NATO'S CRISIS YEARS: THE END OF THE ATLANTIC MYSTIQUE AND THE MAKING OF *PAX ATLANTICA*: 1955-1968

A Dissertation
Submitted to
the Temple University Graduate Board

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

---

by
Timothy Andrews Sayle
December 2014

Examining Committee Members:

Richard H. Immerman, Advisory Chair, Department of History
William I. Hitchcock, University of Virginia
Vladislav Zubok, London School of Economics and Political Science
Jay Lockenour, Department of History
Lawrence S. Kaplan, External Member, Georgetown University

©
Copyright
2014

by
Timothy Andrews Sayle
All Rights Reserved

ABSTRACT

What is NATO? This diplomatic history reveals that NATO and its meaning were contingent and never static. Instead, NATO was a machine the allies sought to adapt and use to achieve their national interests. NATO was shrouded in an "Atlantic mystique," the suggestion that the allies practiced a unique and exceptional type of cooperation based on shared values and common heritage. But this mystique did not define or ensure NATO's longevity; in fact NATO was thought necessary because of differences between the allies. The allies' national interests did converge on fundamental points, like the need for security. But they rarely agreed on specifics. And when they disagreed on basic questions, like NATO's relationship to the rest of the world, the role of Europe in NATO, and the American commitment to the continent, sparks flew. But because NATO was not static, it could adapt. And the hope held by each ally that they could convince their allies to change NATO to meet their needs – the hope inherent in a dynamic NATO machine – kept the allies working together.

From 1955 to 1968, both the allies and the world situation changed dramatically. So to did the allies' plans and uses they saw for NATO. The primary interest of allies was protection from the Soviet Union. But the allies – even some in the Federal Republic of Germany – also believed NATO protected them from a resurgent Germany. Just how to defend against either threat was never agreed. But the allies believed that NATO, by keeping the Cold War cold, and by fostering cooperation between the western European states, established a *Pax Atlantica*. In this Atlantic peace the allies prospered. They cooperated and they competed, but peacefully. By the end of the 1960s, the allies believed NATO was necessary to maintaining the *Pax Atlantica*, even if – especially if – the Soviet empire collapsed. Amidst the crises of the 1950s and 1960s, the allies came to believe NATO was guaranteed a long future.

For Nic

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I owe so much to so many for all the support – tangible and intangible – necessary for this project. Family kept me going. But also, in many cases, the professional kindness of perfect strangers made this project possible. I will always be in awe that so many people I did not know responded to my e-mails and phone calls, showed me around archives, and sought to help my studies for no other reason than that I was a student of history. Some of these people are no longer strangers, but friends and teachers, and that is one of the real rewards of this project. That my friends and family, who do know me, also offered enormous support is no less remarkable. I am eternally grateful.

This dissertation was born in the Center for the Study of Force and Diplomacy at Temple University. The faculty and students associated with the Center, especially Alex Bornstein and Matthew Shannon, made CENFAD my home away from home. Carly Goodman helped me to wrestle this project to the ground. Dr. Richard H. Immerman, the heart and mind of CENFAD, has established a community that runs on his incredible work ethic, collegiality, and passion for the study of American foreign relations. Like so many of his students, I have contracted his infectious enthusiasm for the craft of history.

CENFAD also provided financial support for my research, including awards given in the name of Thomas J. Davis and John Votaw. CENFAD's Hertog Program in Grand Strategy supported an exploratory trip to Kew and Brussels in the early stages of this project. Other elements of Temple University, including the College of Liberal Arts and the Graduate School, provided timely financial assistance and the freedom to write my dissertation. I am grateful to the Foreign Policy Research Institute, who, in partnership with CENFAD, invited students to participate in the FPRI-Temple University Consortium on Grand Strategy.

The research for this dissertation was made possible by a Doctoral Award from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. SSHRC is a national treasure. A fellowship from the German Historical Institute in Washington, D.C. allowed an extended foray into records at College Park and early chance to present my ideas. Research awards from the Eisenhower Foundation, Kennedy Library Foundation, and a Moody Grant from the Johnson Foundation allowed me to take advantage of the Presidential Libraries, those glistening archival jewels. A Bemis Grant from the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations let me return to the United Kingdom and to the NATO archives in Brussels for longer stays.

For my research I have depended on the advice and good will of archivists at a dozen archives. Among the many who have helped me are: Valoise Armstrong and Chalsea Millner at the Eisenhower Library, Stacey Chandler and Stephen Plotkin at the Kennedy Library, and Charlaine Hester and Jennifer Cuddeback at the Johnson Library. Colin Harris and Helen Langley helped me navigate the collections at the Bodleian Libraries. Thanks, too, to the staff at the Liddell Hart Center for Military Archives, Cadbury Special Collections at the University of Birmingham, and the Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge University. I owe special thanks to the NATO Archivist, Ineke Deserno, and her excellent staff, including Eudes Neuvelot, Gregory Scheurweghs, and Anne-Marie Smith. Nicholas Nguyen really went above and beyond to make sure my two trips to Brussels were productive but also that I knew where to find the best refreshments in the city.

The declassification units at Library and Archives Canada, the British Foreign & Commonwealth Office, and several American repositories all helped make a potentially tedious and confusing process easy and productive. Lara Hall at the Johnson Library, Michelle DeMartino at the Kennedy Library, Michelle Kopfer at the Eisenhower Library, and David Fort

at NARA have done me a great service in processing – and continuing to process – the endless stream of requests for Mandatory Declassification Review I send their away.

Jane Reilly has been most kind in allowing me to quote from the papers of her father, Sir Patrick Reilly. The Trustees of the Harold Macmillan Book Trust have also allowed me to quote from the papers of Harold Macmillan. Thanks to both.

None of this research nor the requisite funds would have been available to me without the guidance and support from my dissertation committee. William I. Hitchcock helped me to carve out a subject of study. He is a model of both the professional historian and the professional teacher. Richard Immerman helped me refine my ideas and their presentation. How he found the hours to respond to my constant questions and read my drafts with such a close eye, let alone still have time for all of his other responsibilities and accomplishments, is a mystery. Vlad Zubok helped, at critical points, with incisive questions about my research and argument. I was honored that Lawrence S. Kaplan took the time to serve as the external advisor on my dissertation committee. Ron Granieri, with his prodigious knowledge of European politics, helped me see a different side to the transatlantic relationship. Previous teachers, especially Robert Bothwell and Adam Chapnick at the University of Toronto, and Thomas S. Axworthy at the Queen's University School of Policy Studies, kindled my interest in international affairs and foreign policy. While all of the errors below are entirely mine, I owe anything worthwhile you find in this study to these teachers.

My family has played the most important role, both direct and indirect, in support of my studies. Hilary was my thesis buddy for some of these years; our overlapping studies allowed me to give her lots of advice that I could later try and take myself. What else are big brothers for? Thanks for listening, Hil – it was a big help to me. Brian and Jo provided lots of encouragement

and good cheer, especially considering their predicament in ending up with a perpetual student for a son-in-law. Still, they went further, providing a home for my family and important peace of mind while I was travelling.

Eric and Cathy, my parents, provided important financial fillips at several key points in my graduate school career. But they, along with my grandparents, are responsible for my early fascination with history. I wonder if my parents knew what effect that old copy of *Fighting Men and their Uniforms* (London: Grosset & Dunlap, 1971) would have on me. Probably not, although I know they still have the book. Thanks, Mom and Dad, for all of your love and encouragement.

There would have been no dissertation if not for Nicole. She suggested I try for the Ph.D., conceded to marry me, and then agreed to live in a different country while I began my studies. (Perhaps this is the most sensible way to maintain a marriage to a doctoral candidate.) Nic is my greatest companion. I think only she could know how important has been our daily trip to Tim Hortons over these last years. I look forward to many more. Henry joining us part way through this project has made my life richer and happier than I thought possible and, believe it or not, my work easier. Thanks Nic, Henry, and our pup, Winston, for everything.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT iii

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS v

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS xiv

INTRODUCTION xvii

0.0.1 The NATO Machine xvii

0.0.2 The Ecumenical Alliance xxii

0.0.3 The Heavy Technical Apparatus xxvii

SECTION 1: NATO AND THE WORLD: BEYOND THE MAGINOT LINE xliv

1.0.1 Cracks in the Cement xliv

1.0.2 The Wrong Kind of Alliance in the Wrong Place xlix

1.0.3 Something More Than a Military Alliance? liv

CHAPTER

1. INFINITE CRISES 1

1.1.1 Suez: *L'O.T.A.N. est mort pour le moment* 2

1.1.2 The Blackest Day & Beyond 9

1.1.3 A Rival to the United Nations? 17

1.1.4 Syria: An Unfortunate Lack of Ideas 24

1.1.5 Banging Heads Together 30

1.1.6 Lebanon & Jordan: Doing Another Suez 37

2. THE APPLE CART: FORGING THE ANGLO-SAXON DIRECTORATE 43

1.2.1 Washed Off the Slate 44

1.2.2 A Turning Point in the Organization of the Free World 47

1.2.3 The Last Act of The Apple Cart 52

1.2.4 Greater Things To Come 58

1.2.5 France Wants Some Participation 66

3. TIED TOGETHER BY HISTORY: GREAT MEN AND GRAND IDEAS 73

1.3.1 The Times Are Out of Joint 75

1.3.2 The Mare's Nest 81

1.3.3 A World Something 89
1.3.4 Where Angels Fear to Tread 103
1.3.5 More Radical Suggestions 109
1.3.6 *Le Vérité du Monde* 110
1.3.7 The Worst of Both Worlds 114
1.3.8 Events, Dear Boy, Events 117
4. THE WORLD BY COMMITTEE 125
1.4.1 Countering Counter-Measures 125
1.4.2 Fruitful Strategies 134
1.4.3 A Great List of Potential Mistakes 139
1.4.4 More Than We Had Bargained For 147
1.4.5 Conclusion 155
SECTION 2: NATO and the UNITED STATES: THE MILITARY INSTRUMENT 161
2.0.1 Not an Atlanticist at Heart 161
2.0.2 A Nuclear Emphasis 163
2.0.3 A Forum for Consultation 167
2.0.4 New Management 170
5. A PROFOUND BITTERNESS: THE BERLIN CRISIS AND THE SEARCH FOR A GRAND STRATEGY 175
2.5.1 Eisenhower's Berlin Crisis 178
2.5.2 Berlin "Heats Up" Again 190
2.5.3 A Cold Winter 195
2.5.4 The Instruments of Grand Strategy 198
2.5.5 Very Much in the Dark 208
2.5.6 The Berlin Wall 211
2.5.7 What is a NATO Policy? 215
2.5.8 A Profound Bitterness 218
2.5.9 Do They Want the Alliance to Continue? 223
2.5.10 We Need To Tell Them 226
6. THE LIMITS OF INTEGRATION: "MCNAMARAISM" AND NATO NUCLEAR POLICY 231

