the deterrence of Soviet conventional aggression.

A few Maintainers contend that we are really in pretty good shape even now. Journalist Fred Kaplan sets up the standard view that "the Russians . . . have an overwhelming advantage in conventional weapons," and then goes on to claim disagreement by Kaufmann and others,

who conclude that the view is simply wrong, at least highly exaggerated. "It's one of the great hoary myths of all time," says William Kaufmann. . . . "I'm perfectly willing to say the balance of forces isn't as good as I would like. . . . But it's not nearly as bad as a lot

²⁵Bundy et al., 1982, pp. 758-759.

of people say, and the problems that are there aren't that big a deal to fix."²⁶

Kaufmann has long been associated with this position. His own highly detailed written analysis, however, was more carefully hedged and indicated what he meant by "problems that . . . aren't that big a deal to fix":

[The] Pact's ground forces dwarf those of NATO in the number of divisions, tanks, armored fighting vehicles, and artillery pieces. If these numbers are approximately correct, what reasons exist for questioning the ability of the Pact to conquer NATO in a conventional war and to do so with great dispatch? One reason, quite simply, is that what are known as static comparisons, while not irrelevant to a military analysis, are only one factor among the many that must be taken into account. . . . Soviet strategists . . . may have little choice but to seek quick results through blitzkrieg tactics. Certainly the ground forces as presently constituted are not well suited to extended campaigns of offense or defense.²⁷

Kaufmann is more upbeat than most of those who assess NATO's ability to resist a conventional attack conventionally. It may be a case of half-full or half-empty, but the more frequent view is that expressed by Senator William Roth (Rep., Del.), co-sponsor of the Nunn Amendment:

The current status of NATO's conventional defenses insures that, in the event of war, we, the NATO alliance, will be obliged to escalate quickly to the nuclear level. According to General Rogers, such escalation should be conceived in terms of days, not weeks.²⁸

Roth's statement does not necessarily contradict Kaufmann's analysis. The military analyst says we need some fixes, but even without them we may well have enough strength to make the Soviets think hard about their prospects at the conventional level, and probably to deter them; the Senator's remarks suggest that without fixes, in a situation where the Warsaw Pact is not deterred and does attack, our conventional defenses are likely to crack quickly.

Both Kaufmann's analysis and the Senate debate stem from the first half of the 1980s, however. The Alliance has not stood still since then, but how much progress has been made is conjectural. Senator Carl Levin (Dem., Mich.), for example, had backed the 1984 Nunn Amendment to force the improvement of NATO conventional defenses; but in 1988, as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Conventional Forces and Alliance

²⁶Fred Kaplan, "Analysts: Soviet Force in Europe Exaggerated," *Boston Globe*, April 26, 1987, p. 2.

²⁷William W. Kaufmann, "Nonnuclear Deterrence," in Steinbruner and Sigal, pp. 44-58.

²⁸Senator William Roth, *Congressional Record, Senate*, June 20, 1984, p. S7728.

Defense, he released a report pointing out the uncertainties surrounding any measurement of conventional strength, and then stated as his own view: "I believe an uneasy conventional balance exists today in Europe." Uneasy as it was, he thought that the balance should suffice to deter Soviet conventional attack.²⁹

Even so, the conventional belief about the conventional balance, not necessarily in contradiction to Levin's view, is that NATO remains dangerously deficient. Part of the reason lies in the rubber stamp "In this perilous moment in the history of the alliance;" NATO's officials and analysts have *always* felt this way about conventional defense in the years since Lisbon. And part is explained by General Rogers' 1987 statement: "NATO has gotten stronger every year, because of commitments that have been met, but when one looks at the gap between our force capabilities and those of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, you find that the gap has widened in every area of measurement we have."³⁰ This throws into question the meaning of "getting stronger," but it describes a standard belief.

The primary problem, according to General Rogers is:

our inability to sustain our forces adequately with trained manpower, ammunition and war reserve materiel. This major deficiency—lack of sustainability—is generally ignored by those persons who maintain that NATO can succeed conventionally. The problem is not that our forces will not perform admirably at the General Defensive Positions (GDP) (if appropriate advantage has been taken of warning times); they will. The problem is that they cannot fight long enough through lack of adequate sustainment.³¹

In recent years at least, lack of sustainability has been widely perceived as NATO's greatest weakness. Greater allied contributions to sustainability by increasing the stock of munitions available was the first of the two substantive demands of the Nunn Amendment (in addition to the financial demand of annual increases in defense spending, the burden-sharing issue, which will be discussed below). The second demand was for greater European support for U.S. tactical air reinforcement. Were the two not achieved according to numerical criteria specified in the Amendment, 90,000 U.S. troops (somewhat less than one-

²⁹U.S. Senator Carl Levin press release, announcing his report, *Beyond the Bean Count: Realistically Assessing the Conventional Balance in Europe*, Senate Subcommittee on Conventional Forces and Alliance Defense, Washington, D.C., January 20, 1988.

³⁰"General Bernard Rogers in conversation Ian Davidson," transcript of a recorded documentary, British Broadcasting Corporation, London, May 13, 1987, p. 14.

³¹Rogers, "NATO's Strategy: An Undervalued Currency," p. 6.

third of the total) were to be withdrawn from Europe in three annual increments.³²

In addition to these enforceable requirements, the bill listed as specific needs to fill specific gaps in conventional capabilities: improvements in air base defenses; increased trained manpower levels, particularly reserves; increasing war reserve material, improvements in mine/countermine capability; and improvements in offensive counter air capability.³³ The amendment did not pass. It came close, but Senator Nunn did not press it after 1984. Three years later, he reported some improvement, but remained an armed agnostic:

Although signs of progress in this area are encouraging, we must recognize that much remains to be done if NATO is actually to meet the goals it has set for itself. NATO has less than a superb record in following through on its force commitments, so I am in a sense still watching and waiting to see if my amendment should remain on the shelf.³⁴

Each authority has his own set of NATO shortfalls, each time frame has its own. Kaufmann's come close to those of the Nunn Amendment,³⁵ as do those of three retired officers and one civilian expert who provided specific proposals in 1985 for a European Security Study sponsored by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.³⁶ A year later, Washington analyst Philip Karber termed "marginal" with an "ominous trend" NATO's anti-armor capabilities and its ability to strike deep à la FOFA.³⁷ In 1987, Anthony Cordesman of the *Armed Forces Journal* paralleled Karber on NATO anti-armor deficiencies and long-distance strike capability, but also listed: maldeployment among national sectors on the central front; air and tactical missile defense capability; Naval forces and anti-submarine warfare; lines of communication, logistics, munitions, and war reserves (although reporting recent progress); and

³²The Nunn Amendment, *Congressional Record, Senate*, June 20, 1984, p. S7721.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Senator Sam Nunn, Speech to the DMS Symposium on Industrial Cooperation within NATO, Brussels, April 13, 1987, p. 7.

³⁵Kaufmann, pp. 44-58.

³⁶General Andrew J. Goodpaster, General Franz-Joseph Schulze, Air Chief Marshall Sir Alasdair Steedman, and Dr. William J. Perry, *Strengthening Conventional Deterrence in Europe: A Program for the 1980s*, The European Security Study Report of the Special Panel, Westview Press, Boulder, 1985, pp. xv-xvi. Although both the overall group and the panel of experts are European-American, the study comes up in the Maintainer section because it was American-sponsored.

³⁷Philip A. Karber, "NATO Doctrines and NATO Operational Priorities: The Central Front and the Flanks: Part I," in *International Institute for Strategic Studies, Adelphi Paper 207*, table p. 16.

CSI.³⁸ And Defense Secretary Weinberger chose to stress the "disadvantage in the capability to generate adequately trained and equipped reserves quickly to stop a Warsaw Pact breakthrough along the East-West Border."³⁹

Underlying it all is a general belief among Maintainers that it certainly would be nice to move a little way toward matching Warsaw Pact numbers in manpower and weapons, but that it simply is not going to happen. Thomson quotes another analyst: "Andrew Hamilton provides a rationale for an additional 20-45 equivalent heavy combat divisions which are stronger divisions than the average NATO division today,"⁴⁰ and without endorsing anything that substantial, then goes on to set aside the possibility for any such change: "In any case, conventional deterrence would require substantial force growth. That simply is not in the cards."⁴¹ Thomson's own modest recommendations stress improvements in the NATO planning process as being at least as important as many of the proposed substantive fixes.

The point is not the disagreements among the officials and analysts; there is rather more agreement on specific deficiencies than one might expect. Rather, what is important here is the strong consensus that several things are wrong, and at least some of them must be fixed if we are to mount a conventional defense that is either going to stymie Warsaw Pact aggression or raise the threshold for the decision to go nuclear. The consensus includes such optimists as Kaufmann and Senator Levin.

If major conventional improvements are not in the cards, one reason lies in the questions: How much will it cost to fix these things? Will such sums be forthcoming? Who is to pay? Like the needs, these are classical issues dating back to Lisbon. The debate over burden-sharing will be discussed in the section on the U.S. Commitment. As for "How much?" the Nunn Amendment demanded a 3 percent per year increase, which was the ante agreed to by the NATO membership under Carter administration prodding in 1977, but hardly adhered to religiously thereafter. In 1982, General Rogers upped it a bit, asking a 4 percent increase per year for six years.⁴²

The Nunn requirement can be estimated at slightly below \$10 billion a

³⁸Anthony H. Cordesman, "Alliance Requirements and the Need for Conventional Force Improvements," in James Thomson and Uwe Nerlich (eds.), *Conventional Arms Control and the Security of Europe*, Westview Press, Boulder, 1988.

³⁹Caspar W. Weinberger, "Facing Reality on NATO Security," *Los Angeles Times*, September 13, 1987, Part V, p. 5.

⁴⁰From Andrew Hamilton, "Redressing the Conventional Balance: NATO's Reserve Military Manpower," *International Security*, Summer 1986.

⁴¹Thomson, "Strategic Choices," p. 21.

⁴²Bernard W. Rogers, "The Atlantic Alliance: Prescriptions for a Difficult Decade," *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1982, p. 1155.

year, the Rogers request at slightly more than \$10 billion.⁴³ Other proposals for other packages price out at anywhere from \$5 to \$20 billion. None of these costing efforts is very meaningful, however. When Carter and Nunn's 3 percent a year has been reached only sporadically, and Rogers' 4 percent not at all, there seems little reason to expend major efforts to price out what is really needed. *The Alliance has known about and debated its deficiencies for 35 years, and for that length of time it has estimated what it would cost to fill the deficiencies, and neither the debates nor the estimates have been taken seriously enough for anyone to put up a major portion of the funds.*

Nor does any Maintainer believe that substantial increases are more likely now than in the past. Thomson's appraisal of why "it is not in the cards," in his words, would receive little dissent:

The money and manpower will not be available, especially in Europe, which would have to contribute the lion's share of the resources needed for conventional deterrence. Although NATO nations reportedly did better in meeting the 3 percent real growth goal in 1984 than in the previous few years, the long-term trend in Europe is toward tighter defence budgets, including in Britain and Germany, the European countries with the largest defence efforts. . . . Prospects are slim to zero that Europe's continued economic stagnation will be ended by an extended period of great economic growth that would permit decisive increases in defence efforts. In any case, the second factor would militate against the defence sector becoming the beneficiary of economic gains. Despite all the efforts of the United States and of their own political leaders to "educate" them, European publics do not feel an imminent threat to their survival. Only an extended period of substantially increased East-West tensions, clearly the fault of the USSR, is likely to change the situation.⁴⁴

Since this 1986 writing, the Gramm-Rudman budget limitations have closed down what little chance there might have been of "decisive increases" on the part of the United States, Europe has not begun an "extended period of economic growth," and the Reykjavik meeting and the zero-zero agreement, whatever their ultimate effects on the conventional balance, do not presage any "extended period of substantial East-West tensions."

Lacking the political or economic support to move straight ahead toward substantially stronger conventional capabilities, the Maintainers have been increasingly attracted to the technological and strategic devices that many European Couplers have questioned. They are also questioned by some Maintainers, but the support-to-skepticism ratio is

⁴³This is based on Kaufmann's 1983 estimate of total NATO spending of \$263.2 billion a year (Kaufmann, p. 79), raised to \$300 billion for subsequent inflation.

⁴⁴Thomson, "Strategic Choices," pp. 21-23.

higher west of the Atlantic. The debate over strategic expedients has a history going back almost as far as the other issues raised by the conventional balance; even the technological fixes have been discussed for nearly twenty years.

Richard DeLauer, former Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, believes that the time has come for the "emerging technologies" to play a major role in righting the conventional balance:

The new technologies have . . . now reached the point where their insertion into the military inventory of the NATO forces is readily at hand. It is only by the vigorous pursuit of these technologies and the related advanced warfare concepts that the Alliance can be expected to overcome the vast numerical superiority enjoyed by the Warsaw Pact forces.⁴⁵

The enthusiasm is not limited to DeLauer, who had an official and professional responsibility for introducing the new technologies into the U.S. defense establishment. With the exception of Kaufmann, each of the authorities quoted above on the deficiencies of NATO's conventional capabilities included the new technologies as a significant part of the solution; for the four experts of the European Security Study, and for Cordesman, the technological possibilities were central.

Washington defense analyst and former Army officer Steven Canby, however, expresses deep doubts about the new technologies, going far beyond the issues of timing and net contribution expressed by the European skeptics and some Maintainers as well:

America's weapons have become too costly and too difficult to maintain because of systemic problems in the way they are designed and procured. Many are militarily questionable. . . . America designs its weapons for engineers and the Soviets design theirs for soldiers. . . . Our defense establishment is so fascinated by technology and one-on-one duels that it loses sight of real combat, and often of the laws of physics. Too many of our new systems are overrefined and unable to operate against adaptive opponents in unpredictable environments—the conditions that make war as much art as science.⁴⁶

Based on this philosophy, Canby mounts a heavy attack on SHAPE's FOFA strategy. The strategy itself is described by Sutton, Landry, Armstrong, Estes, and Clark (the five Army analysts quoted above with regard to conventional-nuclear force integration):

⁴⁵Richard D. DeLauer, "Emerging Technologies and their Impact on the Conventional Deterrent," in Pierre, *The Conventional Defense of Europe*, pp. 42-44.

⁴⁶Steven L. Canby, "High-Tech, High-Fail Defense," *Los Angeles Times*, September 16, 1985, Part II, p. 5.

The SHAPE concept seeks to locate and track Warsaw Pact forces during their entire process of deployment, from garrison to battlefield commitment, and to attack them when and where they are most vulnerable. The concept aims at exploiting particularly critical enemy vulnerabilities in the reinforcement process, the rigidity of his planning for an echeloned offense, the density of forces along limited attack routes, and critical transportation facilities.⁴⁷

Canby attacks it from all directions:

Emerging technologies applied to the deep attack of Follow-on Forces (FOFA) *cannot* be effective, in principle or practice. FOFA is a concept beyond the capabilities of technology. Its infeasibility transcends the many limitations of the specific equipment proposed. It is necessarily a preprogrammed, deterministic system. Such systems cannot operate in uncongenial, adaptative and unpredictable environments. . . .

[T]he new technologies fail on four counts: Technology can be a trap; The Soviet operational method has been incorrectly analysed; Technical and operational feasibility are not synonymous; Counter-measures exist. . . .

The concept rests on a survivable "top-down" command, control and communications system, plus *detailed pre-planning* and *timing* of reinforcements. . . .

For the deep attack technologies, five problems exist: Cost; Equipment Reliability; Equipment vulnerability; System complexity; Flawed logic.⁴⁸

It seems probable that Canby's strictures would extend slightly less strongly to the Army's AirLand Battle, which the five Army analysts compare to SHAPE's FOFA. Both are "deep battle" concepts, depending on air strikes well behind the immediate area of ground combat, but AirLand Battle is less "top-down" than FOFA and might thus meet Canby's objections better:

AirLand Battle thrives on the early allocation of airpower to support the ground commander, a process which reduces the extent of centralized control and application; the SHAPE concept, however, plans for more traditional use of airpower through centralized air allocation and application theater-wide.⁴⁹

Jonathan Dean points out that AirLand "could involve use of nuclear as well as conventional weapons in strikes deep into Warsaw Pact

⁴⁷Sutton et al., p. 65.

