NATO

Problems and Prospects

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SOVEREIGNTY

Limitations and Leadership Problems

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SOVEREIGNTY—LIMITATIONS AND LEADERSHIP PROBLEMS

Limiting Factors in Sovereignty

Except for birth and death, most everything in life is a matter of degree. There is always someone richer, handsomer, and cleverer than we; there is always someone less favored than we. This also holds for international life. In theory, the distinction between sovereign and subject, between a state's absolute right to do what it pleases and a people's submission to a writ which is not its own, is as sharp as a razor. All member states of the United Nations are sovereign. The United Nations Charter, although it assigns special privileges to a small elite in the Security Council, does not quibble on the one indispensible qualification for admission, namely the exercise of national sovereignty. Under the law of the United Nations, every member is every other member's peer. For national sovereignty, like Gertrude Stein's rose, is what it is. If it is not exactly what it is, then it is nothing.

One need only to step outside of the United Nations or, for that matter, into the lobbies and corridors bounding its tiered chambers to discover that some members behave as if they were more sovereign, and others as if they were less sovereign, than they are supposed to be inside. In theory, there is only one standard unit of measurement. In practice, there are about as many kinds of sovereignty as there are states.

Obviously, there exists among nations a great inequality in the exercise of sovereignty. Most every laborer in the diplomatic vineyard knows that nowadays the overwhelming majority of states are

beholden for their sovereign status to the self-restraint of a few mighty ones among them—and hence to the prevailing balance of power. Some national sovereignties exist only by courtesy of the United Nations, the Ukraine and Byelorussia being the most flagrant though not the only examples. One need not be endowed with second sight to predict the fortunes of the 120 odd national sovereignties which now elbow one another upon the globe, if the present balance of world power were to be upset by some cataclysmic event. Let us assume that the United States had vanished from the international scene, would then any state care to contest the Soviet Union's interpretation of national sovereignty?

Even the most powerful states do not always enjoy the undiluted blessings of sovereignty. Perhaps the most familiar symbol of United States sovereignty is the dollar. Yet, countries far less powerful than the United States can, if they so choose, subvert U.S. sovereignty in fiscal and monetary matters. France, West Germany, and Japan, if they decided to withdraw their gold holdings from Fort Knox and liquidate their dollar credits, could abridge the most sovereign of all the sovereign rights of the United States, namely to manage its domestic finances: they could knock down the dollar and plunge the domestic economy of the United States into a severe inflationary crisis. Moreover, they could wreak such a disaster without contravening international law. Thus, the sovereignty of even so great a country as the United States is not as unlimited as, according to Webster's dictionary, it is supposed to be. The more closely we look at sovereignty, the more shadowy grow its features. Yet, we cannot do without it. Sovereignty is one of those indispensable concepts without which we can neither analyze nor operate the international system. All states, even the pseudo-states within the communist bloc, act *as if* national sovereignty were the standard unit of international relations. De la Rochefoucauld said that hypocrisy is the compliment which vice pays to virtue. Even the most aggressive and savage states tend to respect, at least by the

gestures of their formal diplomacy and by their demeanor in the open sessions of the United Nations, the national sovereignty of other states. Their hypocrisy pays homage to the ideal of international legality. Their pretense might be worth little; it is better than nothing.

Sovereignty, like the doctrine of free will, comes to life only within the context of limiting conditions. To be truly sovereign is to be able to do what one pleases. No prince has ever been able to do quite that; no sovereign people can do quite that now.

Effect of Alliances on Sovereignty

The most effective international organizations of our times are standing alliances endowed with permanent secretariats and other durable devices for deliberation and coordination. These coalitions—NATO, the Organization of American States, SEATO, the Warsaw Pact and the Arab League—differ considerably from one another as regards their contractual arrangements for the military and political cooperation of their respective members. In each, the members have subordinated their national sovereignty to the collective purpose. True, this is a matter of degree, and the members, availing themselves of their sovereignty, can quit the alliance whenever they choose. But, abrogating an alliance is always a troublesome business, especially for democratic countries. In the latter, the conclusion of an alliance is usually preceded by fulsome, official statements pointing out the benefits to be derived from teaming up with like-and-right-minded people. In the United States, for example, it is said that foreign treaties duly ratified and signed, become "the law of the land." Among foreign treaties, pacts of alliance are vested with special solemnity. Thus, a democratic government can disengage itself from an alliance, as long as the alliance partner has not grossly violated his pledge, at the risk only of injurious public criticism. For example, Daladier's desertion of Czechoslovakia shook the Third Republic to its foundations and

engendered that moral disintegration which proved to be the Nazis' strongest ally in their conquest of France.