2.6.1 Heretical Ideas 236
2.6.2 Pandora's Box 241
2.6.3 Out of Channels 246
2.6.4 Acheson Report 249
2.6.5 A Major Phobia 254
2.6.6 Facing Up To Facts 259
2.6.7 The Three-Pronged Approach 266
2.6.8 Athens 271
2.6.9 Irregular, Tricky, and Unprecedented 277
2.6.10 Rocking the Boat 279
7. NUCLEAR NOISES: DOUBLE CONTAINMENT AND THE SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECY OF THE MLF 285
2.7.1 The German Nixon 289
2.7.2 Pouring our Money into the Ocean 292
2.7.3 The Inevitable Growth of German Pressure 295
2.7.4 A Nassau Track? 299
2.7.5 A Residuum of Dark Forces 304
2.7.6 A Purely Theoretical Model 307
2.7.7 Nuclear Noises 310
2.7.8 We Should Really Bury This One 317
2.7.9 A Nuclear Education 319
SECTION 3: THE END OF THE ATLANTIC MYSTIQUE: 326
8. THE GOOD ALLY: BRITAIN AND THE GAULLIST CHALLENGE TO NATO, 1963-1966 336
3.8.1 Broken Backs 339
3.8.2 Another Great Plan 342
3.8.3 Not Necessarily Wedded to NATO Itself 349
3.8.4 Politics Without Restrictions 350
3.8.5 "NATO, blah, blah, blah" 355
3.8.6 Political Warfare 358
3.8.7 A Wild Idea 362

3.8.8 Conclusion 370
9. THE NEW TRIPARTITISM: THE FRG AND THE ANGLO-AMERICAN CONTINENTAL COMMITMENT 374
3.9.1 The Clear Outline of a US-UK-German Deal 374
3.9.2 The Crisis Breaks 379
3.9.3 Ripeness for Disintegration 384
3.9.4 A New Foundation for the Alliance 392
3.9.5 The Breakfast Position 402
3.9.6 A Grand Scheme to Solve All Known Problems 408
10. AN ALLIANCE FOR PEACE: NATO, EUROPE, AND DÉTENTE 418
3.10.1 An Outworn European Policy? 423
3.10.2 A Thorny Path 429
3.10.3 A New Image and Rationale for NATO 435
3.10.4 Two Pillars 443
3.10.5 Conversion and Subversion 450
CONCLUSION: KEEPING A-HOLD OF NURSE 455
BIBLIOGRAPHY 469

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAPD – Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland
AP - Dean Gooderham Acheson Papers
Bator Papers – Personal Papers of Francis Bator
Ball Records – Records of Under Secretary of State George W. Ball, 1961-1966.
BL - Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford
Bohlen Records – Records of Ambassador Charles E. Bohlen, 1942-71
Bundy Files – Files of McGeorge Bundy
Bundy Papers – McGeorge Bundy Personal Papers
CAB – Cabinet Office files
CDS – Chief of the Defence Staff (United Kingdom)
CEA – Committee of Economic Advisers (NATO)
CFPF - Central Foreign Policy File
CIA – Central Intelligence Agency
CPA – Committee of Political Advisers (NATO)
CRL - Cadbury Research Library: Special Collections, University of Birmingham
CT – Files of the Committee of Three
DAS – Deputy Assistant Secretary
DEFE – Records of the Ministry of Defence (United Kingdom)
DDEL – Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, Abilene, Kansas
DDF – *Documents Diplomatiques Français*
DHCC - The Papers of John Foster Dulles and of Christian A. Herter, 1953-1961, Chronological Correspondence Series (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1986).
DoD – Department of Defense
DPC – Defense Planning Committee
Dulles Papers – Papers of John Foster Dulles
EmbParis – Paris Embassy (Canadian)
EUR – Bureau of European Affairs
External – Department of External Affairs (Canadian)
FCO – Foreign & Commonwealth Office (United Kingdom)
FIG – French-German-Italian
FO – Foreign Office (United Kingdom)
FOIA – Freedom of Information Act
Fowler Papers – Henry H. Fowler Papers
France, 1944-1960 – Subject File Relating to France, 1944-1960
Fried Files – Files of Edward Fried
FRG Records – Records Relating to the Federal Republic of Germany, 1954-1967
FRUS – Foreign Relations of the United States
Gen. Corr. – General Correspondence
GER – Country Director for Germany
Harmel – "Future Tasks of the Alliance – 'Harmel Report'" collection, NATO Archives
MD:PM – Catterall, Peter, ed. *The Macmillan Diaries, Vol. 2: Prime Minister and after, 1957-1966.* (London: Macmillan, 2011).
INR – Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State

INTL – International Series
ITMS - International Trips and Meetings Series
Ismay Papers – Papers of Lord Ismay
Jackson Papers – Papers of C.D. Jackson
JCS – Joint Chiefs of Staff
JFD Chronological Series
JFKL – John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, Massachusetts
JFKLDC – John F. Kennedy Library Digital Collections
Komer Records – Records of Robert W. Komer
LAC – Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, Canada
LBJL – Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum, Austin, Texas
LHCMA – Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives
Macmillan Papers - Papers of Maurice Harold Macmillan, 1st Earl of Stockton
MCM – Military Committee Memorandum
MPBE – Military Planning for the Berlin Emergency collection, NATO Archives
NP – Papers of Lauris Norstad
NARA – National Archives and Records Administration II, College Park, Maryland
NATO – Archives of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Brussels, Belgium
NATO Advisor – Records of the NATO Advisor
NATO Affairs – Records Relating to NATO Affairs
NAUK – National Archives of the United Kingdom
NSC – National Security Council Series
NSF – National Security File
OAPMA – Office of Atlantic Political and Military Affairs
OAEO – Office of African and European Operations
OIAA – Office of Inter-African Affairs
OES – Office of the Executive Secretary
ORPUN - Office of Regional Planning & UN Advisor
OSS – Office of the Staff Secretary
PPC – Records of the Policy Planning Council
PREM – Prime Minister's Office records
Reilly Papers - Papers of Sir (D'Arcy) Patrick Reilly
RG – Record Group
RPM – Records of the Political-Military Advisor
SANSA – Office of the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs
SAS – Special Assistant Series
Schaetzel Files – Subject Files (J. Robert Schaetzel), 1961-1966
SecState – Secretary of State
Trilateral Records - Records Relating to NATO Trilateral Discussion, 1965-1968
UKDelNATO – United Kingdom Delegation to NATO
WE – Records of the Office of Western European Affairs
WHCM – The Papers of John Foster Dulles and of Christian A. Herter, 1953-1961: The White House Correspondence and Memoranda Series (Maryland: University Publications of America, 1986).
Whitman File – Eisenhower, Dwight D.: Papers as President of the United States, 1953-1961
Whitman Diary – Ann Whitman Diary Series

WHMS – White House Memoranda Series
WHO – White House Office

INTRODUCTION

"The Pax Atlantica is not free from tensions: neither was the Pax Romana."
– Lord Ismay, Secretary General of NATO, 1954[1]

"Maintaining alliances is quite an art. There is no simple formula. The miracle is that they are maintained at all."
– United States Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, 1957[2]

"Any periodic review of NATO must be aware of the fact that it is an evolving organism, responding to its environment, susceptible to forces within and without, and adapting itself with varying degrees of success to changing conditions. … We cannot, therefore, think of it, even for only a span of a few months, as a static organization."
– United States Department of State Policy Planning Council paper, 1959[3]

0.0.1 The NATO Machine

Alliances are not supposed to last forever. In the summer of 1963, the historian and presidential adviser Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., searched through classic texts on international relations for quotes that John F. Kennedy might use in a speech about NATO. Schlesinger's selections, drawn from the great works since Thucydides, were not encouraging. The gist of historical opinion was summed up best by Macaulay in his account of the coalition of William III: "No undertaking which requires the hearty and long-continued cooperation of independent states is likely to prosper."[4]

And yet NATO continued, and continues. In NATO's first twenty years, the alliance, the organization, and the individual member states faced repeated crises, challenges, and questions

---

[1] Lord Ismay, "Pax Atlantica," *Unilever Magazine* (Winter 1954). Also available online in the NATO On-line Library, www.nato.int/docu/articles/1954/a54000a.htm

[2] Quoted in C. L. Sulzberger, *The Last of the Giants* (New York: Macmillan, 1970), 438.

[3] "NATO by the End of 1959: Problems and Prospects," July 24, 1959, Policy Planning Council Subject Files, 1954-1962 [hereafter PPC], box 141, folder: "Europe 1959," National Archives and Research Administration II, College Park, Maryland [hereafter NARA].

[4] Macaulay is quoted, along with Thucydides, in "Alliance Quotations," Schlesinger to the President, June 22, 1963, POF, folder: "Schlesinger, Arthur M., October 1963," JFKLDC.

about its future. Changes in Soviet policy, disagreements between allies over decolonization, confused opinions over nuclear and military strategy, the uncertain future of a Europe recovering from war, and hopes of détente with the Soviet Union each threatened to split the NATO allies or make NATO obsolete. Yet, in 1969 - the year that signatories to the 1949 North Atlantic Treaty (NAT) could denounce the treaty - no ally availed themself of this clause.

The historical record reveals that leaders who acted for definable national interests rather than transnational values made the essential decisions that kept NATO in being. Like the "European saints" who built the European Community, allied leaders did not consider NATO as an alternative to the primacy of national sovereignty, but a means for better achieving their national interests.[5] It was *raison d'état*, not transnational conceptions, that kept the allies from withdrawing from the North Atlantic Treaty.

This study examines how and why NATO survived the crises of the 1950s and 1960s. There is an easy answer: NATO endured because the allies agreed NATO was necessary. But that answer becomes much more complicated when one considers just what, in particular, was necessary – what is NATO?