⁴⁸Steven L. Canby, "New Conventional Force Technology and the NATO-Warsaw Pact Balance: Part I," in International Institute for Strategic Studies, *New Technology and Western Security Policy: Part II*, Adelphi Paper 198, London, pp. 7-13.

⁴⁹Sutton et al., p. 76.

territory in response to Pact attack," and therefore terms FOFA "less far-reaching." He also says that although FOFA calls for initial conventional deep strikes, "for the most part, their intended range would be considerably less than in the Air-Land Battle concept—100 kilometers or less."⁵⁰ In any case, Dean opposes both strategies: "Although they may be conceived by their supporters as a purely defensive response to possible Warsaw Pact attack, if deployed in large numbers, these weapons can be used for attack."⁵¹

The third in the triad of deep strategies is the "counteroffensive" of Samuel Huntington, Director of the Harvard Center for International Affairs. This differs from the other two in that it contemplates a distinct ground offensive against the East, with objectives that are more political than the other two purely military designs, and with the explicit intent to threaten the Soviets' East European bloc.

A strategy of conventional retaliation in the form of a prompt offensive into Eastern Europe would help to deter Soviet military action against Western Europe. . . . The logical extension of the forward defense concept is to move the locus of battle eastward into East Germany and Czechoslovakia. . . . To date the Soviets have been free to concentrate all their planning and forces on retaliatory moves into West Germany. A Western retaliatory strategy would compel them to reallocate forces and resources to the defense of their satellites and thus to weaken their offensive thrust.⁵²

As has been discussed, the Huntington concept upsets many European Couplers on political grounds. Keith Dunn of the U.S. National Defense University and William Staudenmaier of the Army War College object to the strategy on military grounds as well:

Whether considered in terms of suitability, feasibility, flexibility or acceptability, the concept of a conventional retaliatory offensive does not appear to offer a credible alternative to NATO's current strategy. As a war-fighting strategy it is unsuitable because it does not provide a decisive use of military force. . . . Nor is it feasible. . . . [By] neglecting to account for the Soviet second strategic echelon, it woefully underestimates the allied force required to implement it. . . . In terms of flexibility, the concept depends on the Warsaw Pact to launch its invasion in a specific way that will play into NATO's hands.⁵³

⁵⁰Jonathan Dean, *Watershed in Europe: Dismantling the East-West Military Confrontation*, D.C. Heath, Lexington, Mass., 1987, pp. 63-64.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, p. 66.

⁵²Samuel P. Huntington, "The Renewal of Strategy," in Samuel P. Huntington (ed.), *The Strategic Imperative*, Ballinger, Cambridge, 1982, pp. 21-23.

⁵³Keith A. Dunn and William O. Staudenmaier, "The Retaliatory Offensive and Operational Realities in NATO," *Survival*, May/June 1985, p. 116.

This is followed by a summary paragraph quoted, with emphasis, by General Rogers, the progenitor of the FOFA alternative, himself:

Besides, and possibly most importantly, if NATO were able to adopt all the force structure changes [to which this SACEUR would add "and sustainability needs"] that would be required to make the retaliatory strategy work, there would be no need to change NATO's strategy. Defence and deterrence would be ensured without the need to endorse a politically and operationally risky course.⁵⁴

In sum, each of the three forward strategies has its advocates among the Maintainers, and each receives far more detailed military analysis than among the Couplers; but none commands a consensus. In case NATO's conventional defenses were actually called upon to resist a Pact attack, elements of FOFA in particular would probably be used, but in their current and prospective states, none of the three alternatives is viewed by any of the debaters as close to a complete substitute for the current strategy or even a major strategic change. Nor does a consensus view the emerging technologies themselves as bases for such a change, although these do have their strong advocates.

The other end of the strategic spectrum, "Defensive Defense," is not taken very seriously by the Maintainers. General Rogers disposes of it quickly:

The concept is beset with inadequacies: it would leave the West vulnerable to blackmail from the threat of overwhelming conventional force, to say nothing of the nuclear threat; the concept provides no convincing deterrent to aggression; and it could take effect primarily after NATO territory had been occupied. Finally, this concept, with no means of ejecting the enemy from NATO territory, is void of hope for our people. . . . Once in possession of NATO territory, it is unlikely that the Soviet Union could be persuaded to leave by the very limited range of offensive options offered by the type of forces associated with this concept.⁵⁵

And Thomson relates it to another concept in a way calculated to make both sides of the pair quite uncomfortable:

All the suggested alternatives [to current NATO strategy] have greater military, technical or financial problems than the current concept. This includes some of the most recent popular notions, whether they be strategic defenses or their intellectual brother—"defensive defenses."⁵⁶

⁵⁴Rogers, "NATO's Strategy: an Undervalued Currency," p. 14.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 13.

⁵⁶James Thomson, "The Arms Control Challenge to the Alliance," Address to the North Atlantic Assembly in Plenary Session, Oslo, September 25, 1987, p. 3.

What the conventional force debate comes down to, then, is that all the Maintainers stress a need for greater capabilities if the threshold is to be raised (and almost all are anxious to raise it); they recognize the economic and related constraints that make straight-line increases impossible; some see a way out through more or less radical fixes; but no such fix commands a consensus and perhaps not a majority. And their Coupler partners on the other side of the Atlantic are much less interested anyhow.

All of the Maintainers' conventional debate thus far examined, just as virtually all of the Coupler's parallel debate, concerns the Central front. The Americans, although sometimes concerned with the role of the Northern flank in protecting the sea lanes to central Europe, seldom bring it into explicit discussion, although Norwegian Defense Minister and analyst Holst does get at least as much attention in the United States as in central Europe.

One brief analysis of issues both north and south has been presented by Karber. His general conclusion about the importance of the Northern flank to NATO as a whole parallels Holst's:

A successful defence in the North is a prerequisite for NATO's conventional prospects in the Centre. This area is more than a flank. It is the guardian of Europe's link to American reinforcement and supply.⁵⁷

And he provides an upbeat analysis of the Norwegian and allied efforts in that country, but contrasts it with the southern part of the Northern flank, where Danish efforts are weak and German defenses are diluted by other demands on both naval and land forces.⁵⁸

So far as the Southern flank is concerned, he suggests that it too is primarily a naval problem, with the issues here being as much political as military, stressing particularly the problems raised by the Greek-Turkish dispute.⁵⁹ These views, presented at the IISS annual meeting of 1985 were generally confirmed at the 1987 annual meeting in Barcelona, the theme of which was the Mediterranean. In spite of all the political and other problems, however, Robert O'Neill's conference summary reported that: "The most important single observation of [the committee on Mediterranean security] was that the balance of forces between NATO and the Warsaw Pact in the Mediterranean favoured the West."⁶⁰

⁵⁷Karber, p. 16.

⁵⁸Ibid., pp. 18-19.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 21.

⁶⁰Robert O'Neill, Concluding Remarks to the Twenty-Ninth Annual Conference of the International Institute for Strategic Studies, Barcelona, September 1987, p. 12.

The military issues on both flanks resemble watery reproductions of the issues on the Central front, but they demand much less attention. The political problems on the Southern flank are unique to that area. What they share with the rest of NATO, however, is that the political issues may well overwhelm military needs and strategies.

ALLIANCE POLITICAL ISSUES

The U.S. Commitment

Journalist Drew Middleton, long-since retired as military columnist for the *New York Times*, wrote in 1987:

Should the United States lose Central America or the Middle East, military survival would be difficult but far from impossible. The loss of NATO Europe, on the other hand, would leave America virtually without powerful allies and the many billions of dollars invested in the area.⁶¹

This is the old-time religion. It reflects Dean Acheson's 1959 "The most important objective today... is to hold together those sources of strength we possess. These sources are North America and Western Europe." It is present in full evangelical strength in Senator Nunn's 1984 "we want to be part of NATO... we are going to continue to be part of NATO" no matter what our European allies do, quoted at the head of this section. It underlies the cautions expressed by many Maintainers, exemplified by former Defense Secretary Schlesinger's "Therefore, all of our public comments should be carefully gauged according to the realization that the fundamental defense of Western freedom lies in preserving the cohesion of the alliance."⁶²

This section examines the Maintainers' restatement of the U.S. commitment to NATO and the reasons for it; the resonance of their views as they reflect and try to calm West European fears; "burden-sharing" as a core issue; and various Maintainer proposals for restructuring the Alliance and the American role in order to preserve both.

In spite of the fears of many European Couplers, the importance and the preservation of the Alliance remain the central tenets of the Maintainers, and the Maintainers remain very much the majority of American

⁶¹Drew Middleton, "U.S. Is Too Eager for Missile Pact with Soviets," *Air Force Times*, July 6, 1987, p. 28.

⁶²James Schlesinger, quoted by Senator William Cohen (Rep., Maine), *Congressional Record, Senate*, June 20, 1984, p. S7745.

debaters and American voters.⁶³ One underlying reason for this devotion is suggested by Schlesinger: "Europeans are, in the view of Americans, good people; thus they are deserving of our protection. That protection does not arise out of a sense of Realpolitik."⁶⁴

Empathy does not make a strong political case for the spending of hundreds of billions of dollars, however, so Ambassador to West Germany Richard Burt continues to depend on Realpolitik in his defense against both the Removers and those Maintainers who want to reduce the size of American forces in NATO:

They are wrong. Maintaining a free, independent and democratic Western Europe remains the pre-eminent strategic interest of the United States. In global terms, the loss of Western Europe would be as significant as the Chinese-Soviet split—with America on the losing end.⁶⁵

Even though the Nunn Amendment did not pass, the 1984 debate marked a trough in support for NATO. A few years later, the Congressional commitment seemed stronger. In December of 1986, NATO Ambassador Abshire reported that:

The good news for NATO is that a new partnership has been formed with the Congress—after some Americans in the past had lost patience with the Europeans never coming to grips with conventional defense improvement. The new pro-NATO network feels that a new attitude at NATO and in the European capitals has emerged, built not only around the old-fashioned approach to arms cooperation of a two-way street, but on a new coalition approach toward better return on defense expenditures.⁶⁶

And in 1987, Senator Nunn, the leader among Americans who in Abshire's phrase "had lost patience," used a few words quoted above to express conditional satisfaction with NATO efforts since his 1984 amendment nearly passed: "signs of progress . . . are encouraging . . . much remains to be done. . . . NATO has less than a superb record in following through." On the other side of Capitol Hill, the House of Representatives in the spring of 1987 passed a resolution opposing reduction of U.S. troop levels in NATO.

⁶³Surveys show that about two-thirds of the American electorate support NATO. The residual included "undecideds" as well as opponents.

⁶⁴James R. Schlesinger, "An American Perspective," speech reprinted in *Congressional Record*, June 20, 1984, p. S7748.

⁶⁵Richard Burt, "Why American Forces Should Remain in Europe," *International Herald Tribune*, March 25, 1987, p. 6 (reprinted from the *Washington Post*).

⁶⁶David M. Abshire, in Atlantic Institute for International Affairs, *Managing Entry Into the 21st Century*, Paris, 1986, p. 23.

This new warmth undoubtedly stemmed in part from increased European efforts, although, as suggested by Nunn, they still had a very long way to go in 1987. Nonetheless, it may seem paradoxical that at the same time that Reykjavik and zero-zero raised West European fears of American abandonment to a crescendo, American Maintainers appeared surer of the U.S. commitment than they had for some time.

Rather than paradox, it is cause and effect. Because the Maintainers place the preservation of NATO near the top of their list of priorities, they respond rapidly in resonance to West European views that seem to threaten the Alliance: *It is in the American interest to preserve the Alliance; therefore it is in the American interest to satisfy the European interests in the Alliance.*

Georgetown University Professor Stephen Wrage, for example, resonates with the Europeans against the Reagan administration:

Our actions set off the debate, yet now we are ignoring it. To the Reagan administration, Europeans' concerns are inconvenient obstacles in the drive toward and agreement with the Soviets. Reagan's advisers calculate that any agreement, no matter what its consequences for NATO, would be a foreign-policy triumph that would put the Iran-*contra* debacle behind them and help them finish strong.⁶⁷

And Schlesinger, having served in the cabinet under both parties, is in a position to resonate even more broadly: "Europeans, quite understandably, have been irritated by what appeared to be the erratic weakness of Jimmy Carter, and they have been almost equally irritated by what appeared to be the erratic strength of President Reagan."⁶⁸ And even traditional conservative eminence William Buckley takes a stand 180 degrees away from neoconservatives Kristol and Krauss. They had turned from Europe, he still resonated:

So Secretary of State George Shultz told the NATO commander-in-chief to shut up about his objections to the INF agreement. . . . What General Rogers said . . . was that the projected swap means, very simply, that our deterrent force in Europe is weakened. . . . That [leaves] us to contemplate this single point implicit in the projected deal, namely that its purpose is not military but political, and that the advantages to be gained politically outweigh those lost militarily. On this point, General Rogers . . . tells us that many European leaders ruefully regret the treaty to which they are now committed but that they are "hoist on their own petard." . . .

⁶⁷Stephen D. Wrage, "U.S. Finds Itself Dealt Out of European Debate," *Los Angeles Times*, August 26, 1987, Part II, p. 5.

⁶⁸Schlesinger, p. S7749.

Our allies are left in a bind, and it is dismaying to contemplate with such icy detachment that, in the current controversy, Secretary Shultz is Neville Chamberlain, General Rogers, Winston Churchill.⁶⁹

Buckley does not supply a 1930s analog for Ronald Reagan.⁷⁰

Like Schlesinger's "Europeans . . . are good people," cited earlier, resonance has its limits as a prop for policy. The major limit in the United States is the feeling on the part of many Americans that the West Europeans are letting us pay for their defense, either refusing to carry their share or at least not volunteering to do so as long as "Uncle Sap" (a pre World War II isolationist epithet) is willing to pay it all. Although Senator Nunn avoided this theme in the Senate debate over his amendment, stressing instead the need to reinforce conventional capabilities in order to raise the threshold, many of his colleagues focused on "burden-sharing." Senator Levin, for example, used several measures to estimate European contributions to the common defense:

Despite their 1977 commitment to increase defense spending annually by 3 percent after excluding inflation [sic], our NATO allies had an average 2.8-percent increase in real growth in their defense budgets in 1981. In 1982, that average went down to 2.3 percent real growth. In 1983 it declined to about 2 percent real growth. In 1984, it is tentatively, projected that the average real growth for non-United States NATO nations will be only between 1.2 and 1.7 percent. . . .

On a per capita basis, the United States far exceeds all its allies in defense spending. We spent \$819 per American citizen in 1982; . . . our nearest ally—financially—was the United Kingdom, which spend \$467 per capita. . . . In 1982, we spent 6.5 percent of our GDP [Gross Domestic Product] on defense. Other economically strong allies spending far less were West Germany—3.4 percent; the Netherlands—3.2 percent; Norway—3 percent; Denmark—2.5 percent; and Canada—2.1 percent.⁷¹

Nunn's tentative agreement that at least they're beginning to try became more typical in subsequent years. Nonetheless, in 1987 Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder (Dem., Colo.) offered a bill similar to the Nunn Amendment, putting it into the context of the balance-of-payments deficit, which had become a major issue by that year:

⁶⁹William F. Buckley, Jr., "Generals Can Be Right," *National Review*, July 31, 1987, p. 56.

⁷⁰Edward VIII?

⁷¹Senator Carl Levin, *Congressional Record, Senate*, June 20, 1984, pp. S7768-S7770.