A country's trustworthiness as an ally is its most precious asset in foreign policy. In this century, Italy ratted twice on her alliance obligations. The low regard in which she is held to this day in international politics, though well deserved, deeply rankles her people and underlies her national inferiority complex which, at various occasions, has diminished her status and influence in the council of nations. Thus, an alliance does mortgage national sovereignty. It is easier to contract in than to "contract out."

The Credit Side of NATO

No alliance of modern times represents as large an investment in political good will as does NATO. Never in peace time has as much collective and costly effort gone into the caring and feeding of an alliance. These facts as well as timeless historical experience weigh heavily upon proposals for strengthening or overhauling, not to speak of liquidating the Atlantic alliance. For better or worse, NATO represents the one and only concrete token of Western unity. The strains upon the alliance have been many. They have opened large cracks. The West's roof is leaking. It is the only roof the West has got. So intense and, in certain quarters, so morbid has become the preoccupation with NATO's weaknesses and failures that Western publics now tend to give scant attention to NATO's shining achievements. NATO has been strong enough to persuade the Soviet Union not to test its weaknesses. Not so surprisingly, the Soviet Union has let it be known that it never intended to do so anyway. Be that as it may, the Communists, who elsewhere kept on gaining ground, have not made any territorial advances in Europe and have confined their offensive against the European *status quo* to non-violent strategems. Furthermore, the Soviets, contained in Europe, have not been able to compensate

for the chronic malfunction of their domestic economy by valuable foreign conquests. Confined to Russia and Eastern Europe, the Soviets have been forced to live at home. And no worse fate can befall the Communists. Thus kept from capturing the great industrial establishments of Europe—especially Germany, which Lenin acclaimed as the greatest prize of world revolution—the Soviet had to yield to the Chinese a good deal of the initiative in revolutionary ventures. It is this circumstance more than any other which has aggravated the tensions within the communist bloc. NATO can claim the lion's share in the causation of the Sino-Soviet split. Incidentally, it should be obvious that Western gains which might accrue from the fight within the World Communist Party, will be quickly dissipated if NATO, the true author of the Moscow/Peking controversy, were to fall apart.

Shortcomings in NATO

The Communists have been making hay only in those fields which are not specifically covered by the writ of NATO. Wherever the sovereign states of the West do not stand together, communists have either gained ground or, at least, remained on the offensive. This simple fact has been illustrated so richly by global experience from 1949 to this day that one wonders at what precisely those who vow their devotion to the ideal of world order and propose for its realization all kinds of alternatives—except the preservation and strengthening of NATO—have been reading in the papers.

Public Relations

The present and growing confusion about the Atlantic alliance has been heightened by the West's signal failure in the field of public relations. Western promotional genius which can sell virtually anybody on anything from brassieres to bulldozers to better mousetraps, has

been remarkably awkward and listless in promoting the goodness of NATO. The reasons for this fiasco are many. Suffice that infatuation with global togetherness paradoxically teamed with parochial nationalism, has reduced the powerful voices of Western publicity and information, when they speak of NATO at all, to an incoherent stutter.

It is generally agreed among experts on publicity that, given a chance, a good product sells itself. The only plausible explanation for NATO's troubles in gaining public acceptance is that NATO, though good, is not good enough. Indeed, the image of NATO has been marred by several flaws which, with the passage of years, have become more noticeable and disconcerting.

NATO, born as a military alliance, has not been able to develop into a more highly differentiated organism—and this notwithstanding the fact that the Atlantic Pact envisaged the growing together of the organs performing the military function with those serving the political and economic purposes of the Atlantic community. The military stigma has estranged from NATO those large sectors of Western public opinion who like to think of themselves as constructively progressive minded. Diminishing public support now makes it all the more difficult for NATO to remedy the very imperfections which are responsible for its low popularity rating.