Lord Ismay, NATO's first Secretary General, claimed that the NAT was not "one of those treaties that you can sign with great pomp, all the photographers taking photographs, gold pens and all that sort of thing, and then put away in the archives of the various F[oreign] O[ffice]s." Instead, the treaty pledged the NATO's signatory nations to "collective action, and continuous

[5] That so many of the European saints, like Spaak and Adenauer, were also heads of NATO states is no coincidence. The odd man out is Charles de Gaulle, who saw both the European construction and NATO as a challenge to the French nation-state. See Alan S. Milward, H. George Brennan, and Federico Romero, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 318-19. For the broader argument on the preservation of nation-states and national interests in international organizations, see 1-21.

action," to cooperate on military issues and on non-military issues, including fostering closer economic and cultural ties between allies.[6]

What Ismay did not mention, however, was that the NAT's broad language made NATO affairs much more difficult. Nor did he mention that the drafters thought such broad promises were necessary to overcome public opposition or indifference to a new defensive treaty signed only a few short years after a terrible war. The need to cast the treaty as more than simply a geopolitical necessity was acutely felt in Washington, D.C., where for nearly 150 years Americans had lived by Thomas Jefferson's 1801 call for the United States to avoid "entangling alliances."[7]

Still, the treaty promised co-operation on a wide range of issues. The allies saw in that promise a tremendous range of possibilities.[8] In its first years, the NATO allies focused on building up the defense of Western Europe, and they succeeded in creating its integrated military command and establishing an international secretariat.[9] After a decade, however, the allies were

---

[6] "The Political Aspects of NATO," Speech by Lord Ismay to NATO Defense College, September 9, 1955, Ismay Papers, 3/17/1/1/b, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College London, UK [hereafter LHCMA]. For the history of the North Atlantic Treaty, the first stop should be Lawrence S. Kaplan, *NATO 1948: The Birth of the Transatlantic Alliance* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007). On non-military cooperation, see especially John Milloy, *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 1948-1957: Community or Alliance?* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006).

[7] See Morrell Heald and Lawrence S. Kaplan, *Culture and Diplomacy: The American Experience* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1977), 229-39.

[8] On the early competing visions of NATO, see Ian Q. R. Thomas, *The Promise of Alliance: NATO and the Political Imagination* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997). On specific attempts to expand NATO's cooperation on non-military issues, see Milloy, *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization*.

[9] The official histories of Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) covering the years from its origins through 1958 have recently been declassified. They are the necessary first stop for studying the evolution of NATO's military component. "SHAPE History, Volume. 1: Origin and Development of SHAPE"; "SHAPE History, volume. 2: Changes in Command Structure, 1952-1953;" "The New Approach, 1953-1956;" "SHAPE History 1957;"

increasingly frustrated by NATO's limits. Cooperation on military affairs did not wash away differences in other realms of policy. Many allies were frustrated that NATO could not immediately help their efforts to maintain imperial possessions. Nor had NATO helped solve the German problem; in fact, it seemed to reinforce the permanent barrier in the middle of Germany and Europe. And some of the grander hopes for an expanded political and economic union between Europe and North America had failed to become manifest. Frank Roberts, the accomplished ambassador who served as Britain's Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Council, asked, in his 1960 valedictory dispatch from the British delegation to NATO, "why so much gloom about NATO?"

The problems and disagreements and crises - the gloom - were not, Roberts reported, simply the product of disagreement. The diplomat knew disagreement was to be expected in dealings between states. Instead, he judged the sense of gloom as the result of high expectations that had gone unmet. The NAT itself, with its wide-open phrasing, allowed the allies to develop NATO however they wished, and there were many various and contradictory wishes. Still, Roberts wrote, "the machine is there. It is for the countries concerned to use it."[10]

To take Roberts' formulation, this history of NATO's crisis-ridden years reveals how and when the allies chose to use the machine of NATO and when to shape that machine to meet new needs. What follows is a diplomatic history of the NATO allies' efforts to build and use NATO

SHAPE History 1958," all available online from the NATO Archives at www.nato.int/archives. See also Lawrence S. Kaplan, *NATO before the Korean War: April 1949-June 1950* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2013); Robert S. Jordan, *The NATO International Staff/Secretariat, 1952-1957: A Study in International Administration* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967). For a short essay on the evolution of NATO's command structure see Gregory W. Pedlow, ""The Evolution of NATO's Command Structure, 1951-2009," (undated). Available online at Allied Command Operations History Corner, www.aco.nato.int/history.aspx.

[10] [Sir Frank Robert's Valedictory] Despatch No. 64 from Paris, October 12, 1960, F[oreign] O[ffice], 371/154562, National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew, United Kingdom [hereafter NAUK].

to respond to crises emerging from areas outside the Atlantic area, disagreement between transatlantic partners, and the debate over the future of the European construction. The narrative is roughly bounded by the German accession to NATO in 1955 and the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. This periodization eschews the traditional divisions of Cold War historiography because NATO, born of the Cold War, grew up in a more complicated international setting than the already complex East-West antagonism.

The significant crises and shifts in world affairs in this, NATO's long second-decade, are staggering. European empires crumbled. How best to manage, or even prevent, decolonization caused disagreement and bad blood between the allies. Technology advanced considerably, and with great impact on national and NATO defense policies: the "nuclear deterrent," primarily an airplane-delivered weapon in 1955, would be, by 1968, the responsibility of ballistic missiles. The states of western Europe, shattered by war, rebuilt themselves and also built a new conception of state cooperation. And these years witnessed dramatic changes in the United States, as the domestic foreign policy consensus broke down, leaving some Americans looking across the Atlantic, others across the Pacific, and others turning inward.

All of these changes resulted in disagreements between allies so deep that the future of NATO seemed permanently in question. But NATO persevered. For at stake, from 1955 to 1968, was the new system of peace and cooperation in the Western world that had been built up in darkest days at the end of the Second World War. The allies hotly contested the specifics of this new system, but were nearly unanimous in agreeing that NATO was the basis of world order. Lord Ismay eloquently summed up these hopes and expectations. "Once upon a time," or so his story went, the "*Pax Romana* established "a period of peace and stability in which trade and

commerce could expand and the arts could flourish." Now, NATO offered the basis for a *Pax Atlantica.*[11]

0.0.2 The Ecumenical Alliance

But how to maintain this Atlantic peace? There persisted throughout the Cold War a belief that NATO, like Voltaire's God, would simply have to be reinvented if it were abolished. But NATO allies seemed to hold the same variety of reasons for NATO as humanity has styles of deity. This confusion about purpose – but insistence on necessity – resulted from the sheer number of things NATO did and that the allies hoped it could do in the future.

Enormous expectations were loaded on NATO's shoulders from the start. In NATO's earliest days, allied diplomats felt empowered by a "NATO spirit," an approach to cooperation premised on the idea that the collective interests of the allies outweighed individual instructions from their home capitals.[12] The relatively quick and agreeable establishment of NATO's military and administrative structures boded well for the organization. And the continued peace in Europe seemed every day to mark NATO's success. NATO was imbued with an "Atlantic mystique," a sheen of exceptionality and uniqueness that allowed the allies to achieve greater and greater harmony in all realms of policy.[13]

The period from 1955 to 1968 witnessed many efforts, from various allies, to build on this mystique and expand NATO to meet their wishes. There were suggestions and plans for NATO to take on greater and greater responsibilities in terms of consultation and joint decision-making in foreign affairs, management of development aid, and deepen economic and social

---

[11] Ismay, "Pax Atlantica."

[12] "Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles," Richard D. McKinzie, November 13 and December 18, 1972. Available online at www.trumanlibrary.org/oralhist/achilles.htm.

[13] This phrase seems to have been coined in the British Foreign Office and was used privately in correspondence. See Draft Paper by LF[ielding], May 3, 1963, FO 371/173436, and Dean to Hood, November 16, 1966, FO 1042/156, both in NAUK.

cohesion between the allies. But by the end of the 1960s, the Atlantic mystique had lost its luster. It had faded in the crises of the 1950s and 1960s as the NATO allies repeatedly insisted – by their actions, rather than their rhetoric – that NATO was a machine for meeting their goals, not an end itself. It was no secret that the allies used the NATO machine when it served their national interests, and sought to change NATO, or ignore it, when it did not.

Richard Neustadt, the renowned political scientist and presidential advisor who studied NATO issues for Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson, coined "Neustadt's Law" for policy planners in 1965: "What governing politicians don't find serviceable won't be feasible."[14] The law fits NATO perfectly. NATO survived the crises of the 1950s and 1960s because at critical points leaders believed NATO served their interests. They believed it provided security, either from the Soviet Union, or Germany, or both. They used it as a stage to improve their international standing, prestige, or to use as a bartering chip in other political or economic affairs. Ultimately, they believed that NATO was worth preserving as the cornerstone of a *Pax Atlantica*, even if the Cold War were to melt away. Governing politicians found or made ways to make the NATO machine serviceable.

The laundry list of national interests the allies expected NATO to serve is long and it shifted over time. Many are discussed in the following chapters. But they can be organized into five key areas and prioritized. First and most important was NATO's promise to deter the Soviet Union from attacking Western Europe by military force or political blackmail or coups. The American security guarantee provided the "cement" for NATO.[15] This deterrence differs from an ability to defend Western Europe from a full-blown Soviet attack, and military officials and

---

[14] "Never mind the Flak," Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy from Richard Neustadt, January 8, 1965, NSF, Name File, Box 7, LBJL.

[15] "Scope Paper," for the NATO Ministerial Meeting, May 1, 1965, Declassified Document Reference System document number [hereafter DDRS], CK3100516117.

defense analysts never came to anything like conclusive agreement whether NATO could defend against the Red Army. In the 1950s, it was broadly assumed that NATO did keep the Soviet Union at bay. It certainly seemed prudent for the allies to maintain NATO than to find out the hard way that the Soviet bear was still hungry. But there was little solid agreement among NATO allies about Soviet intentions, and the consensus that NATO was preventing an imminent Soviet takeover of western Europe nearly disintegrated in the 1960s.

Nearly as important as protecting Western Europe from the Soviet Union was protection for the allies from Germany. The existent Soviet Union was more threatening than a potential resurgent, revanchist, chauvinist Germany. But the other allies – and many Germans - never stopped worrying Germany would reemerge as a fiercely nationalist and militarist power. NATO provided various enticements and obligations to prevent this recurring nightmare. Again, the allies disagreed on just how NATO protected them from Germany. Military cooperation removed any need for a new German high command; constant contact with Western allies kept German politicians from the fear and isolation that had caused Germany, in the past, to either lash out at its neighbors or make deals with the Soviet Union. Some allies thought NATO restrained a permanent menace; others thought it was rehabilitating a sick nation. For those who looked to the past to justify NATO, it helped prevent another European civil war; for those focused on the Cold War, NATO moored Germany to the west and prevented a Soviet-German combine in the heartland of Europe. No matter the diagnosis, NATO was the only prescription.

In 1955, Ismay declared that "the business – the paramount, the permanent, the all-absorbing business of NATO is to avoid war."[16] Ismay was referring to war with the Soviet Union, but the allies believed NATO avoided war both by deterring Moscow and harnessing

[16] "The Political Aspects of NATO," Speech by Lord Ismay to NATO Defense College, Ismay Papers, 3/17/1/1/b, LHCMA.