Of the \$300 billion the United States spends on defense, something more than half, say, \$150 billion, goes for NATO obligations. Our trade deficit is running at about \$175 billion a year. What we are spending to protect our allies is about the same amount by which we are losing the trade war.⁷²

Schroeder's effort was taken less seriously than Nunn's because she lacked both his authority as senior Senate Democrat on defense and his acknowledged expertise. And more generally, in spite of the trade problems of the late 1980s, post-Reykjavik resonance made the American burden-sharing attack much weaker in 1987 than in 1984. General Rogers, for example, without giving up his exhortation for more Alliance conventional support all around, told an interviewer in 1987:

The fact is that those nations in Western Europe within this alliance are not getting a just credit for the amount of the burden they do share. . . . On average . . . I find that the Western European nations are bearing a fair share of the collective security burden but the fact is, if we wish peace with freedom, we're going to have to spend more. And I can tell you, if we accept these agreements . . . go to both zero, zero, zero, levels, there's a major cost associated with that.⁷³

Perhaps the best-hedged statement on burden-sharing is that presented by *New Republic* editor Morton Kondracke:

The burden-sharing movement could lead to a stronger set of alliances and a stronger U.S. economy—if conventional forces are built up on our side or the Soviets can be induced to reduce theirs, and if Japan can be induced to spend its surpluses on economic development.⁷⁴ This will require sophisticated diplomacy on the part of the United States. Unjudicious ally-bashing, however, will only help Mikhail Gorbachev separate the United States from its friends.⁷⁵

For the short run, this might well command a substantial consensus among the Maintainers, at least in their less cantankerous and political moments. Over a longer period, however, the bottom line may be that put forth by economist Charles Cooper, who was the Ford administration's Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for International Affairs. Cooper reflects that after the administration coming to power in

⁷²Patricia Schroeder, "Burt's Right on One Thing: Allies Must Pay More," *International Herald Tribune*, October 14, 1987, p. 4. (reprinted from the *Washington Post*).

⁷³General Bernard Rogers in conversation with Ian Davidson," p. 9.

⁷⁴The Japan theme frequently and the Third World economic development theme occasionally have appeared in the burden-sharing debates analyzed here, but they have been excluded from the analysis because they would take it off on tangents leading away from the NATO debate as such. Another irony of 1987 was that fear of a transatlantic trade war was muted somewhat when both sides of NATO joined in Japan-bashing.

⁷⁵Morton M. Kondracke, "Make 'em Pay," *New Republic*, October 12, 1987, p. 17.

1989 has shaken down, a reduction of the U.S. commitment to NATO "seems to me almost inevitable. Some forty years on, the status quo in Europe looks increasingly anachronistic and unstable as U.S. worldwide and strategic commitments outstrip U.S. capacity to sustain them."⁷⁶

The longer-run burden-sharing issue is also one of the roots of a number of proposals for a much more thoroughgoing restructuring of NATO, eventuating in a lesser American role. Two similar ones, from Carter administration National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski and Nixon-Ford administration Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, have been taken very seriously in Europe—as a threat. They have been taken somewhat less seriously in the United States.

Although some West Europeans lump these two proposals together with the Withdrawers' efforts to get out of NATO entirely, and also with Senator Nunn's pressures for the Alliance to live up to its stated commitments and strategies, Brzezinski and Kissinger, Kristol and Krauss, and Nunn really suggested three quite different directions. Some similarities do exist: the Brzezinski and Kissinger proposals, like Kristol's and Krauss's to get out, are based in part on the belief that the European members of NATO are not carrying their fair share of either the burdens or the responsibilities of an Alliance that was conceived under vastly different economic and political circumstances. And, like Nunn, Brzezinski and Kissinger are concerned about the U.S. nuclear deterrent, although perhaps more with the possibility that the American commitment is no longer sufficiently credible, and cannot be made credible, than with the Senator's fear that the threshold is too low.

But the two former executive policymakers differ from the Withdrawers in that they want a continued strong American commitment, conventional and nuclear, to Western Europe; and they differ from Nunn in that they want to restructure fundamentally rather than improve within the current apparatus.

In his 1986 book, *Brzezinski* started out sounding rather like the Withdrawers, but ended up quite differently:

It is clear that the allocations for the defense of Western Europe represent a massively disproportionate share of the overall U.S. military budget. . . . These unbalanced global deployments have more to do with history than with strategy. They reflect neither the actual estimates of the Soviet military threat nor a measure of each area's relative geopolitical importance. . . .

Until and unless the European members of NATO are prepared to raise and maintain enough conventional forces to fight those of the Soviet Union to a standstill, the U.S. strategic deterrent and the U.S.

⁷⁶Personal communication.

front-line forces that would become immediately engaged in combat remain a vital component of the overall Western effort to deter war in Europe.

Undoubtedly, some Europeans will claim that any redeployment of any U.S. troops will weaken U.S. defenses . . . [but a] gradual reduction of approximately 100,000 troops would . . . free U.S. budgetary and manpower resources for the flexibility needed to respond to other geostrategic threats.⁷⁷

And a year later, he made the strength of the commitment to NATO within his reduction proposal even more explicit:

The U.S. commitment to the defense of Europe will remain as strong as ever strategically and politically, given the fact that large U.S. forces will continue to be deployed in Europe, even with some reductions. Moreover, the U.S. nuclear guarantee will also continue to provide a clear demonstration of that enduring commitment. In brief, in the years ahead U.S. and European security should and will remain organically insoluble and strategically coupled.⁷⁸

Brzezinski's book is an overall analysis of the U.S. worldwide objectives and strategy. Kissinger's proposal focuses more specifically on NATO and is more detailed in both its analysis and its proposals. He first discussed it in 1979, and later laid it out systematically in a 1984 article in *Time* magazine:

Existing arrangements are unbalanced. When one country dominates the alliance on all major issues—little incentive remains for a serious joint effort to redefine the requirements of security or to coordinate foreign policies. . . . An imbalance such as the one now existing cannot be corrected by "consultation," no matter how meticulous. . . . Those who governed Europe in the early postwar years were still psychologically of the era when Europe bestrode the world. . . . The new leaders were reared in an era when the U.S. was pre-eminent; they find it politically convenient to delegate Europe's military defense to us. . . . The change in the nature of European leadership has been paralleled in the U.S. Our new elites do not reject NATO any more than do their European counterparts. But for them, too, the alliance is more a practical than an emotional necessity, more a military arrangement than a set of common political purposes. . . .

A continuation of existing trends is bound to lead to the demoralization of the Western alliance. An explicit act of statesmanship is needed to give new meaning to Western unity and a new vitality to NATO.

⁷⁷Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Game Plan*, The Atlantic Monthly Press, Boston and New York, 1986, pp. 171-181.

⁷⁸Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Peaceful Change in a Divided Europe," in Thomson and Nerlich.

Kissinger's proposed program includes European assumption of "the major responsibility for ground defense;" switching of the jobs of NATO Secretary-General and Supreme Allied Commander so that the political job of Secretary-General would become an American one whereas SACEUR would be a European; European responsibility for "arms control negotiations dealing with weapons stationed on European soil;" and redeployment of some, but by no means all, American ground forces to U.S. soil.⁷⁹

Whatever the perceptions of some European Couplers, Kissinger, like Brzezinski, is far from advocating any sort of withdrawal from NATO. Indeed, in Kissinger's case there is some irony in the fact that three years after his *Time* piece, when he feared that something rather less radical than his proposals—the zero-zero INF agreement—was about to hit NATO, he sounded all the alarms. In an article questioning zero-zero, written with former President Nixon, they warned that "If we strike the wrong kind of deal, we could create the most profound crisis of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization alliance in its 40-year history."⁸⁰ Of Kissinger's devotion to NATO there can be no doubt.

Not that the restructuring proposals go uncriticized by other Maintainers. An unspoken criticism is implicit in the fact that proposals by such eminent, experienced, and responsible people as Brzezinski and Kissinger are not widely discussed. They are feared by Couplers, but not discussed in detail in Europe; for better or worse, most American Maintainer officials and analysts have ignored them in favor of the immediate tasks and crises.

New York Times columnist Flora Lewis provides a summary that could be the last word in this particular variation of the structural controversy. In contrast to Kissinger's mourning "the change in the nature of European leadership" and parallel American leadership, she quotes retiring NATO Secretary General Lord Carrington, and goes on from there:

"I am of the World War II generation. . . . [T]he next secretary general should be of the postwar generation." The observation goes beyond personalities to the heart of NATO's problems, reflected in an unusual outpouring of proposals from both Americans and Europeans for drastic change in the structure of the alliance. Practically all of the suggestions, from people such as Henry Kissinger, Zbigniew Brzezinski, former French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and former German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, as well as less famous figures, are impractical, unreasonable, even outrageous. . . .

⁷⁹Henry Kissinger, "A Plan to Reshape NATO," *Time*, March 5, 1984, pp. 20-23.

⁸⁰Richard M. Nixon and Henry A. Kissinger, "To Withdraw Missiles We Must Add Conditions," *Los Angeles Times*, April 26, 1987, Part V, p. 1.

NATO is not out of date. Nor is the organization and operation of the alliance. The conditions that led to its formation have not disappeared, and none of the ideas for structural change would improve it or probably work as well. What it needs is stimulation to thought and curiosity. What it gets from Western leaders is old rhetoric.⁸¹

The Maintainers share an unease about the state of the Alliance, although not necessarily an unease that goes beyond the traditional "In this perilous moment in the history of the alliance." They share no common analysis of causes or solutions. *But what the American Maintainers all do continue to share—which the European Couplers continue to doubt—is a firm commitment to American assistance in the defense of Western Europe.*

The Europeans' Commitments to Themselves

Most Americans skirt the question of closer ties among the European members of NATO, treating it as a matter for Europeans, within the overall issues of the U.S. commitment and the structure of the Alliance as a whole. Most Maintainers would welcome a shoring up of the "European pillar," some doubt the possibilities, and a few believe that creation of a truly European structure would strengthen the entire Alliance. Brzezinski and Kissinger fall into the last group; stronger European organization is necessary for the greater responsibilities they would like the West Europeans to assume.

Columnist Lewis expresses a typical Maintainer view. She observes "new talk about more defense cooperation among Europeans. This is all to the good, especially because there is little chance of an increase in conventional European defense."⁸² General Rogers hopes for that conventional increase, but otherwise he comes out in about the same place:

[T]he West Europeans have realized that they must take a greater interest in their own defence—try to keep the strategic nuclear umbrella of the United States, tied to the security of Western Europe, but to do more to strengthen the West European pillar of the Trans-Atlantic bridge, and I think that's a good thing. And you see that in the WEU [West European Union]—you'll see it in the Euro-group, and you'll see it just in the bilateral meetings . . . between France and Germany and between France and the United Kingdom, and I think that's a good thing because all of that is contributory to a credible deterrent for NATO. . . . I don't think it's necessarily a divergence of interest. . . . But I do think that [Reykjavik] had a sort of an alarm clock effect here in Western Europe, it rang a few bells

⁸¹Flora Lewis, "The Doldrums at NATO," *New York Times*, July 27, 1987, p. 19.

⁸²Flora Lewis, "Rating 'Double-Zero'," *New York Times*, September 27, 1987, p. 27.

and made them think, you know we're going to have to do more for ourselves.⁸³

Like the Couplers, most Americans focus on the Franco-German relationship. Analytically a few are upbeat. After interviewing Helmut Schmidt, Joan Bingham of the Atlantic Institute presented her own hopes:

The "German question" sends tremors through the Elysée. The French fear German dreams of reunification will lead to neutralism. The time is ripe for a new unified defense system such as Helmut Schmidt described or another configuration with a Franco-German nucleus. As it is unthinkable that France would agree to be militarily reintegrated in NATO, this new entity would give her a chance for a dominant leadership role in Europe. Always suspicious of the Anglo-Saxon, de Gaulle would have applauded. A new American administration should welcome any strengthening of the European pillar of the Atlantic Alliance even if it should be outside U.S. military command.⁸⁴

But columnist William Pfaff, himself an advocate in the Brzezinski and Kissinger mode of "a necessary reassessment of burdens and responsibilities in the alliance," is nonetheless skeptical about the prospects. Also having interviewed Schmidt, he says of Schmidt's proposal for a Franco-German alliance with a Frenchman in command:

The Schmidt argument that France and West Germany should combine to look after the defense of Europe is tenable as a military proposition. Is anyone going to do anything about it? The French might. The West Germans won't. At least they show no sign, thus far, of doing anything like this, or even of very seriously considering it.⁸⁵

This assessment was made after the leaders of the Federal Republic had begun to squirm under the pressures of the imminent zero-zero agreement.

Particularly since zero-zero became real, West European cooperation has become of interest to several American newspaper columnists. Ernest Conine of the *Los Angeles Times* foresees an eventual separation of Europe from the United States. (He is not, however, a Withdrawer, anxious for it to come about. He just sees it coming as the result of existing trends.)

⁸³General Bernard Rogers in conversation with Ian Davidson," p. 12.

⁸⁴Joan Bingham, "The Resurgence of Europe," *Nashville Tennessean*, July 19, 1987, Outlook Section, p. 3.

⁸⁵William Pfaff, "Europe: Toward Independent Defense?" *International Herald Tribune*, April 19, 1987, p. 6.

[T]here is a distinct feeling of unease among European political leaders and defense professionals, as well as among those with pacifist inclinations. The unease has several roots. For many young Germans it stems from an active dislike of the United States and a growing conviction that West Germany does not control its own destiny. Fundamentally pro-alliance leaders resent the fact that Western Europe's political influence has not grown in proportion to its economic strength, and they know it won't as long as Europe depends so heavily on the United States for its security. Perhaps most important, there is a loss of faith in the quality of American leadership. There is also concern, nourished by recent U.S.-Soviet negotiations on arms control, that America has begun a process of nuclear disengagement from Europe.

The bottom-line reality . . . is that present arrangements are no longer consistent with economic and political realities—including the fact that an economically strapped America may soon feel compelled to reduce its commitments to Europe for the simple reason that it can no longer afford them.⁸⁶

Conine's reading of "European political leaders and defense professionals" is rather like French publisher Jimmy Goldsmith's reading of Americans ranging from Kristol to Nunn, and indeed setting Goldsmith's March 1987 column alongside Conine's July piece provides another example of resonance, moving in the opposite direction from the attempts on both sides of the Atlantic to bolster one another. The reverse resonance can be seen in the mutual reading of negative experts on each side, advocating separation in part because of fears of the other side advocating it. Conine's observation that the West Europeans are concerned "that America has begun a process of nuclear disengagement from Europe" provides an example of his reading of the European reading of an American movement—which most American Maintainers would contend is not taking place.

Conine does not believe that anything is going to happen soon. His lead sentence is "The 'Europeanization' of European defense is not yet an idea whose time has come." Most Maintainers are not likely to think much about coping with it until and unless its time does come.

The Rest of the World

In the summer of 1987, when the United States Navy recognized that minesweeping was not among its capabilities and the State Department appealed to our allies for assistance in the Persian Gulf, their initial

⁸⁶Ernest Conine, "Europe May Find It Can Go It Alone," *Los Angeles Times*, July 13, 1987, Part II, p. 5.

rejection induced angry reactions from within the United States. The *Chicago Sun-Times* editorialized,

One after another, America's Western friends and allies have rejected the Reagan administration's request for help with minesweeping in the Persian Gulf, where last month a mine caused considerable damage to a tanker navigating under U.S. protection. The most severe blow, the hardest to take, is the one from Britain. Also on the nay-saying list are France, West Germany and the Netherlands.⁸⁷

The allies did ultimately assist, but the initial demurrer and the American reaction took their place in a string of such events dating from earlier Gulf incidents in the 1970s and going through the refusal of NATO members other than Britain to allow the use of bases or transit rights for the bombing of Libya.

In general, the indeterminate role of European NATO members in supporting U.S. out-of-area activities has been an irritant, particularly when Americans felt that the activities were in the mutual interest of the members—e.g., the maintenance of the flow of Gulf oil, which went mostly to Europe and Japan, and the punishment of terrorism, which hit Europeans as much as Americans. The irritant, however, has had more of an effect on public opinion as exemplified by the *Sun-Times* editorial and on the Withdrawers than it has on the debate among the Main-tainers.

Brzezinski's analysis sounds like a mild version of the Withdrawers':

Today, the United States is weakest where it is most vulnerable—along the strategic front that poses the greatest risk of either a major Soviet geopolitical thrust or an American-Soviet collision. . . . While American power is tenuous along the third strategic front in southwest Asia, the United States still allocates more than half its total military spending for the defense of the first front in Europe.⁸⁸

But unlike the Withdrawers he wants only to readjust, removing 100,000 troops from Europe and allocating the budgetary savings to the areas he considers to be in greater danger.