Differing National Interests

The most grievous imperfection of NATO is one which sooner or later pains every alliance: the national interests of the members differ from one another. In 1949, the alliance would not have been concluded, then and there, had these differing interests not been smothered by common overriding purpose. But, over time—and NATO is one of the longest lived alliances of modern history—differing national interests reassert themselves. So they must—if for no other reason

but geography and history. It is difficult to translate Turkey's traditional hostility towards Russia into the code of Portuguese and Icelandic foreign policy. West Germany's economic stake in East Germany, not to speak of her people's emotional commitment to their enslaved fellow countrymen, cannot be equated with, let us say, Britain's irrepressible quest for foreign markets including any and all Communist ones. These geographical-historical disparities grow even sharper when traditional regional concerns of a member supersede his strategic commitments to NATO. French and British policy in the Suez crisis is a case in point. France fought her war in Algeria against the better judgment and without the support of her strongest NATO allies. In their predicament, the French derived little solace from, for example, the American interpretation of the Atlantic Pact's specific guarantee of the security of French Algeria, and the vocal advocacy by high placed Americans of the rebel cause. Yet, France could point to unassailable evidence of foreign intervention, Tunisian, Moroccan and Egyptian, not to speak of massive arms shipment to the rebels from East European ports. Suffice, France's allies chose to cleave to the letter rather than to the spirit of the alliance treaty. Although a good case can be made that Cuba is situated in NATO waters, the United States dealt unilaterally with Soviet presence on that island, a presence which, incidentally, might have been spared the Cubans and us had the Atlantic Pact defined more specifically the breadth and width of the North Atlantic waters. Although all European NATO members professed themselves satisfied with the outcome of the missile crisis, not all were pleased with having been "informed" rather than "consulted."

The very fact that the members of an alliance are, by necessity, domiciled in various geographical localities, makes it unavoidable that they see issues confronting the alliance as a whole in differing perspectives. Far from abnormal, this is perfectly natural. Differences

in geographical perspectives may divide the people of one and the same alliance member. Thus, for example, during World War II, the general public of the West Coast was far more concerned with fighting the war against Japan than with fighting the Germans. Thanks to strong leadership and a deeply rooted national consensus, these differences in geographical outlook were not allowed to hamper the American war effort and to weaken the coalition against Hitler. Thus, what might be called the locational strains on NATO are inherent in the vast geographical scope of the alliance. That these strains have not, thus far, damaged irreparably the alliance is largely due to the high value which, in their foreign policies, individual members have consistently assigned to their good standing in the alliance.

Unfortunately, the leader of the alliance, namely the United States, on many an occasion, has shown itself incapable of performing the simplest operation in international psychology, namely imagining oneself in someone else's place.

Western Europe consists of several narrow, densely populated peninsulas, rooted in the Eurasian land mass. As seen from these promontories, the vast Soviet bloc appears in perspectives which differ markedly from those visible to American eyes. In part, at least, the American-European controversy over NATO strategy, and especially over the control and possession of nuclear weapons, has been exacerbated by the conspicuous lack of empathy for Europe's geographical consciousness reflected by American diplomacy. It is difficult for Europeans to conceive of nuclear weapons, even low yield and tactical ones, as other than area weapons. The neat hypotheses of controlled response to Soviet aggression, aesthetically satisfying as they might be to the sophisticates in the Pentagon, do not quite still the doubts of the Europeans, acutely and uncomfortably aware of their close exposure to Soviet might. Since a Soviet nuclear attack upon

Western Europe could not help but be indiscriminate, European military thought has been drawn to the extreme ends of the strategic spectrum: the removal of all nuclear weapons from European soil, culminating in the neutralization of Europe, or the build-up of an indigenous nuclear force chiefly designed for wreaking punishment upon Soviet cities. Both of these conceptions may lack those finer shadings which grace American strategy, complexly poised between the concepts of counterforce and of finite deterrence. Yet, to the peoples crowded into peninsular Europe, they seem more convincing than do the more subtle arguments of the official spokesmen of America, a country far less densely settled and five times the size of Western Europe. This European feeling of being more exposed and more vulnerable to Soviet nuclear power, irrational as it might seem to American military logicians, explains a good deal, though not everything, about the "Ban the Bombers" in Britain on the one hand, and the popular appeal of de Gaulle's intransigence in the face of American homilies on the folly of nuclear proliferation.

Optimum Size of Alliances

Although no one has been able to define the optimum size of alliances—just as no one has been able to define the objective optimum conditions for marriage—it is obvious that NATO could function more efficiently if its membership were less numerous.