Germany. But there was more to the *Pax Atlantica*, as there is always more to peace than the absence of war.

Allies sought to use the NATO machine to achieve their interests in the world beyond the Atlantic region. The European powers struggled to manage, or even prevent, the decolonization of their once grand empires. In the 1950s, European allies sought to convince each other and the United States to use NATO to coordinate their policies at the UN, in the raising and distribution of development aid, and even in military contingency plans for conflict outside of Europe. A decade later, the roles were reversed, and the United States sought to cast NATO as responsible for the globe, telling their allies that the Pacific was the "Western flank of the Alliance."[17]

The *Pax Atlantica* built on NATO included other international structures, like the institutions of Europe and also of global finance and trade. Allies frequently used their contributions to NATO as bargaining chips in other realms of foreign policy, and vice versa. The British and French both used NATO in their tug-of-war over British accession to the Common Market. The United States was able to convince their allies to make economic decisions based on continued American commitments to Europe. There was nothing hermetic about NATO, for both the diplomats themselves and the issues they discussed crisscrossed with a range of interconnected international issues.

No time limit was set on the *Pax Atlantica.* Long before the end of the Cold War, the allies recognized that NATO – or something very much like it – would be desirable even when the ideological East-West antagonism burnt itself out. Even in the giddy days of 1967, when détente was in the air and many Europeans hoped for an imminent European settlement to clean up the messy ending of the Second World, NATO's Secretary General Manlio Brosio did not

[17] Bohlen to Eugene Rostow, January 20, 1967, Records of Ambassador Charles E. Bohlen, 1942-1971 [hereafter Bohlen Records], box 27, folder: Rostow, Eugene, NARA.

expect Europe would do away with its "treaty links of friendship and mutual military assistance with the US."[18]

NATO came to be seen as an instrument for winning the peace that would follow the Cold War. Zbigniew Brzezinski, a scholar from Columbia University on loan to the National Security Council in 1967, argued that the partnership between the United States and Europe, embodied in NATO, was the essential precondition "for building world order on the basis of closer collaboration among the more developed nations, perhaps including eventually some of the Communist states."[19]

Today's NATO was born in the 1950s and 1960s. Certainly many of NATO's current practices and obligations look remarkably different from what politicians and diplomats envisioned in 1949. George Kennan, the renowned American diplomat, claimed that he "certainly had no idea at the time that the military instrument we were creating was to be the major vehicle of Western policy in the coming years."[20] But in the efforts to adapt NATO to the crises of the 1950s and 1960s, NATO statesmen created the institutions, practices - and most important, the idea - of NATO as an institution that could outlive the Cold War.

None of those grandees who were, in Dean Acheson's phrase, "present at the creation" of the postwar world could have guessed that NATO's biblical allegory would be a cross between the stories of Methuselah and Lazarus. But the more farsighted officials in the1960s expected NATO

---

[18] Even if he thought it "conceivable that the continuing link between Europe and the United States, afar a settlement in Europe, might be expressed in a new way." "Record of Meeting in the Office of the Secretary General, 25th February 1967, at 10.30 a.m.," NATO/Harmel.

[19] "Memorandum: Atlantic Cohesion and East-West Relations," by Zbigniew Brzezinski, NSF, Agency File, box 53, folder: State Department, Policy Planning, vol. 7 [1 of 2], LBJL.

[20] George F. Kennan, *Russia, the Atom, and the West* (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), 89. On Kennan's limited role in NAT negotiations see "Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles."

would be reborn from crisis and survive indefinitely. Brzezinski's prognostications have held true; NATO's membership now includes ten former members of the Warsaw Pact, and the European Union seven. NATO and the EU's march eastward seems relentless, especially to Moscow; at the time of writing, crisis seethes in Ukraine as Russia seeks to prevent Kiev from becoming the easternmost capital in the EU, and perhaps eventually a signatory to the North Atlantic Treaty. Founding NATO members, like Canada and the United States, have sent fighter jets and paratroopers to reassure their new allies – and former enemies – in Poland and Romania. And pundits continue to wonder which side the Federal Republic of Germany will tilt between East and West. Strategy and politics in Europe today is old wine in old bottles.

0.0.3 The Heavy Technical Apparatus

How can a student wrap their mind around the diplomacy of NATO, and the interaction between dozens of bureaucracies, states, and international events? Sherlock Holmes believes it is a "capital mistake to theorize before one has data," for fear of twisting "facts to suit theories, instead of theories to suit facts."[21] This is good sense and the historian, like the detective, should look on the evidence they gather with an open mind. Nonetheless, historians of the twentieth century must sort through so much archival material that they cannot avoid using some heuristic to guide their study.

Marc Trachtenberg has made a convincing case that historians must acknowledge the explicit and implicit theoretical underpinnings that guide their thinking, and harness these theories as an "engine of analysis" to power the questions that guide research and the reading of documents. Without acknowledging the engines that guide their work, historians may be blinded by their

[21] A. Conan Doyle, "A Scandal in Bohemia," in *Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1892), 7.

biases; if one tries to drive forward without an engine they will get nowhere fast because they will have no means of sorting through the reams of records produced by modern bureaucracies. [22]

Students of NATO have generally relied on two broad but separate engines to understand and explain NATO. One is that NATO is best explained as a transnational phenomenon. Jeremi Suri, for instance, argues that it was a "set of shared values, which transcended the action of US and Western European leaders, that allowed for the continued prosperity of NATO."[23] John Lewis Gaddis, similarly, has argued that the shared democratic political systems of most of the allies accounts for NATO's success.[24] It is, as Suri and Gaddis suggest, necessary to go beyond economic indices and military data to think about what other ideational, moral, or psychological factors lie behind bland policy documents. But democracy and shared values cannot be the whole story, and historians have persuasively demonstrated "how lively national competition and rivalry remained" in postwar Europe."[25] Any study that left out traditional instruments of state power, and the statesmen who believed that military and economic power shaped the world environment, will be left to chew on Robert Buzzanco's question: "Where's the Beef?"[26]

The difficulty in picking an engine of analysis to understand NATO is that both the transnational and international lens present persuasive answers, and historical evidence can be

---

[22] Marc Trachtenberg, *The Craft of International History: A Guide to Method* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 33.

[23] Jeremi Suri, "The Normative Resilience of NATO: A Community of Shared Values Amid Public Discord," in *Transforming NATO in the Cold War: Challenges Beyond Deterrence in the 1960s*, ed. Andreas Wenger, Christian Nuenlist, and Anna Locher (London: Routledge, 2007), 5.

[24] John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 13, 288-89.

[25] William I. Hitchcock, *France Restored: Cold War Diplomacy and the Quest for Leadership in Europe, 1944-1954* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 10.

[26] Robert Buzzanco, "Where's the Beef? Culture without Power in the Study of U.S. Foreign Relations," *Diplomatic History* 24, no. 4 (Fall 2000).

marshaled in support of either explanation. The public rhetoric and speeches of NATO officials celebrated transnational connections between allies and the existence of a larger community beyond state borders. The previously secret documents laying out diplomatic strategies and foreign policies, however, are premised on competition between states. Relying on a transnational or international lens alone can provide only an imperfect and incomplete understanding of NATO. So how should the historian approach documents that might, superficially, tell two different stories?

It is necessary to keep in mind always that the transnational and international lenses are simply tool to bring into focus the most significant elements of the complicated past.[27] And, as implied by Sherlock Holmes, it is the evidence, or the facts, or the data that is the stuff of history; theory is secondary.

The following study then, is the product of careful thinking about the methodology of diplomatic history. But it seeks to submerge as much of the "heavy technical apparatus of learning" that is required for a dissertation under a chronological narrative meant to reveal the change and continuity from 1955 to 1968.[28] It is hopefully enough for the reader to know this study was powered by two engines of analysis, even if those engines are running as silently as possible, and the reader is gently reminded of their existence throughout the text.

It is likely apparent from this introduction that the evidence makes a strong claim for NATO as an international, rather than transnational, phenomena. But this does not mean that the transnational lens reveals nothing about NATO. It is worth thinking through the application of

---

[27] This acknowledges Michael Oakeshott's argument that the historical past is, first and foremost, a "complicated world, without unity of feeling or clear outline," and that the historian's goal is to elicit "a coherence in a group of contingencies." Michael Oakeshott, "The Activity of Being a Historian," in *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays* (Indianapolis: LibertyPress, 1991), 166-67.

[28] William James, "The Ph.D. Octopus," *The Harvard Monthly* (March 1903): 7.

transnational theory to NATO to see just why it cannot offer a full explanation for NATO's survival, but also because there is a subtle hint of transnationalism in NATO affairs that was important to helping allies overcome disagreement.

Historians who deal in concepts of transnational history have only gradually come to consider diplomacy and foreign policy as acceptable subjects for scrutiny under a transnational lens.[29] And if transnational history is the study of "objectives shared by people and communities regardless of their nationality," then NATO is as good a place as any, especially because NATO officials proclaimed to be part of a transnational movement.[30]

Dwight Eisenhower was President of the United States for some of NATO's most tumultuous years. But before his presidency, Eisenhower was NATO's first Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR) - the international officer atop NATO's integrated military command. As Eisenhower went about setting up the new Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in 1951, he told his officers that NATO "is not a military organization, this is not an organization in government, this is a matter of spirit. It'll work if we generate the spirit." Lauris Norstad, an American air force general serving under Eisenhower at the time would later become

---

[29] See the chronological evolution in the thinking of Akira Iriye, one of the leading historians of transnational affairs: Akira Iriye, "Internationalizing International History," in *Rethinking American History in a Global Age*, ed. Thomas Bender (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2002), 51; "Global History," in *Palgrave Advances in International History*, ed. Patrick Finney (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 320; *Global and Transnational History: The Past, Present, and Future* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 15.

[30] *Global and Transnational History*, 15. See also Matthew Connelly's argument that diplomatic historians should be in the vanguard of transnational history, in C. A. Bayly et al., "AHR Conversation: On Transnational History," *The American Historical Review* 111, no. 5 (December 2006): 1447.

SACEUR and use this concept to guide his decisions and policy.[31] John Foster Dulles, as Eisenhower's Secretary of State, would speak along similar lines.