Kissinger arrives at approximately the same point by a more political route. In contrast to the old days of European colonialism,

Now it is Europe that insists that the treaty's obligations do not extend to the developing world. And it is Europe that feels free to disassociate itself from U.S. actions where indigenous upheavals and Soviet efforts to outflank the alliance produce contemporary crises. . . . This produces the following problems which must be solved if long-term paralysis is to be avoided: The United States

⁸⁷"America Betrayed by its Friends," *Chicago Sun-Times*, August 4, 1987, p. 23.

⁸⁸Brzezinski, *Game Plan*, p. 175. The second strategic front is in the Far East.

cannot grant Europe a veto over its actions outside the NATO area unless it is ready to abdicate its responsibilities for the global equilibrium; but neither can it be in Europe's interest to undermine America's willingness to defend its vital interests, for the defense of Europe is part of these vital interests. . . .

The conclusion, I believe, is unavoidable: Some American forces now in Europe would contribute more to global defense if redeployed as strategic reserves based in the United States, able to be moved to world trouble spots. . . . [The] objective should be to distinguish clearly between those American forces earmarked exclusively for the defense of Europe and those available for other areas.⁸⁹

Carter administration Under Secretary of Defense Robert Komer presents two cautions about such moves. The first relates to American interests: "We have to be more prudent about Third World use of military force on a scale that would seriously interfere with other higher priority U.S. commitments."⁹⁰ This appraisal balances Komer's Carter administration Defense Department background when he was primarily concerned with NATO against his late 1960s experience when he had major responsibilities in Vietnam.

Komer's second *caveat* concerns the West Europeans. Rather than accusing them of shirking, we should understand that they evaluate and prioritize differently:

The Europeans realize that denial of Persian Gulf oil access would undermine the viability of NATO Europe without any Warsaw Pact attack. They also realize that the Soviet Union could exert great political pressures on them simply by turning on and off the flow of Middle East oil. But they are even more concerned that the Alliance still falls short of meeting even initial conventional defence requirements in Europe itself. . . . In effect, the U.S. seems to be focusing increasingly on third-area contingencies, whereas NATO Europe tends to regard this as a risky overextension of U.S. resources at the expense of adequate priority to European defence.⁹¹

Although Komer is, here and elsewhere, a strong advocate of increased West European contributions for conventional defense, he does not comment further on the irony of Europe's difficulty in increasing these contributions while criticizing the U.S. lack of "adequate priority to European defence." This is what bothers the Withdrawers as well as the burden-sharing Maintainers.

⁸⁹Henry A. Kissinger, "Redo NATO to Restore the Alliance," *Los Angeles Times*, May 11, 1986, Part V, pp. 1-6.

⁹⁰Robert W. Komer, *Maritime Strategy or Coalition Defense?* University Press of America, Lanham, Md., 1984, p. 88.

⁹¹Robert W. Komer, "Problems of Overextension: Reconciling NATO Defence and Out-of-Area Contingencies: Part II," in *International Institute for Strategic Studies*, Adelphi Paper 207, pp. 64-65.

Komer's own prescription is for specialization. In 1984, he argued for a "division of labor" in which the United States would be responsible for protecting the flow of oil "while the other affected allies concentrate on shoring up their own home-defense capabilities."⁹² Two years later, he reported progress, in that the NATO Defense Ministers did accept "a new set of biennial force goals meant to provide compensation for possible U.S. deployments outside the NATO area," but he pointed out that "force goals are a far cry from actual forces."⁹³

Komer, and Brzezinski and Kissinger, and the other Maintainers all provide answers to the question of allocation of responsibilities for NATO defense of joint interests in the rest of the world. Further, they recognize that not all interests are joint. An issue they tend to finesse, however, is the overall failure of Europe to join in the global anticommunist crusade so ardently desired by the Withdrawers and espoused in part by the Reagan administration. This is because few of the Maintainers outside of the administration espouse that crusade,⁹⁴ and those within, wherever they stand philosophically, must balance it against the immediate needs of NATO.

Komer, however, does confront the naval version of the Withdrawers' global emphasis, which he believes to be the implicit strategy of the Reagan administration, as inevitable defense budget cuts imposed by the Congress leave in place the substantial number of new ships being built together with the requirement to support them at the cost of other military expenditures.⁹⁵ And his own response strikes hard at the presumed new strategy:

Cutting the coat to fit the cloth by concentrating on a primarily maritime strategy cannot adequately protect our vital interests in Eurasia because it cannot adequately deter a great land-based power like the USSR. . . . Even if all Soviet home and overseas naval bases were put out of action, and Soviet naval and merchant vessels swept from the high seas, this would not suffice to prevent Moscow from seizing or dominating the rimlands of Eurasia, including the two great industrial agglomerations of Europe and Japan, and cutting off their economic lifeblood—Middle East oil. . . .

Some advocates of a maritime strategy evade this issue by contending that Europe is now more than rich enough to provide for its own defense. . . . True, a stronger and more integrated European defense

⁹²Komer, *Maritime Strategy or Coalition Defense?* p. 86.

⁹³Komer, "Problems of Overextension," p. 63.

⁹⁴Kissinger is active in the debate over the Third World as well as NATO; although he is close to the Reagan administration on many issues, he is of a distinctly different view from its crusader contingent. See Levins, *The Arms Debate and the Third World: Have We Learned from Vietnam?*

⁹⁵Komer, *Maritime Strategy or Coalition Defense*, pp. 55-59.

effort would be highly desirable, and has always been favored by Washington on strategic grounds. But to suggest that Europe alone would do what Europe plus America so far have not done is whistling in the wind. . . . Indeed, adoption of a primarily maritime strategy would have a devastating impact on the very network of alliances on which the United States is so dependent to maintain a credible deterrent or defensive balance vis-à-vis the USSR.⁹⁶

Although the Maintainers agree with this continued European emphasis, they remain worried about both the strategic and burden-sharing issues, and about the effects of irritated American public opinion as well, and they look for various means to structure American and European responsibilities. To the extent that the United States backs off some extremes in defining its unilateral global interests—in a new administration, perhaps⁹⁷—the remaining issues between the Maintainers and the European Couplers will be no more divisive than those in most other areas. Resonance with our allies is possible here, as elsewhere. Schlesinger may be the most understanding of all the Maintainers:

From time to time, Americans have been annoyed to discover that, for some reason or other, Europeans do not wish to see the cold war resumed in the heart of Europe—just because the Russians dispatched military forces into a country—Afghanistan in 1979—that they had politically taken over a year earlier—or because of conflicts in the Caribbean, Central America, the Horn of Africa or wherever. A gratuitous spillover of Third World struggles into Europe is unacceptable to the Europeans—and Americans simply have to accept this reality.⁹⁸

But Schlesinger is not in office.

THE OPPONENT

The Soviet Union

There is less difference between the Maintainers and the Couplers on their analyses of the Soviet Union than on any of the other issues. Although the interpretation of Soviet ends and means is basic to design of NATO political and military posture, the questions about the Soviets are intellectual ones; and the answers are intellectual and perhaps

⁹⁶Ibid., pp. 67-69.

⁹⁷See Levine, *The Arms Debate and the Third World: Have We Learned From Vietnam?*

⁹⁸Schlesinger, p. S7749.

ideological, rather than being based directly on varying national interests. In the Western world, a Sovietologist is a Sovietologist, and although their interpretations of objectives and strategies vary over a very wide range, the range is about the same on both sides of the Atlantic. It is possible that the Maintainer range of recent interpretations of Gorbachev and his changes is even broader than the Coupler range, but that may be a statistical phenomenon based on the fact that the United States turns out more Sovietologists than Europe.

Even more than in Europe, there is an American far right with the views on the Soviet Union exemplified by President Reagan's "evil empire" speech; but by the mid-1980s the president had dropped the phrase and apparently the viewpoint, much to the disgust of some of his more conservative supporters. Many of these had decided that the real struggle with communism was elsewhere than in Europe and had become Withdrawers; the remainder differed little from the more suspicious end of the narrow range of views held by virtually all Maintainers before Gorbachev.

Before Gorbachev—indeed, from the death of Stalin to the death of Chernenko, with some slight weakening during the Khrushchev era—the standard view of American Sovietologists was that the Soviet objective was to drive us out of Europe, that only their tactics varied over the years, but that their military power was always an essential instrument for those tactics. Almost alone as an *exception among the Maintainers* was George Kennan who has contended for almost four decades that his "containment" doctrine had been badly misinterpreted and that he had "never believed that they have seen it in their interests to overrun Western Europe militarily."

More typically, Alan Platt of RAND has presented a succinct list of Soviet objectives, and a history of recent strategies and tactics they have used to reach these objectives, as of mid-1985. At that time, Gorbachev had been in command only a few months:

Throughout the postwar period, there has been a fundamental continuity in what the Soviet Union has sought in Western Europe—the transformation of the status quo in favor of Soviet interests. In trying to bring about this long-term objective, the Soviets have sought to: Maintain a Soviet military advantage in the European theater; Ensure continued East European responsiveness to Soviet interests; Secure widespread acknowledgment of the Soviet Union as a superpower co-equal with the United States; Expand Soviet access to Western technology and credits; Loosen American political and mili-

tary ties with Western Europe; Transform West European political systems from within by aiding "progressive" elements.⁹⁹

Platt then went on to describe Soviet policy through the first half of the 1980s as repeatedly attempting to achieve these objectives by tactics of wooing the United States, then Western Europe, then both, then neither. None of these worked; their failure set the stage for Gorbachev's more radical changes.

Such descriptions of Soviet fundamental objectives and of the opportunistic means of reaching those objectives commanded a substantial consensus among Maintainers at that time. As Helmut Schmidt did on the Coupler side, Brzezinski put it into a historical as well as a geopolitical context:

From time immemorial, Russian society expressed itself politically through a state that was mobilized and regimented along military lines, with the security dimension serving as the central organizing impulse. The absence of clearly definable national boundaries made territorial expansion the obvious way of assuring security. . . . Russian history is, consequently, a history of sustained territorial expansion.¹⁰⁰

In a book whose subtitle, "Dismantling the East-West Military Confrontation" indicates its hope for a much more relaxed future, Jonathan Dean described the same recent events discussed by Platt, but with less of an air of Soviet inexorability:

There is a clear pattern in this record. It is one of repeated Soviet attempts to influence West European, especially Federal German, policy, using Soviet military power as a basis for these efforts—and of repeated failure of these attempts. This is the reality of the Soviet intimidation issue, and it seems likely to continue.¹⁰¹

Platt stressed the repetition of the attempts, Dean their failure; the distance is not great, but it spans the range of Maintainers' views before the recognition that Gorbachev was likely to make a difference, one way or the other.

Platt laid out five possible future Soviet policy alternatives as seen from his 1985 vantage point: attempted breakup of NATO by favoring Western Europe at the expense of the United States; the same by

⁹⁹Alan Platt, *Soviet-West European Relations: Recent Trends and Near-Term Prospects*, The RAND Corporation, R-3316-AF, March 1986, p. v. Although the report appeared in 1986, Platt's preface states that "It largely reflects information available as of August 1985."

¹⁰⁰Brzezinski, *Game Plan*, p. 17.

¹⁰¹Dean, *Watershed in Europe*, p. 84.

favoring the United States; defying both Western Europe and the United States; attempted renewal of détente by extending overtures to both; and "a purposefully confrontational policy toward the West."¹⁰² His own estimate was that "short-term Soviet policy, despite public denials, is likely to proceed along the path suggested by the first alternative",¹⁰³ the attempt to seduce the West Europeans away from the United States.

In fact, by the time 18 months had passed, the alternative chosen by the Soviets was recognized by the Maintainers, to the surprise of practically all of them, to be the pursuit of détente with both sides of NATO. But this recognition has not ended a debate, it has begun one—a far more fundamental debate over the Soviet Union than has taken place within NATO since its beginning. The two sides were laid out by Platt in his evaluation of what a Soviet move toward détente might imply:

[I]t might signify a major change in the way the Soviet Union sought to approach the United States and Western Europe. Or, on the other hand, it might just signify a continued long-term effort to loosen ties within the Atlantic Alliance, but through the choice of different short-term means to this end.¹⁰⁴

Gorbachev has made a difference. That is accepted by Maintainer as by Coupler Sovietologists. Whether the difference is a "major change" in direction or a new and perhaps brilliant set of tactics, still designed "to loosen ties within the Atlantic Alliance," divides the Maintainers as it does the Couplers.

On the suspicious side, Harry Gelman of RAND asserts that Soviet goals are unchanged:

The central core of [Soviet] goals remains the gradual reduction of American presence and influence in Western Europe, provided this happens under circumstances that do not promote the emergence of an effective substitute—a coherent West European offset to Soviet geopolitical weight in Europe.¹⁰⁵

And he provides a scorecard of how well Gorbachev was doing, as of mid-1987. On the pro-Soviet side, he counts narrowing West European popular support for nuclear deterrence, decaying consensus in West Germany, flexible Soviet adaptation to their failure to prevent INF installation, Soviet ability to exploit Western tensions over conventional arms control, the favorable effect on Western public opinion of Soviet internal reforms, the gap between the United States and Europe on Third World

¹⁰²Platt, pp. ix-x.

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 37.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., p. 35.

¹⁰⁵Harry Gelman, *Gorbachev's Policies Toward Western Europe: A Balance Sheet*, The RAND Corporation, R-3588-AF, October 1987, p. vi.

issues, and West European discomfort over American political erraticism.¹⁰⁶ On the debit side for the Soviets are the failure of the left to gain political power in West Germany or Britain, the anti-Soviet trend in French policy, a strengthening of West European political forces favoring security cooperation but not advocating greater independence from the United States, the possibility that *glasnost* might unleash uncontrollable forces within the Soviet Union, internal Soviet controversy over economic cooperation with the West, and the possibility that policies within the Soviet Union might decrease control over the satellite nations.¹⁰⁷

By no means all the Maintainers would agree with Gelman's assertion that the Soviets retain the same core objective of dominating Western Europe by driving the Americans out that they have had since Stalin's day. Until Gorbachev, almost all did agree; after his first year, a number diverged from the thinking that scored him purely on the old goals. William Hyland, the editor of *Foreign Affairs*, uses his journal to take direct issue with those who see new means to old ends:

It is possible to see in Gorbachev's changes nothing more than shifts in tactics. It can even be argued that the wily old Gromyko would have arrived at similar conclusions about the position of the Soviet Union, but without resorting to Gorbachev's novel rhetoric. A more persuasive analysis, however, is that Gorbachev views foreign policy in much the same way he sees his domestic situation. That is, he still believes in the basic system but recognizes that radical changes are in order, and that this will involve paying a price in the near term to achieve longer term aims. Thus he is introducing innovative elements into current Soviet foreign policies which are beginning to outweigh the elements of continuity.¹⁰⁸

"Paying a price in the near term to achieve longer term aims" might be interpreted as new tactics with old strategy, but Hyland's next two sentences are:

In sum, the accession of Mikhail Gorbachev to the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union marks the beginning of a new historical period. The transition from Brezhnev to Gorbachev is a genuine generational change, unlike the transfer of power from Khrushchev to Brezhnev in 1964.

Professor Jerry Hough of Duke University and the Brookings Institution provides a historical-sociological explanation for the change. In

¹⁰⁶Ibid., pp. viii-xiv.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., pp. xvi-xxiii.