When NATO was formed, the size of its membership was determined by strategic and political considerations which then seemed perfectly valid. What mattered then was to obtain the largest possible area coverage from the Lincoln Sea to Cape St. Vincent and to Lake Van in Turkey and from there all the way north to the North Cape. In order to assemble this vast agglomerate of bases, staging areas, and forward positions, and to block all kinds of conceivable Soviet thrusts,

the architect of the alliance, i.e. the United States, fitted the whole together from all kinds of building blocks which differed widely in size and quality. A fairly wide gap separates, for example, Norway, Iceland and Portugal on one hand, and Greece and Turkey on the other as regards their strategic importance, contribution and even psychological commitment to the alliance. This particular deficiency of NATO is generic, and, as long as the alliance remains politically as amorphous as it has been since its creation, incurable. It has greatly complicated the alliance diplomacy of the United States: to retain the cooperation, mostly passive, of the non dues-paying members of NATO, the United States has incurred considerable financial expenses, unrequited by commensurate returns to the military strength of the alliance. Not the least unfortunate aspect of this problem has been its destabilizing effect upon the American diplomatic psyche: at times, the United States, harassed by the pusillanimity of its lesser allies has hectored the NATO Council with the arbitrariness of an irritable schoolmaster. Thus, in turn, United States conduct has engendered psychological tensions which have contributed as much to the malaise of NATO as have the controversies over the proper place and the control of nuclear weapons in NATO strategy.

Views of General de Gaulle

President de Gaulle's proposal for a Tripartite Directorate in NATO, advanced shortly upon his accession to power in 1958, registered France's claim to a share in the leadership of the alliance. De Gaulle spoke for France. Yet, he also voiced publicly and vigorously what the other alliance members had felt for a long time and, cowed by the United States, had not dared to express unequivocally, namely that the alliance consisted of several categories of members and the United States belonged to a category all its own. The short shrift

given by the United States to President de Gaulle's proposal merely confirmed this impression.

Explicitly, the French President addressed his proposal for the informal reorganization of NATO to a long standing and increasingly more obvious shortcoming of NATO, namely the haphazard limitation of its geographical scope. For the United States, NATO signified—and still signifies to this day—the defense of Europe against Soviet military aggression. Ever since NATO was established, some of the most serious threats to the national interests of certain members and to Western Europe as a whole have been posed not by Soviet military power deployed along the Iron Curtain but by developments in other parts of the world, notably South Asia and Africa, not specifically covered by the Atlantic Pact. Surely, the Mediterranean is as much a European as it is an African and an Asian Sea. Yet, NATO has ignored discreetly the goings-on in Algeria and Cyprus, not to speak of the rambunctious behavior at the West's expense of various Arab leaders. However, a good case can be made for the contention that the various North African and Middle Eastern crises were actually touched off by the Communists, or at least kept going by war materiel supplied by the Soviet bloc.

Long before de Gaulle appointed himself the spokesman of non-Anglo-Saxon Europe, other West European statesmen had argued that most anything of importance which happens in South and East Asia and in Africa, concerns NATO Europe as much as it does NATO America. Over the years, NATO has developed all kinds of common positions on such matters as force goals and even so ticklish an issue as the defense of West Berlin. Yet, NATO has never agreed on the most rudimentary common approach to such problems as decolonization and the West's residual interests in Asia and Africa. Certainly, Holland, Belgium and Portugal have not found membership in NATO a precious

boon in their dealings with their colonial or ex-colonial wards. To the contrary, with pained surprise, they have watched their NATO ally, the United States, disassociate itself from what they deemed to be their legitimate interests. Nor were they consoled by the fact that the United States, rather than backing them in their troubles overseas, referred them to the United Nations. Invariably, they met with an unsympathetic reception. Rejecting the charge of having ditched its unhappy NATO allies, the United States has pointed to its wider international commitments such as its undivided responsibilities in East Asia, its unique role as the wielder of the nuclear deterrent, and its *de facto* custodianship of the United Nations. Although there is a great deal of truth in the American apology for an independent course in extra-NATO matters, it is not all of the truth.