Other NATO statesmen attempted to define what Eisenhower called "spirit" with more precision. In 1959, on NATO's 10th birthday, and about the time the allies were feeling the gloom reported by Roberts, Paul-Henri Spaak published a short tract *Why NATO?* Spaak, who had replaced Ismay as NATO's Secretary General, made a strong case for NATO's continued existence as a balance to Soviet power. But he argued that NATO was not concerned "merely" with defense. The allies needed NATO to protect the "very principles upon which their civilization is based." This civilization, he argued - perhaps to the consternation of at least one NATO ally, Turkey - "is the heir of Greek humanism, of the Christian tradition, of the message of social freedom and justice handed down from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and it is open to all man's new needs."[32] Spaak's language reflected the claim in the North Atlantic Treaty that the NATO allies shared a "common heritage and civilization ... founded on the principles of democracy." A cynic might chalk up Spaak's language to hyperbole and the efforts of a man trying to hold his organization together. But scattered throughout the papers of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff and also in records of the British Foreign Office are reams of plans suggesting, for instance, that NATO take on a "primary function" as

> the proponent of the values of Western Christian civilization, to stimulate in [Arnold] Toynbee's sense the response of this civilization to the challenges now

---

[31] Eisenhower's quote is retold by Norstad. Norstad Oral History, OH-558, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, Abilene, Kansas [hereafter DDEL], p. 41. It is certainly in keeping with Eisenhower's other recorded statements. See Stephen E. Ambrose and Morris Honick, in *Generals in International Politics: NATO's Supreme Allied Commander, Europe*, ed. Robert S. Jordan (Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky, 1987).

[32] Paul Henri Charles Spaak, *Why NATO?* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1959), 38-39.

posed, and to catalyze greater integration in all fields of countries (including the US) holding Western values."[33]

The governments of the NATO allies did contain officials who believed that NATO represented a transnational grouping of states. Some thought this could eventually be translated into a larger "organized community, even a confederacy or union, with common institutions."[34]

Still, as Kathleen Burke points out, "the concept of an Atlantic community is slippery as an eel," and it is difficult to determine where rhetoric ends and reality begins.[35] For many officials concerned with NATO, there were no "common military, political, economic, and cultural interests and principles" upon which to base an Atlantic Community.[36] Calls for such an Atlantic future were nothing but the "wild blue yonder."[37] By 1960, British diplomats reported that plans for an Atlantic Community had failed to materialize.[38] A year later, an Italian ambassador worried that all of the hopes put on NATO for purposes beyond defense were

---

[33] "Subject: Policies Affecting the Anglo-American Alliance," drafted by Burdett in EUR/BNA, January 9, 1961, Record Group [hereafter RG] 59, EUR, Office of Regional Planning & UN Advisor [hereafter ORPUN], box 1, folder: "EUR IDEA PAPERS – January 1961," NARA.

[34] The quote is from a British Foreign Office document. "Memorandum for Mr. McGhee: Atlantic Union (for talks with Ramsbotham)," April 6, 1961, RG59, PPC, Subject Files, 1954-1962, box 140, folder "Great Britain 1960-61," NARA.

[35] Kathleen Burk, "The Anglo-American "Special Relationship" in the Atlantic Context During the Late 1940s and 1950s," in *Defining the Atlantic Community: Culture, Intellectuals, and Policies in the Mid-Twentieth Century*, ed. Marco Mariano (New York: Routledge, 2010), 149.

[36] The German Foreign Office, in an effort to get a handle on the various phrases used to describe the NATO states, defined "Atlantic Community" as the "totality of NATO states, which are bound by common military, political, economic, and cultural interests and principles," and hinted towards "future official integration" of the allies. Quoted in Ronald J. Granieri, *The Ambivalent Alliance: Konrad Adenauer, the CDU/CSU, and the West, 1949-1966* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003), 172.

[37] Thomas Finletter Oral History, Lyndon Baines Johnson Library & Archives, Austin, Texas [hereafter LBJL], 24.

[38] Evelyn Shuckburgh to Norman Brook, December 26, 1960, PREM 11/3325, NAUK.

crushing the alliance.[39] By 1964, American officials wrote that the idea of an "Atlantic Commonwealth" - another phrase used for "Atlantic Community," was "beyond our capacity to accomplish and … contrary to our interests."[40]

In 1966, after the French withdrawal from NATO's integrated military command and as the NATO allies began to think about NATO's place in a world characterized by hopes for a détente, American officials argued it was "vital" that any discussion of NATO's purpose going forward be "narrowed to defense preparation and relationships. NATO organs are not and never have been workable vehicles for economic cooperation and social interchange. Nor is there any reason why they should be."[41]

There is a danger, however, in drawing to fine a distinction between transnational and international explanations for NATO. National interests, the basis of foreign policies and international relations, are themselves the products of ideas, values and other broad manifestations of culture.[42] Scholars of NATO suggested that shared values and ideas have manifested in national interests similar enough to ensure cooperation between the NATO states. They see this either as a product of shared political systems or of shared experiences of elites, either of which allow cooperation that easily transcends merely national interests.

---

[39] "View of Italian Ambassador [Sanitized] on NATO Strategy," CIA Information Report, June 26, 1961, National Security File [hereafter NSF], box 220A, folder: NATO, General 7/61-5/62/61 [Folder 1 of 3], John F. Kennedy Library & Archives, Boston, Massachusetts [hereafter JFKL]. The buckslip makes clear it was the Italian Ambassador to Bonn.

[40] "Revision of NSC Memorandum of April 25, 1961, entitled "NATO and the Atlantic Nations." January 24, 1964, DDRS, CK3100010146.

[41] Neustadt to McNaughton, April 4, 1966, Yarmolinsky Papers, Subject Files, box 32, folder: "France-NATO, 1963-1967," JFKL.

[42] Melvyn P. Leffler, "National Security, Core Values, and Power," in *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, ed. Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

The most common explanation for NATO's endurance and functioning is that NATO was, in one way or another, democratic. Scholars like Thomas Risse-Kappen and Wallace Thies have argued that NATO endured because it was made up largely of democratic states.[43] Others have seen in NATO an organization that operated along "the same federalist principles that govern American democracy."[44] There is in fact little to the suggestion that NATO itself operated *like* a democracy, for there was no executive power. Although the Secretaries General sought their right to launch initiatives, they had no power to compel anyone to do anything, nor did anyone else in the organization.[45]

It is more difficult to determine whether the nature of the allies' home governments affected their policies. There can be no suggestion that NATO was simply an alliance made up of democratic states. Despite the Treaty language and grand speeches about NATO as an alliance of democracies, many officials, like those in the British Foreign Office, believed NATO's "democratic ideology" was already "tarnished by autocracy in Portugal and the somewhat authoritarian government in Turkey."[46]

Among those states that were democracies, the nature of those democracies varied greatly. The leaders of NATO countries often did not think their colleagues were true democrats, or at least not subject to the same democratic scrutiny and accountability they themselves faced.

---

[43] Wallace J. Thies, *Why NATO Endures* (New York: Cambridge University, 2009); Thomas Risse-Kappen, *Cooperation among Democracies: The European Influence on U.S. Foreign Policy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995).

[44] Andrew Preston, "The Spirit of Democracy," in *Uncertain Empire: American History and the Idea of the Cold War*, ed. Joel Isaac and Duncan Bell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 143.

[45] Dirk U. Stikker, *Men of Responsibility: A Memoir*, 1st ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), 363. See also Norstad Oral History, DDEL, 164.

[46] Robert Cutler to Christian Herter, March 13, 1958, White House Office, Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, NSC series, Briefing Notes series, box 16, folder: Spain, U.S. Policy toward (1957-60), DDEL.

Britain's Prime Minister Harold Macmillan wrote about the "strange system" of American government, and could not understand how U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower remained so powerful after his illnesses. "The whole scene" in Washington, Macmillan thought, was much "more like the days of the Roman Empire than a modern democratic State."[47] West Germany's Konrad Adenauer, for his part, thought it was "wrong to talk about democracy in France. The French were not really democrats." It was a "Napoleonic regime," after all, "which had suited them best," and Charles de Gaulle, he thought, embodied this.[48]

The practices of democratic government, especially electioneering and forming minority or coalition governments, also presented problems for NATO. Election campaigns slowed down agreement in the North Atlantic Council and in other forums because politicians were not willing to take strong stands while on the hustings. The idea that new elections always turned up fresh and talented leaders is too optimistic. As Dean Acheson remarked, it was a "damned shame that the right "people" don't turn up in the sheer gamble of politics."[49] In fact, elections often filled allies with dread rather than hope. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, NATO allies variously worried that Labour might come to power in Britain, that the Italian coalition government would collapse, or that France might elect a government too far to the right or too far to the left. By far

---

[47] Macmillan diary entry for June 12, 1957, *MD:PM*

[48] Record of Meeting in the Palais Schaumberg, October 8, 1958. PREM 11/2328, NAUK. French officials were telling their colleagues that France was in a state of "authoritarian rule" that would "revert to democracy" in about two years. Memorandum of Conversation, Paris, January 23, 1959, RG59, Records of the Office of Western European Affairs [hereafter WE], Subject File Relating to France, 1944-1960 [hereafter France, 1944-1960], box 3, "Memos of Conversation 1959 (Folder 2)," NARA.

[49] July 6, 1965. Acheson to Donnelly. Dean Gooderham AP [hereafter AP], General Correspondence. [hereafter Gen. Corr.], Box 8, Folder 105, as filed in the microform version of these papers (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 2004). This contrasts with the argument of Wallace Thies, a political scientist, that "[d]emocracies regularly renew and reinvigorate their governments by allowing new, more energetic, and/or more patient leaders to rise to the top" and provide a "regular infusion of new talent." Thies, *Why NATO Endures*, 297.

the greatest worry, however, was the fear of almost all allies, including many Germans, that the German electorate would be whipped into a nationalistic frenzy. Germany's political past, and the allies' fear that Germany would "return to the bottle," make an explanation of NATO based on shared democratic principles especially difficult.[50]

That said, of course there was a difference between the political systems of the allies and those they faced across the Iron Curtain. But the differences were not always considered advantageous. Selwyn Lloyd, the British Foreign Secretary, complained that the NATO allies were "greatly handicapped" in diplomacy by efforts to get agreement; his implication was how much nicer it must have been in Moscow to simply tell your allies when to agree with you.[51] In the middle of Eisenhower's presidency, Ike, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, and the National Security Council consoled themselves by arguing that "in a life-and-death struggle, democracy would prove itself superior to dictatorship." Nonetheless, in the Cold War, short of hot war, they believed "dictatorship has many advantages over democracy.[52]

---

[50] Risse-Kappen seeks to square this circle by essentially avoiding discussion of Germany. *Cooperation among Democracies*, 23 and note 32. Italy's political past, as much as Germany's complicated the picture of a common democratic tradition. Burk, "The Anglo-American "Special Relationship" " 150.