¹⁰⁸William G. Hyland, "Reagan-Gorbachev III," *Foreign Affairs*, Fall 1987, p. 10.

opposition to the concept set forth by Brzezinski and Schmidt that Soviet expansion is the continuation of centuries of Russian history, he espouses the theory that interprets "the Communist revolution as an overthrow of Peter the Great's Westernized elite and a break with Russia's natural evolution toward constitutional democracy." In recent years, however, the elite has reasserted itself and is demanding not democracy but a "looser one-party dictatorship." The effect on external policy is a tradeoff:

The deal for the middle class is clear: a looser political system in exchange for the lash of foreign economic competition. . . . Moscow needs to focus foreign policy on improving relations with Europe and Japan. That means Moscow will have to make concessions to Europe and Japan and decrease the number of troops facing Europe to reduce fears about investing in the Soviet Union.¹⁰⁹

And economist Charles Cooper agrees with Hough on attributing internal causes to Soviet change, but turns the argument in an economic direction: "Gorbachev has indeed made a difference, but that difference reflects the 'fact' of Soviet economic deterioration."¹¹⁰

Hyland's explanation is external rather than internal to the Soviet Union:

For some reason we refuse to learn how to live with the undeniable success of American foreign policy since World War II. . . . We have won the ideological war; we are close to winning the geopolitical contest in the Third World, except for the Middle East. We long ago won the economic competition. As James Reston remarked in his final regular column for the *New York Times*, "I think we've won the cold war and don't know it."¹¹¹

His operational conclusion from this is moderate: "Preserving the European alliance must remain the cornerstone of American policy,"¹¹² but others, who have been pushing for U.S.-Soviet rapprochement for much longer and now see the world catching up to them, wax more enthusiastic. At the start of the 1987 zero-zero negotiations, Arthur Cox, secretary of the American Committee on U.S.-Soviet Relations, contended,

Gorbachev is eager to reach an agreement with Reagan for deep reductions in all types of nuclear weapons. Despite the debacle of the Iran-*contra* affair, Reagan still has an opportunity to salvage the integrity of his presidency by reaching a momentous agreement with

¹⁰⁹Jerry F. Hough, "New Deal in Moscow," *New York Times*, February 13, 1987.

¹¹⁰Personal communication.

¹¹¹Hyland, pp. 14-15.

¹¹²*Ibid.*, p. 15.

Gorbachev to end the arms race and drastically reduce the nuclear arsenals.¹¹³

And Abraham Brumberg, former editor of the journal *Problems of Communism* and something of a patriarch among Sovietologists, delineates the two extremes and a middle group, and then stakes out a somewhat different middle position for himself:

One school holds that the Soviet Union will inevitably be transformed into a genuine democracy. Its adherents include a sprinkling of "revisionist" historians, whose writings on the Stalin period would bring a blush to the cheeks of even their most orthodox Soviet colleagues. . . . A much larger group consists of those who claim that the Communist system cannot change, no matter what. . . . There is a third group, the skeptics, whose case is clearly more persuasive than the others. . . . Mr. Gorbachev may mean well, they say, but how can he succeed in efforts that strike at some of the most long-lived and tenacious features of Soviet society?

Healthy skepticism is justifiable but not to the point of dismissing the possibility of change. The reforms may yet fail, stall, or dissipate. Yet nothing in our logic or experience supports the notion that the Soviet leadership may be unable to change their country. Only our assumptions tell us that.¹¹⁴

Most Maintainers take one version or another of this middle position, and the conclusion that most of them come to is uncertainty but perhaps some hope. The prudence of Coupler Christoph Bertram's "even if these expressions of intent are genuine, Soviet power will be of a profoundly ambiguous nature for a very long time to come" is in no way inconsistent with Brumberg's "The reforms may yet fail, stall, or dissipate. Yet nothing in our logic or experience supports the notion that Soviet leadership may be unable to change their country."

All of which has led to a new question for debate: Should we attempt from the outside to assist Gorbachev overcome internal opposition to his reforms?¹¹⁵ Whitney MacMillan, chief executive of Cargill, Inc., a major American grain-exporting firm, and Richard Ullman of Princeton, contend "that it is very much in the interest of the goal of American policy

¹¹³Arthur Macy Cox, "Revising U.S. Perceptions of Gorbachev's New Thinking," *Los Angeles Times*, March 8, 1987, Part V, pp. 1-3.

¹¹⁴Abraham Brumberg, "Moscow, Seen Clearly," *New York Times*, September 2, 1987.

¹¹⁵Actually, this question, like most others, is not really new, having come up in one form or another since Khrushchev. During the long Brezhnev years, however, few Western Sovietologists of any view saw much political payoff from Western attempts to exploit ideological differences within the Kremlin.

to help him," and propose both arms control measures and economic assistance.¹¹⁶ Columnist Stephen Rosenfeld argues that

[W]e have no right to assume that the United States actually could 'help' Mr. Gorbachev. . . . [Making] 'preemptive' concessions as distinguished from reciprocal ones could simply invite the Kremlin to pocket unearned gains.¹¹⁷

Perhaps the best bottom line for most Couplers is the last line of a letter to the editor of the *New York Times* by Indiana University Economics Professor Nicolas Spulber: Gorbachev's "success or failure certainly does not depend on any such help but rather on the capacity of these changes to deliver better goods and services than before."¹¹⁸ This matches the caution of Bertram and Brumberg.

Eastern Europe

The Maintainers pay substantially more attention to Eastern Europe as a whole than do the European Couplers. One reason is that the larger number of American Sovietologists allows for more specialization. Another is that the fairly recent East European roots of many Americans lead to more of an interest in the Soviet satellite nations. For similar reasons, the Maintainers treat less with the "German question"; most German immigration to the United States was many generations back.

One American attitude toward the Eastern nations is that expressed by Huntington. The central thesis of his counteroffensive strategy is that it would compel the Soviets "to reallocate forces and resources to the defense of their satellites and thus to weaken their offensive thrust." More specifically,

[T]he adoption of this strategy should be accompanied with a clear invitation to Eastern European governments to avoid invasion by opting out of a Soviet-initiated war. At the very least, such an invitation would create uneasiness, uncertainty, and divisiveness within satellite governments, and hence arouse concern among the Soviets as to their reliability. In practice, the allied offensive would have to be accompanied with carefully composed political-psychological warfare appeals to the peoples of Eastern Europe stressing that the allies were not fighting them but the Soviets and urging them to cooperate with the advancing forces and to rally to the liberation of their countries from Soviet military occupation and political control.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶Whitney MacMillan and Richard H. Ullman, "America's Self-Interest in Helping Gorbachev," *New York Times*, October 7, 1987, p. 23.

¹¹⁷Stephen S. Rosenfeld, "Go Slow on Glasnost," *International Herald Tribune*, October 14, 1987, p. 4 (reprinted from the *Washington Post*).

¹¹⁸Nicolas Spulber, "Proof of Gorbachev Pudding is in Soviet Tasting," *New York Times*, October 22, 1987.

¹¹⁹Huntington, *The Renewal of Strategy*, p. 31.

As has been noted, the counteroffensive strategy is opposed by most Maintainers and Couplers. Most Sovietologists (of which Huntington is not one) take another tack. As described by Milan Svec of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: "The principle behind United States policy toward Eastern Europe has for many years been 'differentiation'—in effect, a promise to reward those governments that show greater tolerance, flexibility and independence from Moscow."¹²⁰

One of the leading advocates of differentiation is Brzezinski, who pushed in this direction long before the "many years" during which it has been national policy, long before it became obvious. In 1961, writing with William Griffith, he called for:

a policy of what might be called peaceful engagement in Eastern Europe. This policy should: (1) aim at stimulating further diversity in the Communist bloc; (2) thus increasing the likelihood that East European states can achieve a greater measure of political independence from Soviet domination (3) thereby ultimately leading to the creation of a neutral belt of states which, like the Finnish, would enjoy genuine popular freedom of choice in internal policy while not being hostile to the Soviet Union and not belonging to Western Military alliances.¹²¹

Not that Brzezinski has been under any illusions as to the possibilities for rapid change. Writing a quarter-century later, after his stint as National Security Advisor and at a time when Gorbachev had just come into power, he points out that:

Despite forty years of forced indoctrination, all the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe remain in power through heavy reliance on severe internal police control, reinforced by the potential threat of Soviet intervention—and by Soviet troops on the ground in Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. . . . At the same time, Moscow is determined to restrict the scope of East European independence in foreign affairs. . . . At the first Warsaw Pact meeting held under Gorbachev's chairmanship, the principle of tight coordination was firmly reasserted.¹²²

Brzezinski's strategy for change in Eastern Europe fits into his overall schema to put more of NATO's responsibilities onto its European members. Marking the fortieth anniversary of the 1945 Yalta Agreement, supposed to have divided Europe between East and West (Brzezinski argues that the decision was made earlier), he emphasized that:

¹²⁰Milan Svec, "Let's Warm Up Relations with Eastern Europe," *New York Times*, January 23, 1987, p. 27.

¹²¹Zbigniew Brzezinski and William Griffith, "Peaceful Engagement in Eastern Europe," *Foreign Affairs*, July 1961, p. 644.

¹²²Brzezinski, *Game Plan*, pp. 82-83.

the historic balance in Europe will be changed gradually in the West's favor only if Russia comes to be faced west of the Elbe rather less by America and rather more by Europe. Thoughtful Europeans realize, moreover, that the future of Europe is intertwined with the future of Germany and of Poland.¹²³

His program included: NATO's "publicly repudiating . . . the partition of Europe," which he terms "the historic legacy of Yalta," while simultaneously "reconfirm[ing] its commitment to the Helsinki Final Act," which "confirmed the durability of the existing frontiers in central and eastern Europe," creating "the maximum number of opportunities for Eastern European participation in various all-European bodies," intensifying "aid to those East Europeans who are struggling actively for the political emancipation of Eastern Europe," and implementing his ideas for the restructuring of NATO.¹²⁴

Two years later, after Gorbachev had begun to make his distinct mark, Brzezinski reiterated his central themes:

In the heart of Europe, we can see a revival of the old concept of *Mitteleuropa*. Today, the average Czechoslovak, Hungarian, or Pole openly professes that he feels closer to the typical Austrian, German, or further west the Frenchman than to his eastern neighbors. . . . We must exploit these trends and build on the confidence in the fact that the existing territorial status quo in Europe, as confirmed by the Helsinki agreements, is no longer subject to change. We must seek on that basis to shape progressively a new political reality in Europe.¹²⁵

Ross Johnson of RAND analyzes the same issues from the viewpoint of the Soviet bloc itself—the governments of the East European nations and the pressures and constraints they put on the Soviet Union:

[At] the end of Gorbachev's first year [1985–86], the motives that impelled the East European leaderships to cultivate special ties with Western Europe in the wake of NATO's INF deployment remained as strong as ever and continued to complicate Soviet policies directed toward increasing discipline and cohesion in Eastern Europe. . . . Thus, since the mid-1970s, the Soviets have faced an increasingly pronounced dilemma in attempting to use control over Eastern Europe to promote greater Soviet influence in Western Europe while at the same time attempting to avoid the "reverse influence" from

¹²³Zbigniew Brzezinski, "The Future of Yalta," *Foreign Affairs*, Winter 1984/1985, p. 294.

¹²⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 295–299.

¹²⁵Brzezinski, "Peaceful Change in a Divided Europe," pp. 4–17.

Western Europe that could threaten Soviet control of Eastern Europe.¹²⁶

The constraints seen analytically by the Maintainer Sovietologists thus coincide substantially with the strategies recommended by Brzezinski and the others who want to differentiate among members of the Soviet "bloc": Gorbachev cannot allow too great a scope for autonomy, and the West should not push for it. The structure is fragile, and too much internal or external pressure in the wrong place might cause its collapse; few Maintainers would shed tears over that, except that too sudden a collapse might bring instability, confrontation, and combat. And no Maintainer wants to take that risk. The possibilities are thus quite limited.

All this leaves out Germany, on which the Maintainers concentrate less than the West Europeans, particularly, of course, the Germans themselves. When the Maintainers do write about the two Germanies, however, they tend to worry. Brzezinski, for example, uses the division of Germany as a major reason why policy toward Eastern Europe cannot proceed along current lines, but he also betrays a substantial concern with the direction of current German policy based on that division:

[T]he partition of Germany within the partition of Europe . . . guarantees a continuing political struggle for the future of Germany and, consequently, for the future of Europe. . . . West Germans—no longer dominated by feelings of war guilt, less mesmerized by the American ideal, and distressed by the failure of Europe to become an alternative to divisive nationalisms—are naturally drawn to a growing preoccupation with the fate of their brethren living under an alien system. The notion that the destiny of a United Germany depends on a close relationship with Russia is not a new one in German political tradition. . . . As a consequence, West Germany is already pursuing a distinctive policy of its own toward the East. It carefully avoids provoking Moscow on such neuralgic issues as Poland—the geopolitical linchpin state of Eastern Europe—and cultivates a special relationship with East Germany. . . . [This] reactionary and dangerous regime has been the beneficiary of significant West German economic assistance—and this has directly contributed to East Germany's emergence as Moscow's most important junior partner.¹²⁷

Such American fears do not map well onto the statements of German Couplers from all parts of the political spectrum that unification is a remote ideal at best, and that the ties that *are* being created to the East must be within the compass of the Western Alliance; nor are they

¹²⁶A. Ross Johnson, *The Impact of Eastern Europe on Soviet Policy Toward Western Europe*, The RAND Corporation, R-3332-AF, March 1986, p. xi.

¹²⁷Brzezinski, *Game Plan*, pp. 197-199.

matched by any substantial fears stemming from Germany's European NATO partners. The debate in Europe is as much about the Federal Republic's ties to France as it is about the ties to the Communist German Democratic Republic. "Rapallo," the 1920s agreement between the German Weimar Republic and the Soviet Union, which is the reference for Brzezinski's comment that the notion of a "close relationship with Russia is not a new one in German political tradition," is laughed off in Europe as a model for current policy.

This does not mean that the Maintainers' fears are completely unjustified. It does mean that intra-German relations, unlike other issues of Eastern Europe, are viewed substantially differently on both sides of the Atlantic.

ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT

The Maintainers express no peculiarly American views on arms control and disarmament; given the resonating attempts to calm European fears, particularly about Reykjavik and the zero-zero agreement, the same positions can be found as among the Couplers. But both the balance of views and the details of the way they are approached are quite different. This section, as with the corresponding discussion of the Couplers, stresses the debate over zero-zero, leaving subsequent developments for the Epilog.

The Maintainers were sharply divided over the zero-zero agreement. In 1987, for the first time in 40 years, both arms controls in Europe and arms reductions anywhere in the world suddenly looked real. Radical change is shocking; and for that reason if no other, opposition to zero-zero was more prevalent among Maintainers than support.

The opposition to zero-zero was spearheaded by General Rogers in his last days as SACEUR; that was a major reason why they were his last days. Shortly after retiring from that position and from the United States Army, he summarized his view:

Removing the land-based intermediate-range nuclear forces now would return NATO to its weak pre-1979 posture. In fact, because the Russians have continued to improve their conventional and nuclear forces, NATO would be in an even worse position now. To establish credible deterrence, two capabilities, listed in NATO's guidelines for using nuclear weapons, are vital: the ability to strike, with certainty, targets deep in the Soviet homeland . . . and a number of nuclear escalatory options between conventional forces and the use of strategic nuclear forces. The proposed I.N.F. agreement would eliminate the Pershing 2 missiles and thereby remove the first capability. It would also eliminate a crucial escalatory option.¹²⁸

¹²⁸Rogers, "Why Compromise Our Deterrent Strength in Europe?"

Kissinger stressed political as much as military reasons for opposing the agreement, including some major points of resonance to West European positions. He listed six flaws in the proposal: It contributed to decoupling; it reduced "the Soviet nuclear threat to Europe only slightly," it continued the abandonment of "European leaders who staked their political positions on American proposals for the nuclear defense of Europe," it gave the Soviets a veto over Western nuclear deployments, it complicated "the possible replacement of American missiles by European ones," and it created additional problems by allowing the Soviets to retain missiles in Asia.¹²⁹ The last of these objections was taken care of when the Soviets agreed to remove all intermediate-range missiles rather than retaining the 100 they had proposed to keep in Asia while we retained an equal number elsewhere than in Europe.

A few weeks later, Kissinger joined his former boss Richard Nixon in a considerably softer position, disapproving of the treaty but accepting it under two conditions, one of which was the elimination of the Asian missiles and the other a strong linkage to additional arms control agreements improving the conventional balance.¹³⁰ In the event, once the treaty was agreed to, they favored ratification, primarily on the ground that failure to do so would be one more twist in the American erraticism that had been destroying West European confidence and threatening the Alliance itself.