Inevitably, America's dual role as the leading member of NATO and as the greatest independent world power is fraught with ambiguity. To play this role convincingly, more is needed than mere diplomatic virtuosity, namely a fine discrimination between those things that must come first and those that must come second. What, in the judgment of the United States, comes first: the making of the Atlantic Community, or the bouquets handed by the Afro-Asians to the United States whenever, in the name of anti-colonialism, it sides against a NATO member? More specifically, what comes first: the increased military strength and closer political cohesiveness of NATO, or the United States' quest for a détente with the Soviet Union? Is it not these unanswered questions rather than the idiosyncrasies of individual statesmen which have given rise to the current and gravest crisis of NATO? If, since 1949, nothing had changed in the NATO circle and the world outside, these unanswered questions could be shoved back under the great diplomatic rug. Instead, they are now in a fair way of wrecking the great alliance.

Other Leadership Problems

Although U.S. diplomacy has been slow in taking cognizance of it, the world has changed and the United States has changed with it. The Europeans, a threadbare lot in 1949, have become richer; the dollar has become less influential in international economics; nuclear weapons have become not only more destructive but also more available; Soviet capabilities of annihilation have become more formidable; and, despite intra-bloc controversies, the presence of communism has become more ubiquitous than it has ever been. Not all of these developments may have been foreseeable; some of them were. To govern is to foresee. It *was* foreseeable that an alliance as hastily assembled and as oddly assorted as NATO depended upon the exercise of inspired leadership and organizational ingenuity for its survival. For a while, the stuff was malleable. Capable hands could have pressed it into an enduring mould. For a while—during the Golden 'Fifties—the United States could have shaped the Atlantic alliance into its own image, a "wider union." If this had been the American purpose, no one in Europe could have gainsaid it. To be sure, such American purpose could have been accomplished only if the United States had cared to surrender certain of its sovereign rights in exchange for the place of first among equals in the Atlantic Community. Then, a gesture might have sufficed. In all essential matters, the vote cast by the United States would have decided the issue before the Federation's Council. It can be argued that only the form, but not the substance of NATO would have been changed. Under any and all then conceivable arrangements, the United States would still have retained the physical possession and, in the last resort, the political control of the nuclear deterrent. But, a people so well versed in the lore of public relations and attractive packaging as the Americans should be able to appreciate the importance of form in international relations.

No one has yet been able to explain satisfactorily how any cooperative undertaking can be made more effective and enduring without making more effective and enduring the authority which presides over it. In the process, the participants will have to yield to one another some of their rights to independent, non-cooperative action. Hardly ever will they do so spontaneously.

Historically, durable associations of states have always been forged by a leading state. After World War II, the creation of the various European economic communities and the spectacular achievements of the European Common Market have given rise to a good many misapprehensions about international integration. Among these, the most erroneous is the idea that common tariff and trade policies—doing more and better business with one another—will lead, in the fullness of time and as a matter of course, to more intimate political association of states and, finally, to their political union. History does not teach this lesson. The German Zollverein, for example, was a political failure. Prussian political and military leadership forged the German Federation. It is, to say the least, an open question as to whether the European Common Market owes its existence to the force of economic logic or to the leadership of French and German statesmen inspired by the vision of European political union.

Sovereign states do not grow together into a federation by some self generating process, but only by the exercise of political will. It is the leadership of one or a small minority—the strongest—among them which persuades the many to become one. No one should know this better than Americans who cherish the memory of the Founders. Could the United States, had it forthrightly espoused the role of federating power, have created that wider union of the Atlantic peoples which President Kennedy, in his celebrated speech of July 4, 1962, at Independence Hall, Philadelphia, acclaimed as the goal of American policy?

This would be a pointless question had the United States tried and succeeded—or tried and failed. The fact is that the United States never did try. It has been argued that the American people, jealous of every particle of their national sovereignty, would not have supported so bold an initiative. Determined leadership persuaded them to embrace the United Nations, a radical departure from national precedent. Since the idea of Atlantic union never enjoyed such resolute and fervent sponsorship in high places, it is a moot question as to whether the American public would have opted for or against membership in Atlantic union. As it was, the American public was never asked. The European experience in the making of communities is instructive: a handful of men—the so-called Europeans, i.e. political leaders such as Robert Schumann, Konrad Adenauer and Alcide de Gasperi, and technical experts such as Jean Monnet and his small elite of devoted aides—conceived the plan of attack, enlisted the support of influential interest groups—and *led* their peoples who had as yet hardly overcome their mutual enmities, into mutual cooperation. It was their determination which evoked "European consciousness" stirring at the grass roots. They took their chance on the public mood. They went ahead. With each step forward, they won ever larger popular support.