[51] Telegram from the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the Department of State. 1747. March 4, 1959, 6 pm. US Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States* [hereafter *FRUS]*, *1958-1960*, vol. VII (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office), Document 197. All *FRUS* documents in this dissertation are referred to by *FRUS*, followed by year, volume, and document number. The relevant *FRUS* volumes are available online from the Department of State's Historical office website at history.state.gov [hereafter *FRUS]*.

[52] Memorandum of Discussion at 284th Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington, May 10, 1956, in *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 30. There are more practical examples of this frustration: When, in the mid and late 1950s the Soviet Union undertook an "economic offensive" in Africa and the Middle East, the allies found it very difficult to mobilize a "free world economic system" against "totalitarian power." Telegram from USRO to Department of State, May 4, 1956, *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 19. Similarly, during the Berlin Crisis of the early 1960s, some policy officials wished to coordinate economic sanctions by NATO against the Soviet Union; the idea fell apart given different legislative systems each ally used to control trade.

That there was a tremendous difference in the character of the governments allied in NATO and those dragooned into the Warsaw Pact by the Soviet Union is not up for debate. But what role that difference played in NATO is extremely murky. It can only be a part of the story.

The distinguished political scientist Stanley Hoffmann acknowledged that there were connections between the peoples of the Atlantic nations. Still, he thought it "absurd" or at least "misleading" to point to broad connections between populations and to assume that these connections affect the specific policies and decisions made by governments.[53] Such an analysis would require a finer lens, one that examines the personal connections between members of these governments. Hoffman's Harvard colleague Charles Maier and others have pointed to a "transnational élite" that spanned the allied states.[54] Others have called this an "Atlantic political culture;" the idea is that a group of influential individuals, either members of government or those with influence over governments, served as a bridge connecting the allies' values and interests. These scholars point to gatherings and meetings, such as those of the Bilderberg society, where influential officials from the NATO countries met and developed a "“basic consensus on transatlantic cooperation and the need for Western unity."[55]

---

[53] Stanley Hoffmann, "Discord in Community: The North Atlantic Area as a Partial International System," in *The Atlantic Community: Progress and Prospects*, ed. Francis Orlando Wilcox and Henry Field Haviland (New York: Praeger, 1963), 8.

[54] Charles S. Maier, "The Making of 'Pax Americana': Formative Moments of United States Ascendancy," in *The Quest for Stability: Problems of West European Security, 1918-1957*, ed. R. Ahmann, Michael Howard, and Adolf M. Birke (Oxford Oxford University Press, 1993), 391.

[55] Thomas W. Gijswijt, "Beyond NATO: Transnational Elite Networks and the Atlantic Alliance," in *Transforming NATO in the Cold War: Challenges Beyond Deterrence in the 1960s*, ed. Andreas Wenger, Christian Nuenlist, and Anna Locher (London: Routledge, 2007), 60.

Some, but not all, of the most important officials charged with NATO files met regularly at meetings and conferences of organizations like the English-Speaking Union, Bilderberg, the Council on Foreign Relations, Atlantik-Brücke, and parallel unofficial and sometimes informal clubs.[56] Historians and scholars of these organizations, however, have not been able to identify a direct link between these organizations and policy, and even scholars that study Bilderberg's connections to NATO warn against overestimating the importance of these organizations.[57] Attendance at Bilderberg summits, of course, is no sign of a belief in their effectiveness; McGeorge Bundy, bored at one such conference, scribbled a proposed title for future meetings: "Uncle Dean Acheson's Scribble Seminar for Delinquent Youths."[58] Other organizations and lobby groups, like Clarence Streit's "Union Now" and the Atlantic Council, were "just 'pie in the sky" that officials believed caused "extensive" problems for policy making and "gratuitously create[d] confusion" about policy in NATO.[59]

Scholars looking for a transnational elite at Bilderberg and other meetings, however, have been digging in the wrong place. The most important gatherings between elites with close connections occurred at NATO headquarters, in the Council and in the hallways, and also in the regular meetings between diplomats on official business. There were deep personal connections

---

[56] Readers will notice that several of the Council on Foreign Relations' "Atlantic Policy Studies" volumes were consulted for this study. On the CFR and NATO, see Robert D. Schulzinger, *The Wise Men of Foreign Affairs: The History of the Council on Foreign Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), especially 193-200.

[57] Gijswijt, "Beyond NATO," 60. See also Valerie Aubourg, "Organizing Atlanticism: The Bilderberg Group and the Atlantic Institute, 1952-1963," in *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe, 1945-1960*, ed. Giles Scott-Smith and Hans Krabbendam (Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2003).

[58] Handwritten notes by McGeorge Bundy. March 21, 1964, LBJL.

[59] Memorandum for Bundy, "Presidential Meeting with de Gaulle," May 26, 1961, NSF, box 70A, folder: "France-General, 5/11/61-5/18/61," JFKL; Schaetzel to Rostow, February 19, 1963, and Butterworth to Achilles, February 13, 1963, both in RG59, EUR, DAS, Schaetzel Files, box 1, folder: "Canadians," NARA.

between the presidents and Prime Ministers, diplomats and bureaucrats, and generals and admirals who shaped NATO. These connections, transcending national borders, grew out of university study abroad, from business or legal relationships, and from participation in the Second World War. Dwight Eisenhower, Harold Macmillan, and Charles de Gaulle repeatedly worked together - not always easily - in war-torn North Africa and Europe. Other NATO officials and officers fought together - and indeed against each other - on the same battlefield. On D-Day, General Maxwell Taylor parachuted into Normandy on the instructions of the plane's jumpmaster, Lawrence Legere. General Hans Spiedel, Chief of Staff to the absent Erwin Rommel, led the Nazi defenses that day. Less than two decades later, in the early 1960s, Taylor was Kennedy's military advisor, and then the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, with Legere his assistant; Spiedel was the Commander-in-Chief of all NATO troops in Central Europe.

But did these connections and relationships, which predated the North Atlantic Treaty, mean that NATO officials thought the same way? Did their common history equate to common values that led to seamless cooperation?[60] Lord Ismay offers an important and nuanced answer when he explained that the officials accredited to national NATO delegation met "not only round the Council table, but round the dinner table, the bridge table, on the golf course, and so on." Nonetheless, this intercourse did not create a transnational community with a common conception of NATO that ranged across borders; instead, it created the personal connections that lubricated what might have been a site of greater friction between allies. Personal interactions, according to Ismay, made it "much easier … to do business with chaps you know well then with

[60] NATO seemed to offer the ideal site for cultural transfer, or cultural transmission, i.e. the interaction of social groups and the acceptance, alteration, or rejection of culture. Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, "Cultural Transfer," in *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, ed. Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 272.

strangers or mere acquaintances."[61] Thus while close connections between allied officials might have made doing business easier, that business was representing the instructions issued by national capitals. As Hoffmann put it, the diplomacy of NATO was conducted among "a group of states, however friendly, whose statesmen remain in the mental universe of traditional interstate relations."[62]

As Stanley Hoffmann was describing the "mental universe" of NATO diplomats and policymakers, his subjects' minds were undergoing an important change. A diplomat's vocabulary, according to Hoffman, could contain either "platitudes that express pleasant hopes, or subtle instruments used to prod and to pry, or veils needed to conceal and disguise."[63] But NATO witnessed a new type of diplomacy that helped ensure it persevered. Allied officials came to believe that the best way to manage their interstate relations was not to send an honest gentleman abroad to lie for his country, but instead to share national goals and plans as openly as possible.

There remained, for the duration of the period under study, much diplomatic posturing, secrecy, and reserve between NATO diplomats. Intelligence services, especially the CIA, continued to covertly collect reports and transcripts of what allied leaders said and wrote in private. Nonetheless, these practices were accompanied by a new belief that sharing information, facts, and ideas with allies was the surest way of achieving last cooperation and, more importantly, achieving national goals. The idea that the NATO allies could convince each other that common policy was in each of their best interest helped keep NATO glued together. The

---

[61] "Lecture to Canadian Defence College on 25/5/56," May 25, 1956, Ismay Papers, 3/18/6a, LHCMA.

[62] Hoffmann, "Discord in Community," 9.

[63] Ibid., 7.

promise of consultation and exchange of information that would eventually lead to agreement on fundamental issues – the promise of transnationalism – helped paper over differences between allies.

At no time did NATO officials sit down and agree to such a change. In the Three Wisemen's report of 1956, and repeatedly thereafter, the NATO allies called for more "consultation" but there was disagreement as to what consultation meant and when it should occur in the national policymaking process. Throughout much of this period, most allies believed that they had not achieved a proper process of consultation. And repeatedly, allies made important policy decisions and took actions without informing their allies.

But each of these crises only provided more evidence that the NATO allies needed to understand each other's thinking. It was disagreement, debate, and discord that propelled NATO forward. Ideas for reforming NATO, or establishing a global directorate, or reducing NATO to a series of bilateral agreements, were rejected. Yet rather than return to any status quo, the NATO allies sough to adapt the NATO machine to the changing international environment.

Immediate national concerns, rather than grand hopes, pushed this process forward. The British, for example, believed that sharing information about the complex nature of postcolonial Africa would convince their NATO allies not to try and expand NATO's responsibility to Africa. Others, like Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, believed that he could overcome the allies' concerns about his defense strategy if they had the same facts he did. As a result, he, and other officials, took a number of steps to improve the defense data available to the allies. By the late 1960s, both the allies that wished to encourage the process of detente with the Soviet Union, and those who thought it was a false hope, believed that exchanging information about bilateral contacts through NATO would protect their interests.

Not every national policy was discussed in NATO. Quite the contrary; some of the most important discussions for NATO's success were discussed outside of NATO, such as Anglo-American policy in the Middle East in the late 1950s, military contingency for Berlin, and critically in the late 1960s, the plans to keep American and British troops stationed in Germany. And the key decisions and policies that secured NATO's continued existence, including whether and where to deploy troops and whether to maintain security guarantees and alliances were based on what the British called "hardheaded" calculation. But the hope - and growing belief - was that transnationalism provided another and complementary means of achieving those policies. It provided the allies with a relatively private and safe forum to convince their allies to support them on various world affairs, if not as NATO then as ad hoc groups of individual sovereign states. The allies came to see NATO as a forum where officials could educate each other, and in turn be educated. They believed the NATO machine was applicable to an enormous range of problems including, but well beyond, the Cold War.