How did we get to a position and a treaty seen to be so unsatisfactory? Kissinger attributes it to Washington and international bureaucracy:

As often happens in Washington, quite disparate elements combined to produce the zero option. Throughout the 1970s opponents of arms control had obscured what was an objection in principle by claiming that they wanted to go beyond freezing existing deployments to major reductions of nuclear arsenals. This had the additional advantage, from their point of view, of giving them two chances to slow down an agreement—first by urging wider reductions and then by proposing intrusive verification to check on reductions. . . . Other supporters of the zero option included neo-isolationists and military technicians who preferred U.S. missiles at sea or within the United States to reduce the automatic nature of any nuclear response. European leaders had . . . at first asked for the INF to balance the Soviet deployment of hundreds of the new SS-20 medium-range missiles. . . . But rattled by the combination of Soviet-orchestrated diplomatic pressures and growing public assaults, the European allies took refuge in an evasion—that the INF could some day be traded for the SS-20s. . . .

¹²⁹Henry A. Kissinger, "Missiles: A Zero Option Is No Choice," *Los Angeles Times*, April 5, 1987, Part V, p. 2.

¹³⁰Nixon and Kissinger.

All this was woven together into a formal proposal by the then-dominant group in the [Reagan] White House. They knew little about strategy and less about arms control. . . .

The traditional arms controllers started out on the sidelines of this particular exercise. But committed as they were to the proposition that there is no such thing as a good new weapon, they have since joined the fray with a passion.¹³¹

Elizabeth Drew of the *New Yorker*, ordinarily much more friendly to arms control than Kissinger (but less friendly to the Reagan administration) presented an interpretation of the later stages of the zero-zero negotiation similar to Kissinger's story of its birth:

[F]ew people in the Administration think that an I.N.F. agreement is very important—as compared, say, with a possible agreement on deep reductions in long-range nuclear weapons or an agreement on deployment of the Strategic Defense Initiative. . . . [An] I.N.F. agreement solves a number of problems for the Administration at what its officials see as little cost. Best of all it gives Reagan an arms-control agreement. . . . The situation has other benefits for arms-control opponents: some of them do not at all mind that we might reach an agreement with the Soviets that makes the Europeans unhappy. . . . One can also detect on the part of some Administration officials a certain pleasure over the fact that the potential I.N.F. agreement has split the arms control community. The subject of I.N.F. particularly lends itself to theological disputes, and the theologians have gone at it with great zest.¹³²

The pro-arms control theologians were, in fact, somewhat split by the zero-zero proposal. House Armed Services Committee Chairman Les Aspin opposed it because he believed it started at the wrong end, removing the more stable nuclear weapons and leaving those least subject to central control.¹³³ Most, however, favored it if not because, in Kissinger's words, they thought that "there is no such thing as a good new weapon," at least because they attributed great importance to the first agreement to actually reduce nuclear weapons. In the words of Carter administration chief arms negotiator Paul Warnke: "It is important that an intermediate-range nuclear forces treaty be promptly completed so that the superpowers can get on with the more serious business of strategic-range nuclear forces."¹³⁴

¹³¹Kissinger, "Missiles: A Zero Option Is No Choice."

¹³²Elizabeth Drew, "Letter from Washington," *New Yorker*, May 4, 1987, pp. 140-141.

¹³³Les Aspin, "But Battlefield Nuclear Weapons Should Go First," *International Herald Tribune*, April 28, 1987, p. 4. (reprinted from the *Washington Post*).

¹³⁴Paul C. Warnke, "An Abiding Love Affair with the Bomb," *New York Times*, August 13, 1987, p. 19.

On the specific issues of zero-zero, Charles Schultze, who had been Chairman of President Carter's Council of Economic Advisors and before that President Johnson's Budget Director, questioned the anti-zero-zero view, using the same scholastic figure of speech as Drew:

[T]he Soviets would be deterred from conventional aggression by Pershing 2 missiles on the land mass of Europe but would *not* be deterred by Polaris missiles off the European coast. Only when one sets it down on paper does this argument's specious nature become clear. It implies that what counts in the Soviet mind in deciding how to retaliate against a nuclear attack is not what target was hit or what damage the missile did or even what the politico-military situation was, but only whether the delivery system was labelled "strategic" or "intermediate." This flies in the face of repeated Soviet warnings that they will make no such nice distinctions. The argument has the intellectual ring of a theological debate at the University of Paris circa AD 1250.¹³⁵

General Rogers' response to this point of the zero-zero advocates is that:

although the Russians can discriminate between the launching of land-based ballistic missiles and the launching of submarine-based ballistic missiles, they cannot tell whether those being launched from submarines are part of the Supreme Allied Commander's limited inventory or from the American or British strategic nuclear inventory. Thus, they cannot know whether the West has begun an all-out nuclear attack.¹³⁶

To SACEUR, it is important whether it is his attack or that of the commander of the Strategic Air Command and, unlike Schultze, he believes that this will be of interest to the Soviets too.

In any case, as zero-zero moved toward the status of *fait accompli*, the tendency among Maintainers—and, indeed, Couplers as well—was to accept it and get on with the job. General Rogers' successor as SACEUR, General John Galvin, in a sense contradicted Rogers when, according to the *Baltimore Sun*, he said:

that the defense of Western Europe would be possible without U.S. medium-range nuclear missiles but that they should not be removed too rapidly. "I am talking about years, not months." . . . General Galvin welcomed the planned Soviet-U.S. treaty.¹³⁷

¹³⁵Charles L. Schultze, "Decoupling Dubious Arguments Against Arms-Control Agreement," *Los Angeles Times*, May 9, 1987, Part V, p. 3.

¹³⁶Rogers, "Why Compromise Our Deterrent Strength in Europe?"

¹³⁷"General urges 'years, not months' to remove missiles," *Baltimore Sun*, September 16, 1987, p. 6.

General Galvin was, of course, being a good soldier; had he not been willing to be a good soldier after Rogers' revolt, he would not have become SACEUR.

In fact, once it became clear that the agreement was going to be signed, Maintainers and Couplers alike fell into line. Falling into line had two implications for both schools, and one more specifically for the Couplers. It meant taking additional arms control steps seriously so that the next time the West could make proposals in its own thought-through security interests rather than playing a political game with the Soviets and its own electorates. And it meant taking steps to strengthen the Alliance in the new environment created by Gorbachev. In addition, for many of the Couplers, it meant reexamination of the concept of European security in a European context.

SUMMARY: MAINTAINER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Maintainers may constitute a tighter School of Thought than do the Couplers; at least, given the American nationality that is used here to define them, they all speak the same language, and this is not a trivial consideration. Nonetheless, they present a wide range of views in the NATO debate. (In other parts of the overall arms debate, they constitute three schools on Third World policy and two in the strategic nuclear debate.)¹³⁸ It may thus be surprising that the Maintainers do reach a consensus on a set of policy recommendations, based on the three points suggested at the beginning of the report: No Early Use, stronger conventional capabilities, and maintaining the commitment to NATO.

Further, the Maintainer consensus, for all the similarities between their debate and that of the Couplers, ends up differing from that of the Couplers, certainly in emphasis, to some degree in viewpoint. In the following list, the relevant Coupler points, as reported in Sec. III, are summarized in italics below each Maintainer point.

The Maintainers come together not to unanimity, but to consensus, on five broad policy recommendations:

- The Alliance structure should remain as it is. European moves toward a "second pillar" are acceptable and perhaps even desirable, but not important enough to contemplate restructuring an Alliance that has maintained the peace.

(Europe should begin serious movement toward forming a second pillar.)

¹³⁸See Levine, *The Arms Debate and the Third World: Have We Learned from Vietnam?*, and *The Strategic Nuclear Debate*.

- NATO should strive for stronger conventional capabilities even if it takes more money, and the European members of the Alliance should contribute a larger share of that money.

(Larger expenditures on conventional forces may have to be put up, at American insistence.)

- Nuclear deterrence in Europe is necessary but very dangerous, and a central task of the Alliance is to raise the threshold.

(Nuclear deterrence is basic to the defense of Europe and must not be eroded.) This is the most basic difference between the two schools.

- The United States has worldwide responsibilities, including some in support of West European as well as American vital interests. If the Europeans will not participate, they should compensate, and surely they should not complain.

(There is danger in the United States being diverted to the rest of the world.)

- Arms control, both nuclear and conventional, is important to security policy and world peace.

(The West European view is more suspicious, particularly of agreements between the superpowers, but this may change in the wake of zero-zero, insofar as it concerns conventional arms control in Europe.)

Some of these differences are marginal, some, like that over the threshold, more substantial. But what both sides of the Atlantic continue to agree on has been captured by Thomson's words that the: "solidarity of the Alliance . . . is the most vital element of deterrence." And deterrence, for Couplers and Maintainers alike, remains essential for world peace and Western civilization.

VII. EPILOG

(1) Western publics are becoming increasingly allergic to nuclear weapons and will become increasingly aware that NATO relies on the early use of nuclear weapons in response to nonnuclear attacks. (2) NATO has no revolutionary plan for implementing conventional force improvements or for bold innovative conventional arms control proposals which could combine to eliminate its reliance on the early first use of nuclear weapons. (3) NATO faces a Soviet leader—whatever his long run intentions may be—who appears willing, in the parlance of the American card game called poker, to “call NATO’s bet and up the ante.”

—Senator Sam Nunn, Chairman,
Armed Services Committee,
United States Senate¹

These developments of the defense policy of the United States and that of the Soviet Union are not new. For the first time, however, they are turning toward convergence. The denuclearization that serves the military interests of the Soviet Union responds to a yearning on the part of American public opinion and of President Reagan. It facilitates the starting up of strategic defense. The inevitable reduction for budgetary reasons of United States conventional forces may help the Soviet Union accentuate the decoupling between Europe and America. This convergence of interests provides a real impetus to the ongoing developments.

—Deputy François Fillon, Chairman,
Committee on National Defense and Armed Forces,
French National Assembly²

We have, without doubt, reached another “perilous moment in the history of the alliance.” Although this is indeed a major turning point, it is no more than that; it is neither an end of the Alliance nor is it a radical new beginning, for example, of a separate European alliance. Nonetheless, new Soviet tactics and perhaps objectives are forcing NATO to reexamine both its internal structure and its negotiating posture, which may result in structural political and military changes in

¹Senator Sam Nunn, Speech to the DMS Symposium on Industrial Cooperation within NATO, Brussels, April 13, 1987, p. 3.

²François Fillon, 1988-1992: *Les Relations Franco-Allemandes en Matière de Défense*, Journées Parlementaires du R.P.R.—Bordeaux, September 1987 (mimeographed speech).

the Alliance—perhaps a Kissinger-like rebuilding, perhaps a new arms-control-driven conventional posture. But the restructuring is likely to end up with the same key members of the Alliance, a similar incompletely defined flexible posture, and many of the same disagreements.

The Epilog is more personal and less objective in its intent than the body of the report. It uses my own logic and interpretations rather than the quotations that have supported the major analysis. There are two reasons for this. First, it is difficult to capture a rapid change in mid-flight and predict its direction; NATO is changing rapidly, and quotations on current events that are fresh in the spring may be obsolete by the fall. Second, for the same reasons of rapid current change and examination of the future, this section depends much more than the earlier ones on unattributable conversations, although the analysis is based primarily on the research presented in the previous sections.

Our Soviet opponent, who inspired the defense mechanism that became the Alliance and who has defined its existence for 35 years, has suddenly changed at least his tactics and perhaps his objectives. This has been received with worry and skepticism on both sides of the Atlantic, among both the American Maintainers and the European Couplers, as illustrated by the opening quotations from American and French legislators in corresponding positions.

Senator Nunn reflects a broad American consensus in remaining agnostic about Gorbachev, "whatever his long run intentions may be," and in suggesting that we had better get our act together. Nunn concentrates on arms control negotiations, both because he foresees little in the way of unilateral improvements in Alliance posture, and because he doubts that the arms control poker game will end with the double-zero agreement (nor can we or should we pick up our chips and go home). But central to the Senator's concerns is the fear that public opinion may send arms control off in its own self-propelled direction. As put by another American Maintainer, James Thomson: "The arms control challenge to the Alliance is, first and foremost, to recreate a viable security concept and rally public support around it. . . . Only when the Alliance has recreated its security consensus will our leaders be able to lead public opinion to support a sound arms control policy."³

³James Thomson, "The Arms Control Challenge to the Alliance," Address to the North Atlantic Assembly in Plenary Session, Oslo, September 25, 1987, p. 1. Thomson had seen INF as an important part of a "viable security concept" and he was concerned that arms control agreements, including the one removing INF as well as new proposals, have been springing up without consideration of NATO's overall security needs.

Deputy Fillon is less representative of European Couplers than Senator Nunn is of American Maintainers, although Fillon's belief that threatening change comes as much from the United States as it does from the Soviet Union does represent a strong French undercurrent. Although less than a West European consensus, this view is widespread enough that it will have to be dealt with by Americans and Europeans who want to preserve the Alliance. Fillon's context is an argument for greater Franco-German defense cooperation. It illustrates one version of *within-the-West* adaptation to the changes of the late 1980s.

These two types of adaptation—changes in the ways in which the Alliance deals with the opponent, and changes in the political/military structure of the Alliance itself—come together into Thomson's "security concept." My belief is that his goal, "to recreate a viable" concept, is likely to be achieved by a NATO that is not too dissimilar from the one that has existed through the late 1980s.

Central to my contention is an assertion that the primary requirement for adaptation stems much more from outside the Alliance—the Soviet Union—than from American isolationist, ethnic, budgetary, or any other internal imperatives. This is, admittedly, an American view, in distinct disagreement with M. Fillon's point that we as much as the Russians are causing the upset. But even though I am not in great sympathy with the off-hand way in which President Reagan has frequently made and implemented foreign policy, I believe that many of the U.S. actions that have disturbed Fillon and other West Europeans have been adaptations by existing mechanisms to new stimuli, rather than structural changes initiated by pressures from within the United States or any other part of the Alliance. True, President Reagan was erratic before Gorbachev (and so was President Carter); since Gorbachev, the erraticism has been reflected in Reykjavik and other responses to the Soviet Union, but they remain responses, not first causes. And there is a good chance that the next president of the United States will be less erratic.

Most recent evidence indicates that internal Alliance structures remain stable. As a result, the Alliance is adapting nonradically to the most recent radical changes in Soviet attitudes and actions; the "subjective alliance" remains subjective. Further radical changes in Soviet behavior can be expected, however, and the variables that we can manipulate should be directed toward preserving the internal stabilities while adapting them to the new externals. The result is consistent with Nunn's and Thomson's prescriptions of a type the next American administration is likely to take seriously.

CURRENT FACTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

In understanding the external changes of the late 1980s, and NATO's ongoing and future adaptations to these changes, it is important to separate facts—statements with which no debater would disagree—from interpretations of those facts. In the following listing, the facts are italicized and then followed by my interpretations of those facts and their relevance.

- *The most important fact is that Ronald Reagan will not be president of the United States after January 20, 1989. Another fixed point on the electoral calendar is the French presidential election of 1988. Not quite as certain, but likely, is that current German and British governments will continue at least until elections in 1991 or 1992.*

Paradoxically, both the near-term changes and the delays in this electoral calendar tend toward stability within the Alliance. The American election will have two effects. First, both European Couplers and many American Maintainers have viewed not only President Reagan but President Carter before him as large sources of instability. The litany that begins with Carter's inconstancy on the neutron bomb and continues through the "evil empire," SDI, Libya, Reykjavik, and, in some views, zero-zero, has been an upsetting one. Further, Europeans know few of the initially announced presidential candidates in either party, and this worries them; the American most Couplers would feel comfortable with, Senator Nunn, was not among the initial candidates. Nonetheless, most of the candidates in both parties strongly favor NATO, and the defense and foreign policy advisors the successful candidate will depend on are likely to include old pro-NATO hands. And all indications are that this time around the electorate is looking for stability in foreign policy, with erraticism at a substantial discount.