In the United States, the Atlantic idea failed to fire political and intellectual leadership with that crusading zeal which enlivened the campaign for public approval of the United Nations Charter. In truth, despite the vague murmurings of those in high places on the beatitudes of closer Atlantic cooperation, the idea of Atlantic union never got off the ground. Presidents, Secretaries of State and leaders of Congress agreed that it was a good idea. And this is about as far as they cared to do. Thus, the United States contented itself with nursing the NATO *status quo*.

The Multilateral Force

Paradoxically, it has been the deterioration of the Atlantic alliance which has spurred the makers of American foreign policy to seek political devices wherewith to shore it up. The U.S. proposal for a multilateral force (MLF) serves a political, rather than a military purpose, namely the satisfaction of European demands for a greater share in strategy decisions, especially a share of the decision to launch nuclear war. By offering its European allies a token membership in the nuclear club, the United States has sought to head off pressures for independent, national strategic forces—and thus to isolate de Gaulle. Skirting the delicate question of exactly where the sovereign writ of the United States—the right to pull or not to pull the trigger—ends and the collective writ begins, the American proponents of MLF have stressed the technical excellence of the hardware to be purchased at considerable cost by the Europeans. Thus, they invited technical criticism. The invitation was accepted. The American and European critics of the MLF, resting their case on technical grounds, proceeded to tear the proposal apart. Their task was eased by the flagrant inconsistency of the arguments advanced in favor of the proposal by the spokesmen of the United States Administration. What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander! If, in view of the vast nuclear capabilities of the United States, an independent European national or European collective deterrent is unnecessary, then the MLF, too, is a drug on the market. But it is not the technical shortcomings of the MLF proposal which defeat its avowed purpose, namely to offer a basis for American-European cooperation in matters of highest common strategic concern. The proposal does not yield one iota of the United States' absolute control over the alliance's nuclear strategy. Far from advancing the search for a true, politically meaningful NATO deterrent, it blocks it.

Stubbornly, the proponents of the MLF clutch at the NATO *status quo*, the very *status quo* which is now breaking up under the eyes of the Western peoples and their enemies. Worse, the proposal now assigns to Germany a role which neither the founders of NATO nor those very German leaders who gained their country's readmittance to civilized Western society, meant Germany to play. France is not interested in the MLF. The limitations of Britain's military budget, not to speak of the uncertainties of her domestic political future, preclude the allocation of significant British funds to the building of the MLF. Thus, nearly the entire European share of the costs to be incurred by the MLF will be borne by the *Bundesrepublik*. Perhaps, as some will have it, the West Germans are really so eager to "get their foot in the nuclear door," as to be willing to foot the bill for MLF to the tune of several hundreds of millions of dollars. Certainly, if they will do as they are told to do by the United States, they are justified in expecting—as a *quid pro quo* for their largesse—to emerge from this transaction as the United States' principal NATO ally. Hardly any more ingenious method could have been found for chilling the hearts of Germany's neighbors and blighting the residual hopes for preserving Western harmony, if not building a better Atlantic World.

It is not surprising that, in America, the growing crisis of NATO has set off the hunt for suitable foreign scapegoats. General de Gaulle has been cast in the role of saboteur of the Atlantic alliance. Yet, NATO's dilemma is rooted in causes of much longer standing than de Gaulle's commitment to France's *"Force de Dissuasion"* and polemic against *les Anglo-Saxons*. The worth of the MLF is not attested by the mere fact that de Gaulle opposes and ridicules it. The wisdom of United States adherence to the test ban treaty is not borne out by de Gaulle's refusal to sign it. America's NATO policy has not been sabotaged by the "narrow nationalism" of an obstreperous ally. In

fact, the United States has never pursued a NATO policy—if by such a term is meant the fostering of the growth and solidarity of the Western alliance. If there is one true cause of the crisis of NATO—the crisis of the West—it is the failure of American political will and imagination. Why American political will and imagination succeeded so brilliantly in restoring the wealth of Europe and forging the greatest peacetime alliance of history only to stop short of the crowning achievement, namely the unification of the West—this question goes to the heart of democracy's most crucial problem: the role of leadership in a free society. But this is another matter.