The NATO machine is not and has not been the primary instrument of foreign policy for its allies, nor is it the only grouping in which the various allies have co-operated on the world stage. NATO's perceived value has waxed and waned since 1949. But it has lasted throughout the crises described below, through the rest of the Cold War and into the twenty first century. Because the NATO machine can be used for whatever the allies wish, and because they have used it as an important forum for informing and educating each other, it survived not only for what it did as what allies hoped it could achieve.

*****

The ten chapters that follow detail the agreements and disagreements that transformed NATO. They reveal a number of different possible tracks upon which NATO's development

might have travelled, and explain how and why NATO took the direction it did. The first section examines the changes in the alliance caused by the receding threat of a Soviet invasion of central Europe and Moscow's growing attention to Africa and the Middle East. The second section focuses on the disagreement over the use and purpose of NATO's military forces and efforts to reconcile NATO's integrated military structure with the fact that NATO's nuclear firepower was primarily under American command. The final section focuses on the changing nature of postwar Europe, a new American role in NATO, and planning for NATO's future beyond the Cold War.

SECTION 1: NATO AND THE WORLD: BEYOND THE MAGINOT LINE

"Faced with a world situation increasingly inhospitable to their aims, the Soviet leaders began to seek a way to restore their maneuverability short of the alternative extremes of war or of accommodation at unacceptable cost. […] This atmosphere has also reduced the incentive for Free World countries to submerge their differences in the face of a common threat[. …] Meanwhile, by creating an atmosphere in which further rearmament may appear unnecessary … the Soviet leaders aim to undermine NATO."

– "World Situation and Trends," U.S. National Intelligence Estimate, 1955[1]

1.0.1 Cracks in the Cement

The story of NATO's relationship with the wider world begins in Europe. For it was only with the establishment of the NATO, the accession of the Federal Republic of Germany to the NAT in 1955, and the stasis brought on by the formation of the Warsaw Pact that NATO could begin to consider applying the NATO machine outside the North Atlantic. The stasis, and reduced certainty of military attack, caused the allies to consider how else NATO might serve their national interests. But the NATO allies held such a disparate range of aims and priorities for the non-Atlantic world that they could come to little agreement. And their efforts to adapt NATO's responsibilities and commitments acted like a centrifuge threatening to pull apart the allies and dissolve the alliance and the organization. NATO overcame the problem of its relationship with the rest of the world by being extraordinarily cautious in what it did and said about events outside the North Atlantic. All the allies kept their disagreements as quiet as possible, they often agreed to disagree, but built a practice of discussion and information sharing to try and find areas for agreement.

***

NATO's early formation is often summed up with the apocryphal quip by Lord Ismay: NATO existed to 'keep the Americans in, the Germans down, and the Russians out.' Certainly

[1] "World Situation and Trends," National Intelligence Estimate, NIE 100-7-55, November 1, 1955, *FRUS*, *1955-1957, XIX*, doc. 39.

the primary motivation for the North Atlantic Treaty was the perceived need to keep the Soviet Union from encroaching into Western Europe, and this perception grew more acute after both the Prague Coup and Berlin Crisis of 1948. Military planning remained the most important part of NATO policy for its first decade. In the 1950s, in response to the Korean War, NATO established an integrated military command structure and appointed Dwight Eisenhower the first SACEUR.

But the middle part of Ismay's explanation, regarding Germany, has always been complicated. Keeping the Germans "down" was a tricky business, as the first half of the twentieth century had shown. What role would Germany play in the postwar balance of power? Toward the end of World War Two, some had wanted Germany rebuilt only as an agrarian state with limited industrial capacity so as to remove it entirely from the equation of international affairs. This, however, was impractical; it would be difficult to enforce and the historical legacy of Versailles was not one that encouraged emulation. The Western powers also needed German industrial and military strength to balance against the enormous manpower of the Red Army in the emerging Cold War. Still, no one would soon forget the last two World Wars, both of which pitted most of the initial signatories to the North Atlantic Treaty against Wilhelmine and then Nazi Germany. It would be no easy choice to allow Germany to rebuild its strength after the allies had just paid horrendous sums of blood and treasure to defeat it.

One idea was to allow West Germany, or the Federal Republic (FRG), to rebuild not as an independent army but in small units that could be integrated with European, especially French forces. In this proposed European Defence Community (EDC), The German units would be of such a size and organization that they could never coalesce as an independent Germany army, but their manpower could still be added to the rosters of the West. To the agony of the EDC's

supporters on both sides of the Atlantic, the plan fell apart in 1954 after the French National Assembly voted against ratification.[2]

The EDC was an early effort at "double containment;" that is, it aimed on one hand, to contain the Soviet Union by establishing an alliance that would prevent further Soviet encroachments, and on the other, to tie Germany to the Atlantic allies and preventing it from going off on another ruinous adventure.[3] The need for German rearmament and incorporation into the West gained urgency in the Korean War, and the French rejection of the EDC did not end efforts to find a place for the FRG in the Western constellation. In 1954 British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden scored a major diplomatic wicket by proposing a new institution, the Western European Union (WEU), which would admit the FRG if Bonn promised to abide by certain limits to its military and naval forces, weapons production, and especially, a voluntary commitment to abstain from producing atomic, chemical, or biological weapons on German soil. The FRG membership in WEU and accession to the North Atlantic Treaty in 1955 coupled German power to that of the other NATO states and eliminated the immediate likelihood of Germany becoming neutral or allying outright with the Soviet Union.

---

[2] Hitchcock, *France Restored*, 171. On the EDC, see also Brian R. Duchin, "The "Agonizing Reappraisal": Eisenhower, Dulles, and the European Defense Community," *Diplomatic History* 16, no. 2 (April 1992); Edward Fursdon, *The European Defence Community: A History* (London: Macmillan, 1980); Rolf Steininger, "John Foster Dulles, the European Defense Community, and the Germany Question," in *John Foster Dulles and the Diplomacy of the Cold War*, ed. Richard H. Immerman (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990); James Hershberg, ""Explosion in the Offing": German Rearmament and American Diplomacy, 1953-1955," *Diplomatic History* 16, no. 4 (October 1992).

[3] On French policy towards Germany, see Hitchcock, *France Restored*; Michael A. Sutton, *France and the Construction of Europe, 1944-2007: The Geopolitical Imperative* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007). The best account of the American efforts to contain Germany remains Thomas Alan Schwartz, *America's Germany: John J. McCloy and the Federal Republic of Germany* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991).

The incorporation of the FRG into NATO was a deft achievement for Western diplomats. What to do with Germany, and how to deter the Soviet Union, had been the problems of highest priority facing Western statesmen.[4] In 1954, there was general agreement among NATO military commanders that the USSR would not attack NATO without mobilizing - noisily and obviously - large numbers of troops in the Soviet Union itself.[5] By 1956, Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery NATO's Deputy Supreme Commander, argued that the incorporation of Germany in 1955 "had made it virtually certain that there would be no major war during at least the next decade."[6] "Western policy in Europe," wrote a British official, "having achieved its main objective last May, is in a bit of a cul de sac."[7] What next?

This stasis would not last long. Changes in the world necessitated changes in NATO. The first new challenge stemmed from Cold War developments following the 1955 Geneva Summit. The allies, after a decade of worry that the Soviet Union would flex its military muscle in Europe, found Moscow adept at employing other instruments of foreign policy. The Soviets had signed a peace treaty with Austria and withdrawn the Red Army, issued a disarmament proposal, sent a mission of top Soviet leaders to Yugoslavia, accepted a meeting of the Four Powers, and organized the Warsaw Pact.

Certainly, said Dulles, the Soviets were "trying very hard to do something." But what? Did these moves signal a Soviet understanding that war was unwinnable? Did the Kremlin sense the danger of its own over-extension? Was the Soviet government turning its focus to its own people

---

[4] For the lasting power of geopolitical thinking, and the importance of Germany in American geopolitical postwar strategy, see Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992).

[5] Ismay to Winston Churchill, March 20, 1954, Ismay Papers, 3/12/27, LHCMA.

[6] Untitled minute by [Lord] Reading, June 14, 1956, FO 371/124805, NAUK.

[7] Minute by G. W. Harrison, March 26, 1956, FO 371/124801, NAUK.

after their long suffering? These guesses, uncharacteristically rosy assessments for a man of Dulles' demeanor, were rhetorical cues. For what the Soviets really wanted, Dulles explained, were three things: to "reverse German admission to NATO," to weaken NATO, and to eliminate American participation in European security.[8]

The Soviet efforts were part of what the NATO allies began to call the Soviet "political offensive," or "political and cultural offensive." By whatever name, the goal was to make the Soviet Union more attractive to Europeans.[9] Eisenhower himself worried that the public opinion reports from Europe showed a "new feeling growing abroad that NATO may be unnecessary."[10]

The United States Information Agency (USIA) reported that "the cement holding NATO together" was "showing cracks," with neutralism rampant and "much complacency about the improbability of an early war."[11] With the likelihood of Soviet aggression seeming to

---

[8] "Outline for a Speech by the Secretary of State." May 19, 1955. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XIX, 23.

[9] American intelligence reports pointed to France, for example, where the Soviets were inviting French "scholars, publicists, rising young politicians, and influential business leaders" to the USSR. This was not an effort to indoctrinate these citizens; it was damaging enough to predispose them to "neutralism or even increased anti-Americanism." "Daily Intelligence Abstracts of Interest to Working Groups – No. 581," OCB, March 16, 1956. DDRS, CK3100329121. The Soviets were abandoning outright subversion in favor of what the CIA called "subtler forms of political action," hoping to encourage non-Communist Europeans to join popular fronts, promote neutralist policies, and "in general to substitute Bloc for Western influence. "World Situation and Trends," National Intelligence Estimate 100-7-55. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XIX, 39.

[10] Draft of message for General Gruenther from Col. Goodpaster, October 22, 1955. DDRS, CK3100241767.

[11] Daily Intelligence Abstracts No. 549, Operations Coordinating Board, January 31, 1956. DDRS, CK3100040602.

diminish, the Central Intelligence Agency warned, "some loosening" of the alliance "seems inevitable."[12]

1.0.2 The Wrong Kind of Alliance in the Wrong Place

The public opinion and intelligence analysis had Europe's official mind backwards. In London, Paris, Bonn, Rome, and other allied capitals, officials were seeking a means not of dispensing with NATO, but of adapting NATO to help them meet their respective national goals. Had Europe been the only prize in the Cold War, or had there been no other international context beyond the East-West showdown in the 1950s, then perhaps NATO might have faded in importance, or, as the CIA, predicted, "loosened," after 1955. But the challenges facing NATO and its members were much more wide-ranging than a simple showdown between democracy and communism, or a geopolitical struggle for the European heartland. The 1950s was a period of enormous upheaval as European empires relinquished - often unwillingly - their imperial control over colonies in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. The non-Atlantic world was in flux, and the North Atlantic nations were deeply concerned about what this meant for both their states and their alliance. These changes caused the allies to consider what NATO could do in the world at large.