This is likely to be reinforced by the other effect of the American elections: They will take place on a fixed schedule and should slow down American initiatives and responses to Soviet initiatives on Europe. (Negotiations over U.S.-Soviet strategic arms controls may slow down less, but the possibility of such controls is far less upsetting to West Europeans than is the chance of further rapid changes on the continent.) For most of 1988, the American election campaign will make radical changes difficult; this will be reinforced by the Senate debate over ratification of zero-zero. Then, for at least part of 1989,

the shakedown period for the new president will cause further decision delays (unless he uses his traditional 100-day honeymoon period for NATO initiatives, which, in the light of domestic issues and festering foreign policy problems elsewhere, seems unlikely). All this means that the headlong momentum of the zero-zero negotiations will be broken. *Perhaps* it will also mean that through 1989 the United States and the other members of the Alliance will take the time to think through just what it is they want from multilateral negotiations and unilateral decisions.

The French elections are even earlier than those in the United States, but national security has not been an electoral issue in recent years, and although the French consensus may be shifting, perhaps toward a tighter arrangement with Germany, it remains a tight consensus. Few French think of NATO policy as an issue in the 1988 elections.

In Britain and in Germany, the existence of stable government majorities and the unlikelihood of national elections before the early 1990s suggest that competition for office will not be a major destabilizing factor. (Elections in the states of the Federal Republic will continue to have some effect on national policy, however, as they did in 1987 when losses in some states apparently played a role in modifying Chancellor Kohl's opposition to zero-zero.) In any case, the electoral calendar means that the left-wing parties feared by some American Maintainers are unlikely to have a chance at governing. Further, the majorities within the British and German left remain strongly and explicitly pro-NATO, even if not in a form liked by many other Couplers or by Americans; and it is suggested in both countries that the left will have to moderate even more if it wishes to regain political power. None of this is meant to imply that politics and Alliance policy will be completely dissociated, particularly in Germany, but at least imminent elections will not be an exacerbating factor.

One final point should be made about national politics and NATO. Even the closest of allies have difficulties in understanding the politics of their partners. This is most evident in Coupler misunderstandings of American politics: the tendency to confuse Kristol and Krauss's drive to get out of NATO with Kissinger and Brzezinski's desire to strengthen the Alliance through restructuring, for example. But it is also evident from

the fears in France and elsewhere of a German tendency to recreate *Mittleuropa*, a possibility quickly dismissed in all German political quarters.

- *Budgetary and other economic pressures on U.S. defense spending will remain strong.*

No *deus ex machina* is in sight to reverse the unacceptable American budget deficit. Nor, lacking the external push of an "extended period of substantially increased East-West tensions, clearly the fault of the USSR," that Thomson suggested would be needed to goad the West into financing a conventional buildup, will taxes or other devices take the pressure off the defense budget. Additionally, the need to reverse the flow of trade deficits from the Reagan years will add other economic pressures and may also sour economic relations between the United States and its NATO allies. Difficult trade problems, badly handled, may be the major threat to the Alliance in coming years.

Some of the early effects of these phenomena were reflected in Representative Schroeder's 1987 proposals to force burden-sharing.⁴ Schroeder considered running for president but ultimately chose not to; also in 1987, a much more serious candidate, Senator Bob Dole (Rep., Kan.) began to mention burden-sharing and troop drawdown in his campaign speeches. The discussion here suggests that serious consideration of unilateral drawdown will at least be postponed while negotiated NATO/Warsaw Pact decreases seem a real possibility; but this is not a sure thing, and should conventional negotiations fail to produce an agreement, budgetary considerations will renew unilateral pressures. In any case, budget-induced decreases in the number of American troops in Europe, seem more possible over the longer run. Even if numbers are reduced, however, this will not necessarily be a first step toward complete withdrawal of the troops or of the commitment they represent.

- *The European members of NATO have officially accepted the zero-zero agreement.*

Stated this way, such official acceptance is not only factual; it is the obvious reaction to a *fait accompli*. Nonetheless, the degree of acceptance has gone beyond the obvious. Whether for

⁴Patricia Schroeder.

political reasons or for psychological reasons beyond the scope of this analysis, necessary official acceptance has brought with it more real acceptance than might have been expected. In contrast to Secretary Shultz's tense Brussels reception when he reported to his fellow foreign ministers in closed session on his April 1987 return from Moscow with the first real intimations of the zero-zero agreement, both his September reception with the agreement in hand and his November meeting with the final draft were warm and supportive far beyond official requirements. This is true even of the French, although Fillon's undercurrent of suspicion about the United States remains strong.

One fairly straightforward interpretation is that the changes, brought about by Gorbachev's innovative approaches to the West, in a structure of relationships under which Western Europe had grown prosperous and secure over a 30-year period, were of course unsettling. West European fears of direct Soviet attack had been close to zero for twenty years; a parallel lack of political fears had been confirmed by Brezhnev's failure to prevent the installation of the INF missiles. Gorbachev's changes could hardly improve this secure European comfort; therefore they disturbed it. Once zero-zero became a fact, however, many Couplers who had been dubious began to see some good in it—a far more substantial Soviet warhead reduction than American, potential future economic rapprochement, even greater security at lower levels of armaments if agreements did not go all the way to denuclearization. Natural conservatism about a system that had worked well began to give way once the system was forced to change. All this was strongly reinforced by resonance, once many American officials realized that the West Europeans were in serious danger of being alienated, and once many Europeans realized that continued protesting could help bring about the U.S. decoupling that was their central fear about zero-zero in the first place.

- *Nonetheless, dissidence from the overall acceptance of the changes does still exist among the European Couplers.*

Explicit dissidence is less prevalent than individual ambivalence. The doubts that had existed are more likely to have been internalized than satisfied. The statement of Fillon, the conservative-coalition chairman of the National Assembly's defense committee, provides sufficient evidence of continued

dissidence, at its strongest in France. It is almost nonexistent in Britain, where the few initial doubters of zero-zero rapidly accepted the *fait accompli* and where the changes that are taking place are attributed to the Soviet Union or sometimes to the Germans or the French, but not to the United States. And, in contrast to the French, the Germans became substantially less dissident after they had accepted the agreement than before. Regardless of some still-negative feelings about zero-zero, and regardless of whether their own political analysis "blames" the Americans or the Russians, there is no payoff for the Germans in further alienating the United States, and this is recognized in all Coupler quarters. This is not to deny that the experience has moved the Germans toward greater interest in cooperation with the French, however.

- *Moves toward a stronger "European pillar" for NATO, in particular a stronger Franco-German security arrangement, have proliferated.*

The Franco-German maneuvers in the summer of 1987, and the initial planning for a Franco-German brigade, for a Franco-German military planning group, and for a Franco-German helicopter all provide evidence. Outside of the coupling of the two continental powers, even the British talk more about the pillar than they did before zero-zero. The pace of Franco-British discussions of cooperative utilization of their two independent nuclear forces has also accelerated. And Europeans, particularly French, point to the fact that it was the Western European Union that coordinated the European contribution to minesweeping and other functions in the Persian Gulf crisis of 1987.

It must be stressed, however, that this movement is for a stronger pillar to strengthen the Alliance, not a parallel arrangement outside the Alliance that would weaken it. The parallel alternative, which is occasionally discussed at least as a fallback position based on fears like Fillon's about American abandonment, is not acceptable to the Germans or the British, or even to official French policy. Indeed, the recent movement toward "pillarism" has been directly proportional to the weakening of "parallelism," and it is only after the initial zero-zero fears about U.S. decoupling began to subside that the West European movement began to take on new seriousness. None of this was very clear in Washington, however, where the

Reagan administration was schizophrenic about change within European NATO: One portion of the administration welcomed the pillar as a possible support for burden-sharing, while another deplored the potential parallelism (and perhaps the potential loss of American domination of the Alliance). What should still concern NATO advocates on both sides of the Atlantic, however, is that negative resonance, between Europeans who huddle together in fear and Americans who fear the huddling, could help turn the pillar into the parallel.

What movement has taken place is still highly symbolic. The circle has not been squared; the difference between the German desire for a full French commitment on the Elbe and the French reiteration of independent control over their nuclear weapons has not been resolved, nor have the other differences and suspicions between the two nations. The dilemma of the Franco-German brigade—how the German battalions can remain within the integrated NATO military structure while the French battalions stay outside—has been resolved by drawing the German component from territorial forces not under SACEUR's command; but this solution is not available for the active divisions that make up much the greatest part of the Federal Republic's forces.

Zero-zero has provided new impetus for movement in an area where movement had seemed to cease from 1983 to 1987. But the movement has also stopped short of solving those issues of doctrine and national interest that have thus far prevented it from going beyond symbolism. If, on the American side of the Atlantic, either the stasis of an election year or a sudden rush of international political wisdom should prevent further clumsy irritants and negative resonances, that may well slow down any further movement toward parallel structures.

- *The final fact is the one with which this Epilog began: The Soviet Union is changing. The change in Soviet external policy may be tactical or strategic, malign or benign in intent, good or bad for the good guys. It may be short or long run. But the indubitable fact is that change is taking place, fast.*

The Couplers and Maintainers sections on "The Opponent" indicated the breadth of the debate over the difference Gorbachev has made. What is beyond challenge is that he has made a difference. Soviet acceptance in 1987 of the changes that led to the zero-zero agreement—intrusive inspection and

extremely asymmetrical reductions, for example—were not predicted and, indeed, seemed impossible two years earlier. Nor is it likely, or even possible, that the Soviet Union will revert to the Brezhnev-Andropov-Chernenko era, any more than Brezhnev reverted to Stalin. Were Gorbachev to be overthrown by the military or by old-liners in the Communist Party, *perestroika*, restructuring, could not be re-restructured back to the 1970s. Externally, the “tough” Soviet policies that led to the SS-20s, which led (in part) to the INF, could return. But the economic failures and the political failures in Europe (the failure to prevent the installation of INF) and elsewhere (Afghanistan) would remain.

A Soviet return to overt hostility would have ironic implications for NATO. In many ways it would be comforting. The Alliance was built on Soviet hostility, and a return to such hostility might seem to facilitate a return on our side to the old familiar ways rather than the upsets of the last few years. Further, because the economic and political problems of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact would remain unsolved by the means that had failed to solve them in the past, the opponent's renewed hostility would be weakened. The trouble is that Europe “can't go home again.” The chief comfort for the West from the pre-Gorbachev Soviet Union was that, hostile as it might have been, it was clearly unwilling to go to war in Europe or, since the Berlin crises of the early 1960s, risk war. A renewed hostility, plus weakness, plus a new leadership anxious to restore Soviet positions could be a very dangerous combination. Innate Western conservatism has mourned the loss of the old pre-Gorbachev stabilities. But they *are* lost; a new conservatism should cherish the ostensibly nonhostile instabilities of the late 1980s, because hostile instabilities would be even worse.

Suppose that Gorbachev remains and continues to pursue his line of internal *perestroika* and external radical surprises. What are the implications for the West? The central theme must continue to be Christoph Bertram's caution about the Soviet Union's “profoundly ambiguous nature for a very long time to come.” It is difficult to think up changes in our negotiating positions or our unilateral postures that we should make even if we “trusted” the Soviets. Nor do those who advocate measures to strengthen Gorbachev's faction come up with specific proposals that depend on our ability to manipulate the internal dynamics of Soviet politics. Some of their arms control and

trade suggestions might be useful in any case, but not demonstrably for within-the-Kremlin political reasons. What difference, then, should the fact of Soviet change make for Western positions? The answer lies not in our postures but our preparations: *Soviet ambiguities should not allow us to accept what would otherwise be unacceptable; but Soviet activities should force us to treat seriously what was never serious before because it was never possible.* The agenda is wide open, and we should not again be caught with an arms control proposal such as zero-zero, put forth in the sure knowledge that it was unacceptable to the other side.

ADAPTATIONS

NATO's adaptations to the brave new world of post-zero-zero must take place in two arenas: within the Alliance and in the relationship between the Alliance and the Warsaw Pact. Together, they will be governed by the creation or the absence of Thomson's "viable security concept."

Within the Alliance

The discussion of within-the-Alliance adaptations starts with three premises about the next several years:

- The central premise is that whatever happens in negotiations with the Pact, and indeed whatever happens with or to Gorbachev, the Soviets will not turn very much *more* hostile than they had been in the Brezhnev-Andropov-Chernenko years.
- A Soviet reversion back only as far as the hostilities and suspicions of those years would be insufficient to relax the budgetary and other constraints on substantial increases in NATO capabilities; that would take at least a return to the real military threats that apparently ended with the Berlin and Cuban crises of the early 1960s.
- The current sort of "benign" Soviet attitudes will not call forth within-Alliance responses greatly different from those that would have been produced by Brezhnev-style hostility; Western suspicions about the Soviets remain too great, and shifts in NATO posture will depend on the translation of Soviet attitudes into acceptable mutual arms control agreements.

Given these three premises, one major pressure and one powerful constraint will govern NATO's unilateral adaptations to zero-zero. The pressure is the fear, felt mostly in Europe but shared resonantly by many American Maintainers, that zero-zero removes part of NATO's nuclear counterbalance to the Pact's strong conventional superiority, thus leaving us dangerously exposed at the lower levels. The West Europeans further fear that the United States will strip away more of the links that couple conventional defense to the American strategic nuclear deterrent; this fear is not widely shared in the United States. The constraint on both sides of the Atlantic, however, is that neither the budgets nor the economies of the United States or the European members of the Alliance will permit substantial expenditure increases to correct the new exposures stemming from zero-zero.

The zero-zero pressure may call for two types of unilateral Alliance adaptations within the budgetary constraints: restoration to NATO of some of the nuclear capability lessened by removal of the INF missiles and reduction of the conventional imbalance by increasing the capabilities of the Alliance.

On the nuclear side, several proposals are based on reposturing of American weapons:

- Replacing the land-based INF missiles with sea-based cruise missiles with ranges that can reach the USSR, dedicated to NATO and under the control of SACEUR (insofar as the INF missiles and other American nuclear weapons have been under the control of SACEUR, which means under the ultimate control of the president of the United States).⁵
- More dependence on nuclear-capable aircraft, particularly the F-111, based in Europe. This is likely to run up against the arms control objection to dual-capable aircraft: Controlling escalation will be difficult if an F-111 can take off in times of crisis or conventional combat without the enemy knowing whether it is carrying a conventional or nuclear load.

Other proposals involve British and French weapons:

- Some of these are vague or symbolic. The Franco-British discussions of targeting, for example, are partly in response to the impetus of zero-zero, but how they would relate to the replacement of the INF deterrent is unclear.

⁵See, for example, Christoph Bertram, "Trade Europe's Land Missiles for Seaborne," *Los Angeles Times*, May 11, 1987, Section II, p. 5.

- Some are more concrete but quite uncertain and long run. The French, for example, are developing an aircraft-carried missile called *Air-Sol de Moyen Portée* (Air-Ground Middle Range), and there is some talk of building into *Longue Portée*, long enough to reach the Soviet Union, possibly in collaboration with the British.
- Some are more radical, for example Jean d'Aubach's proposal for "juxtaposition' of the French and British capabilities."⁶ Their radicalism makes them unlikely except perhaps under some combination of renewed Soviet hostility and substantial U.S. withdrawal. They will become even less likely as West Europeans realize that zero-zero is not necessarily or particularly the first step down the "slippery slope" to full denuclearization of the American commitment.

One proposal not heard from European Couplers is for an independent German nuclear capability; the only debaters to suggest this are American Withdrawers such as Layne. The Germans do, however, impose constraints on solutions designed to compensate for the deterrent loss of INF. For one thing, they oppose missiles with ranges so short that, launched from West Germany or its allies beyond the Rhine, they can only fall on Germans of the Federal Republic or the Democratic Republic. This has some important implications for arms control negotiations; so far as unilateral Alliance posture is concerned, it would preclude any buildup of short-range nuclear systems to compensate for the loss of the intermediate-range missiles. This would be unlikely in any case, however: Couplers as well as Maintainers generally agree with Congressman Aspin that the short-range weapons are the least stable; independently of zero-zero, the Alliance has moved toward cutting back at least on nuclear artillery and mines.

In addition, German government and other Coupler fears of the peace movement make very unlikely *any* compensatory buildup of new or new-seeming nuclear weapons that could provide a visible symbol around which the movement could mount demonstrations like those in opposition to the original installation of the Pershing II missiles in the early 1980s. This is a major reason for failure, during the early-1987 negotiations over the Short-Range Intermediate Nuclear Force category in which the Soviets had many missiles and NATO had almost none, of the proposal by some CDU Germans for NATO to build up toward some agreed ceiling rather than zeroing out the category on both sides. The CDU did not want to face the internal political consequences of an

⁶See p. 46.

arms control agreement that increased nuclear weapons. And it is why similar post-zero-zero compensation is unlikely.

What remains for unilateral Alliance nuclear compensation for the assumed loss of INF deterrence within the political, budgetary, and other constraints is largely symbolic. It may include sea-launched missiles dedicated to NATO and capable of reaching Soviet territory, but it is unlikely to include vessels or missiles that were not on the water or the drawing board anyhow. It may include aircraft, but it seems unlikely to include aircraft with major new nuclear delivery capabilities, at least not based in Germany. And in any case, such unilateral compensation may well be overtaken by new arms control proposals and perhaps agreements.

The possibilities for unilateral restoration of the conventional balance may be less constrained politically than the nuclear possibilities, but they are more constrained by economics. The importance of increased conventional capabilities has been recognized since 1952, the budgetary constraints have been recognized just as long, and this part of the debate has changed very little. The several pre- and post-zero-zero quotations from General Rogers and others advocating increases fall within a classic NATO literary genre. And unless the taxpaying electorates of the NATO nations become far more frightened of the Soviet military threat than they have been in recent years, they will continue to come to naught.

Some of the suggested budget-constrained solutions—the technological changes, the deep strategies, and the defensive ones—have been discussed. In general, no breakthroughs of strategic conceptualization seem likely, and most expert analysis treats the technological possibilities in terms of jam tomorrow, but never today. Perhaps Western science and engineering can right the conventional balance within fixed budgets, but at best the case is not proven.

Similar constrained possibilities for conventional improvements lie in the mild post-zero-zero acceleration of Franco-German cooperation. The cooperation does little to relax the budget constraints; the French have increased military budgets, but the lion's share has gone to improvement and modernization of their nuclear forces. Joint Franco-German planning may lead to greater military effectiveness, but that would be marginal and could be counteracted by the failure to mesh semi-integrated Franco-German forces into the integrated NATO effort. And although sub rosa reintegration of French forces, were it possible, would surely increase the Alliance's conventional capabilities, most of the computations that still lead to unfavorable estimates of the balance have already counted French forces.

The most serious aspect of Franco-German cooperation may lie in the prospective realm of "What if American troops did leave?" The one surest effect of zero-zero on the conventional balance, however, has been the resonant delaying of any potential drawdowns of U.S. forces. After the 1984 defeat of the Nunn Amendment, the pressure became less; and in April 1987 Senator Nunn announced himself conditionally satisfied about progress to date.⁷ But both Nunn's spring statement and the similarly timed resolution of the House of Representatives eschewing withdrawals from Europe were conditioned by Maintainer resonance to the initial strong negative reactions of the West Europeans to zero-zero. Predictably, budgetary and economic pressures will renew the drive within the United States for more European burden-sharing or American drawdowns in Europe; they are likely to strengthen in the new administration if the arms control dynamic has not superseded the unilateral pressures. But perhaps the most important effect of zero-zero in improving the conventional balance has been some postponement of any American moves that could have caused further deterioration.

The prospects for unilateral NATO restoration of the nuclear-conventional deterrent balance disturbed by zero-zero thus do not appear very promising. It might be argued that the disturbance has been trivial—that deterrence was overwhelming before zero-zero and remains overwhelming after. In fact, that argument will be made in the final, most opinionated, portion of this Epilog. This does not imply that we should cease striving for better deterrence or more stability, but substantial unilateral measures seem unlikely.

Arms Control

That leaves arms control. A frequently heard view is that stated by U.S. Ambassador to the Federal Republic Richard Burt: "Arms control cannot in itself redress the imbalance of conventional forces in Europe."⁸ The trouble is that arms control may not be *the* solution, but it may be the *only* solution. The prospects for unilateral solutions seem so thin that even if Burt is right, arms control may be the worst solution except for all the others, to paraphrase Churchill.

Post-zero-zero arms control possibilities fall into three categories. Controls on U.S. and Soviet strategic missiles are outside the scope of this analysis, but they do have an important implication for NATO.

⁷See p. 118.

⁸Richard R. Burt, "An Increased Emphasis on Conventional Forces: Problems and Possibilities," in Thomson and Nerlich.

To the extent that the negotiations, revolving around 50 percent reductions in offensive missiles and trades against SDI, take the center stage after the signing of zero-zero, the pressure will be off immediate next steps in Europe. This will enable almost all Couplers and most Maintainers to breathe a sigh of relief; NATO officials and analysts would like the time to think about the more complex military and political issues of arms controls in Europe. As has been suggested, the American electoral calendar may also help provide that time; how well it will be used is another issue.

The other two arms control categories, parallel to those for unilateral actions, cover nuclear and conventional controls in Europe. (Controls on chemical weapons, sometimes considered separately, are subsumed here in the conventional category. Both sides apparently want such controls, but major technical problems of verification must be solved.)

In the nuclear realm, it is not clear what controls might come next. From the NATO viewpoint, fears of sliding down the slippery slope to denuclearization might suggest that the best additional controls in the immediate post-zero-zero future would be no additional controls, other than some unilateral winnowing out of short-range systems for stability purposes. In addition, many in NATO want to negotiate controls on short-range nuclear weapons in conjunction with conventional arms controls.

Things are not that simple, however. For many reasons, the Germans in particular want to press on, and have proposed negotiations in the next lowest range category. (The zero-zero agreement does away with all missiles in Europe down to 500 kilometers in range; the next lowest takes it down to 100. The German proposal is sometimes characterized as a "third zero," but in fact it is for a thinning out in that range, not a zeroing out.) One reason for the German thrust is purely political: In 1987, the CDU lost several elections in the states, partly, they believe, because of Chancellor Kohl's dragging his feet on zero-zero, and the party and the Chancellor want to seize the initiative on arms control. In addition, there is real concern among many in the Federal Republic that the remaining missiles in Europe can fall only on East or West Germans: "The shorter the range, the deader the Germans." But many German officials and analysts subordinate that argument to the point that the existing balance in that range category strongly favors the Warsaw Pact, and reductions would thus serve NATO's interests. What is contemplated is a negotiated rebalancing in the down-to-100 range, a unilateral winnowing below that level, and more deterrent stress on the F-111s and perhaps sea-based missiles. The German position has concerned some others in the West because

it seems to be avoiding denuclearization by denuclearizing, but that is in part because of the incorrect belief that what is being proposed is the third zero.

Some Couplers on the German left still suggest denuclearized zones, but these proposals received no new impetus from zero-zero and are not being considered by current NATO governments. In addition, in his Brussels speech Senator Nunn mentioned a tradeoff of a nuclear No First Use pledge by NATO against a breaking up of major tank concentrations by the Warsaw Pact,⁹ but this was apparently intended primarily rhetorically and has not been taken as seriously as the conventional arms control proposals in the same speech. In general, outside of Germany, the attitude of Couplers and Maintainers alike has been that it might be best to digest zero-zero before moving on to additional nuclear controls in Europe.

The feeling has been quite different on conventional controls. For one thing, the possibility of having to respond to major Soviet proposals or even unilateral withdrawals of one sort or another, soon after completion of zero-zero, has concentrated more attention in this area. More important, however, the added stress put on the conventional imbalance by the perceived lessening of nuclear deterrence due to zero-zero, plus the thought that in the Gorbachev era agreements to help right the balance might just be possible, have led many in NATO to treat conventional controls far more seriously than in the past.

First, however, it has been necessary for NATO to get its own bureaucratic act together. Before 1987, negotiations over conventional controls in Europe took place in two different and partially competing arenas. In Vienna, starting in 1973, leisurely discussions over force reductions had kept many diplomats and bureaucrats engaged in a pleasant atmosphere, without going anywhere. These negotiations were "bloc-to-bloc" between the Alliance and the Pact, and as such were eschewed by the French who did not wish to be considered part of the NATO bloc. Starting somewhat later, Stockholm hosted multi-country negotiations on "confidence-building" controls (rather than reductions) over conventional weapons. These did bring about some small but important agreements, particularly concerning observations of maneuvers. The zero-zero prod toward real consideration of force reductions as well as other controls, however, has led NATO to attempt to put together a unified "mandate" about what to talk about and where, as well as a unified position on the substance of the controls.

⁹Nunn, Speech to the DMS Symposium.

The Alliance has arrived at no substantive position, but the debate has opened. In the initial stages it has not divided Couplers from Maintainers. Both schools include debaters who emphasize the possibilities for conventional controls, and both include debaters who emphasize the dangers and constraints; both contain Sovietologists who stress the Kremlin's real need for cutbacks, and both contain Sovietologists who stress their tactical use of negotiations. All this is as it was before zero-zero. What is new, however, is the belief that it might happen this time, and it had better be taken seriously.

The opening debate has produced opening proposals. One of the earliest and best-known was that made by Senator Nunn in the same Brussels speech. He suggested a 50 percent reduction in U.S. and Soviet forces deployed on the territory of their allies; because the Soviets had many more such, this would amount to an asymmetric reduction of something like two American divisions against 13 differently structured and smaller Soviet divisions. These forces were to be drawn far enough back that it would take equal time for them to redeploy back to their previous positions.¹⁰ The speech also discussed a chemical weapons ban and the need for verification. The Nunn concept was later provided with hypothetical detail (without consultation with the Senator) by defense analyst Philip Karber who, strikingly for someone who had previously concentrated on NATO's conventional needs, waxed enthusiastic about what he saw as changed Soviet positions that "would have been hailed as a breakthrough if raised during the 13 fruitless years of the preceding Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction negotiations."¹¹ Karber's elaboration of the Nunn plan covered manpower, tanks, artillery and other weapons, distances of withdrawal, details of verification, and so forth. The details themselves were not crucial at this stage; what is important is that first-string analysts of conventional defenses had begun to analyze such details.

Another such effort, widely circulated throughout NATO, was by James Thomson and Nanette Gantz of RAND, who suggested that "substantially asymmetrical" Warsaw Pact and NATO reductions would be necessary to avoid worsening the conventional balance. Their estimated breakeven point was a 5:1 ratio of Pact to NATO reductions, based on the existing 1987 balance. Even a 4:1 or 3:1 ratio, according to their calculations, would actually turn the balance even further against the Alliance than it had been up until that time. Further, initial reductions should be large; small asymmetrical reductions would not help. All of these estimates were applied to "division equivalents,"

¹⁰Nunn, Speech to the DMS Symposium, pp. 12-13.

¹¹Philip A. Karber, "Conventional Arms Control Options," in Thomson and Nerlich.

taking account of the differences in what NATO and the Pact include in a ground-forces division; Thomson and Gantz also stressed the importance of tanks and artillery.¹²

The 5:1 ratio for NATO and Pact reductions is consistent with Nunn's differently calculated 13:2 for U.S. and Soviet forces. The Thomson-Gantz report was hardly noncontroversial, however. Although asymmetry had been a feature of the zero-zero agreement, Thomson himself suggested that the Soviets were unlikely to accept such overbalanced proposals at the conventional level. This induced both a State Department response that we should try anyhow (with which Thomson would not disagree), and a comment by Jonathan Dean that he was too pessimistic.¹³ Many more calculations remained to be done before a Western position aimed at stabilizing the conventional balance in Europe could be designed to compensate for whatever loss of deterrence had stemmed from zero-zero. And, after the Western position was designed and agreed to by the allies, negotiations with the opponent could then begin.

CONCLUSION

Where, then, should we be going? Some of my views may be clear from the foregoing discussion, in which I have made less of an attempt at objectivity than in the analysis in the previous sections. Four central assertions summarize the viewpoint:

- The security of Western Europe is quite safe and stable after zero-zero; it was quite safe and stable before zero-zero. The Soviet military threat and even the political shadow of "Finlandization" are and have been extremely remote. Under Khrushchev, under Brezhnev, and under Gorbachev, this security has been based largely on "existential" nuclear deterrence—on the Soviet fear that so long as nuclear weapons existed in Western arsenals, the risk of escalation was too great to allow *any* military adventurism that might threaten Western Europe. In spite of the American Withdrawers, neither the current administration nor any electable next administration has any intention of proceeding down the slope to denuclearization of Europe, and existential deterrence will remain. It might

¹²James A. Thomson and Nanette C. Gantz, *Conventional Arms Control Revisited: Objectives in the New Phase*, The RAND Corporation, N-2697-AF, December 1987, p. 13.

¹³See "Study Says Troop Pact Is Not Likely," *New York Times*, November 12, 1987, p. 3.

well remain anyhow, based on the U.S. strategic nuclear capability, even if no American weapons were on European soil; it might remain, based on British and French weapons, even if the United States dissociated itself completely from NATO.

- West European safety and stability are safest and most stable within NATO, however; and the United States belongs within the Alliance for reasons of both national interest and national empathy. In spite of the strong statements about existentialism made in the last paragraph, European nervousness about self-preservation is understandable. The Alliance *is* subjective, and this subjectivity is important and important to understand. That “resonance” governs much of the Maintainer reaction to Europe and much of the Coupler reaction to the United States is no bad thing. If the Alliance is central to European stability, and if European stability is an American vital interest, then a lot of effort on both sides of the Atlantic should be going into preserving the Alliance.
- On the American side, this effort should include both a continued nuclear commitment manifested in ways clearly understood by our allies and our adversary, and a continued substantial troop presence on the continent. On the European side, it should include both a relaxation of the regular pressures on the United States to express its commitment by the particular symbolic gesture of the year, and an understanding that not every change in nuclear or conventional posture is a first slide down one or another slippery slope.
- Gorbachev makes a difference. His seductive advances to the West may not be sincere, or his colleagues may inhibit him, or they may ultimately remove him. Even so, it would be very difficult for the Soviets to get back to where they were. Were they to try, economics might make them less of a threat than they were before. A weak, hostile, heavily armed Soviet Union, however, might be very dangerous. The only sure thing is change. None of this suggests that we should “trust” the Soviets any more than we did before. We should not arrive at agreements that depend in any substantial measure on such trust. And we should know by now that we are far too clumsy to “help” Gorbachev by playing internal Kremlin politics; we should have learned something by trying to play internal Iranian politics. Soviet changes may mean that substantial new opportunities are opening for the kinds of agreements that we have ostensibly been striving for for 35 years—agreements that do not depend on trust and that are based on the asymmetrical reductions we

require. Such agreements can provide stronger and cheaper guarantees for West European security and American interests.

We need time to digest zero-zero, and the American presidential election may give us this time. What *should* be done with that time is sober and serious Alliance consideration of what we want from negotiations with the Soviets, and how we might get it. What *should not* be done with that time is shouting across the Atlantic, negative resonance building into a crescendo that could make the Alliance into a victim of its own paranoia and a potential victim of Soviet exploitation. Such amplifying negative resonance seemed to be starting during the early part of the 1987 zero-zero negotiations; it seemed to die down after the *fait accompli*, but it could return. In particular, although all sides recognize the need for a stronger European pillar for the Alliance, neither European rhetoric about the need for a parallel alliance because of American unreliability nor U.S. reactions that treat pillar-building as inherently anti-American are very helpful.

One specifically American contribution to Alliance comity would be to keep NATO out of the 1988 presidential campaign. It may be that in the next years, economic pressures will force a drawdown of American troops in Europe or a substantial resharing of the burdens. It may also be, however, that burdens can be reduced through negotiations between the Alliance and the Pact. That can best be explored under a new American presidency. It can best be explored if the "officials and analysts" whom this report is about use 1988 and part of 1989 to figure out where the United States and the other Alliance partners should be going from here.

My own bottom line is that it is entirely possible, and even likely, that the Soviets are open to agreements that enhance the security of both sides. If so, the process—understandably worrisome to those who see the structures that have provided peace and stability for the last 25 years suddenly changing—could nonetheless end up being exhilarating. If not, and if we exert proper care, neither the Alliance nor East-West stability need suffer. In either case, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization will remain a necessary keystone for many years.

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