Until 1955 the NATO allies avoided discussing topics outside the Western European area in the North Atlantic Council. To talk about the rest of the world would mean broaching the topic of imperial policies of some NATO allies, policies that frequently drew criticism and recrimination. States like Norway and Canada were deeply troubled by French policies in North Africa, both because of anti-colonial domestic constituencies and because they believed French actions were giving NATO, and by extension its individual allies, an embarrassing

[12] National Intelligence Estimate 100-7-55, "World Situation and Trends," *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XIX, 39.

black eye abroad.[13] Many allies, like the British, found themselves between a rock and a hard place. They recognized that French withdrawal from North Africa would "be a major blow to France and to the whole Western Defense pos[ition]," but they could not "always endorse their policies."[14] The Americans, like Dulles, found themselves simultaneously attempting to prevent the non-imperial NATO states from criticizing the French, while also discouraging the French from raising the North African issue in the Council. The North Atlantic Council, Dulles believed, was not the place to discuss sticky issues.[15]

Dulles had a change of heart, however, in May 1955. A showdown with the People's Republic of China (PRC) over the islands of Quemoy and Matsu prompted his shift. Dulles said it was "right" that the Council should consider Far East questions, "because of intrinsic importance of these questions and their effect on European areas."[16] At the same meeting, the Turkish foreign minister spoke about defensive relations outside of NATO, including early plans for a regional defensive alliance in the Middle East and South Asia.[17] After the meeting, Dulles wrote to Eisenhower that this had been the "first time that the Council had gone into

---

[13] For the Canadian worries, see Dana Wilgress to Lord Ismay, March 19, 1956, Ismay Papers, 3/12/32a, LHCMA. Norwegian complaints are in Harold Macmillan to Crawford (Oslo). October 26, 1955, FO 371/118546, NAUK.

[14] J.C.W. Bushell to D. A. Greenhill, October 31, 1955, FO 371/118546, NAUK.

[15] See Dulles' reaction to the Italian suggestion he discuss Sino-American tensions in the North Atlantic Council. Memorandum of a Conversation at the Department of State" March 30, 1955. FRUS, page 262.

[16] "Telegram from the Office of the Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Council to the Department of State." May 11, 1955. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXI, 52.

[17] At the time, the Turks referred to a "Northern Tier" concept, which would evolve first into the Middle East Treaty Organization, known also as the Baghdad Pact, and then into the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO). The organization, while designed with some conscious similarities to NATO, did not have an integrated military command. See Behçet K. Yeşlıbursa, "The American Concept of the 'Northern Tier' Defence Project and the Signing of the Turco-Pakistani Agreement, 1953-54." *Middle Eastern Studies* 37, no. 3 (July 2001): 59-110.

these global problems." While the discussion did not bring total agreement, it "was very valuable" and "did bring a far better understanding" amongst the NATO members. In private conversations around the Ministerial Meeting Dulles met with French officials to discuss Indochina, and with the Portuguese about Goa. He mused afterward "perhaps they have a better case than we have generally assumed."[18]

By December 1955, when the Ministers met again, more allies argued that NATO should take an active interest, and perhaps an active policy, beyond the boundaries of the North Atlantic area. The Portuguese argued that Africa was the "real weak point for West." The Dutch, concerned more about Indonesia than Africa, argued that NATO was at a "turning point in its history" and that it "must be concerned with events outside [the] NATO area."[19] Antoine Pinay, the French foreign minister, also called on NATO to "search for ways and means meeting Soviet economic threat in underdeveloped areas."[20]

The Portuguese, Dutch, and French all had an interest in rallying support for their policies toward former and current colonies. But they were joined by non-colonial powers including the Italians, and especially the Germans, who wanted NATO to take "common measures to thwart further Soviet penetration." The Germans argued, "wherever one of us loses, all lose."[21] The American delegation reported back to the State Department that the Ministerial showed the

---

[18] "Message from the Secretary of State to the President." May 10, 1955. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 8. "Telegram from the Office of the Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Council to the Department of State." May 11, 1955. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXI, 52.

[19] "Telegram from the Secretary of State to the Department of State." December 17, 1955. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 13.

[20] Pinay suggested that NATO allies coordinate aid to underdeveloped countries or that the Organization even undertake "Point 4" activities itself. "Telegram from the United States Delegation at the North Atlantic Ministerial Meeting to the Department of State." December 16, 1955. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 11.

[21] "Telegram from the United States Delegation at the North Atlantic Ministerial Meeting to the Department of State." December 16, 1955. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 11.

NATO member states "groping for ways of implementing Article 2" which called for non-military cooperation between the allies. The allies were searching for "a collective policy in the political, economic, and psychological fields." This new perspective did not mean the end of NATO's concern with military affairs, but - or so the Americans thought - "reflected an attempt to think through other ways and means of giving long-term substance and content to NATO."[22] This pleased the Americans. "All in all," wrote Dulles to the President, this Ministerial was "one of the best meetings that the NATO Council had ever had."[23]

The remarks at the NATO Ministerial meetings were not, in any sense, a freewheeling discussion amongst ministers. They were scripted statements prepared in advance by officials. The Council was not in 1955 a forum for open discussion and debate. But it was nonetheless significant that the allies acknowledged that they saw threats to their interests in a variety of locales and from a variety of means. Whether and how NATO could do something about it was a different question altogether.

French politicians wanted a change in NATO. Michel Debré, a French Senator, complained that NATO was "a military alliance in Europe where there was no fighting" while there was "no alliance in North Africa where fighting was actually under way." It was "the wrong kind of alliance in the wrong place." [24] Leaders of the Fourth Republic, especially Foreign Minister Christian Pineau, repeatedly called for NATO to expand its responsibility to North Africa. What

---

[22] "Telegram from the United States Delegation at the North Atlantic Council Ministerial Meeting to the Department of State." December 17, 1955. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 14.

[23] Memorandum of Discussion at the 271st Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington, December 22, 1955." December 22, 1955. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 17.

[24] Paris No. 1029 to Secretary of State, October 22, 1955. DDRS, CK3100304752.

this meant, precisely, was never entirely clear but seemed only to mean political support, at the United Nations (UN or UNO) or elsewhere, for French policy.[25]

While French concerns in 1955 focused on North Africa, British concerns centered primarily on the Middle East. The British were seeking to expand NATO's purview while also seeking a means to maintain close links with the United States. In late 1955 Harold Macmillan, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in Anthony Eden's Cabinet, proposed meetings of the British Prime Minister and American President to discuss a strategy for countering Soviet moves around the world. The U.S. State Department, however, rejected the plan.[26] As Macmillan made his entreaties for Anglo-American cooperation, the Foreign Office (FO) was developing plans for NATO to take responsibility for other parts of the globe. The plan, presented to the British Cabinet in May 1956 as "The Future of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization," called on NATO to maintain its defensive shield, but also to meet "the Soviet political and economic offensive which is now beamed on South East Asia and the Middle East, where the Western nations have grave difficulties in aligning their policies." This memorandum was not a call for new machinery, but an expression of the desire to broaden NATO activities and political consultation, even economic consultation, to "all parts of the world." This way, NATO allies would "gradually develop a community of view and identity of policy at least on all problems bearing on the cold war."[27] Western strategy in the Cold War,

---

[25] "Memorandum of a Conversation, French Embassy, Karachi, March 7, 1956, 1:30 p.m." *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXXVII, 18.

[26] Memorandum from the Counselor (MacArthur) to the Secretary of State. December 9, 1955. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXXVII, 221.

[27] "The Future of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation," Cabinet Paper, May 2, 1956, C.P.(56)11, NAUK.

according to London, needed to focus just as much on political and economic levers as military strength.[28]

1.0.3 Something More Than a Military Alliance?

But how would NATO develop, let alone implement, a common policy? There was very little heavy lifting done by officials and policymakers to determine how, either in theory or in practice, the NATO allies could come together to agree on the great policy questions of the day.

Nonetheless, John Foster Dulles announced that NATO allies could come together as something more than a defensive alliance. On April 23, 1956, in anticipation of the meeting of NATO foreign ministers scheduled for the next month, Dulles made a speech to the Associated Press in which he emphasized the notion of "Atlantic Community." Dulles drew heavily on ideas he had agreed on with the Atlantic federalist Clarence Streit in the 1940 about the need for common belief and action across the Atlantic. John Milloy, who has written extensively on the search for an Atlantic Community in NATO, argues that Dulles' ideas might have been fuzzy but his desire for such a community cannot be doubted.[29] He had seen, first hand, the disastrous wrangling among victors at Versailles. During the Second World War he had vociferously opposed the method of conference at Dumbarton Oaks, where he thought that a few large states seeking to act for all nations of the world was the "rankest form of imperialism."[30] He applied this thinking to NATO in the 1950s, arguing that the time was passing "when a few countries could presume to speak for so many." It was time, he argued, for NATO states to come

---

[28] The Italians agreed with their French and British colleagues. See "Memorandum of a Conversation, White House, March 1, 1956, 9 a.m." *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXXVII, 104.

[29] Milloy, *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, 147.

[30] Richard H. Immerman, *John Foster Dulles: Piety, Pragmatism, and Power in U.S. Foreign Policy* (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 1999), 147.

together and consult each other freely and openly, in a new style of peacetime alliance and community.[31]

It was in this milieu - of a changing Cold War, a desire by member states to harness NATO to their national interests, and of Dulles' promise that the United States would take the lead in expanding the meaning of NATO - that the foreign ministers once against met in May 1956. Dulles provided the theme by announcing beforehand that it was necessary for NATO "to organize itself into something more than a military alliance."[32] While all the allies might have agreed with this statement, their reasons and interpretations for strengthening NATO's non-military component were myriad. The meeting reflected the eclectic and unorganized thinking member states had been giving NATO since the change in Soviet tactics had become obvious in 1955. Generally, "strengthening" NATO, as it was discussed in 1956, meant one of two things: either developing the "internal" coordination and cooperation between NATO states, that is through increased connections between the allies themselves, or through "external" coordination and cooperation, that is taking a common line or even action on issues outside the North Atlantic region.

At the May Ministerial, talk of internal coordination resulted in vague calls for cooperation and the broadening of trade relations, but also in more specific suggestions: Pineau, of France, argued that the time was "ripe to improve civilian infrastructure of members." NATO, he advised, should cooperate on communications systems, dams, and other public works projects

---

[31] "Draft Memorandum of a Conversation, Department of State, Washington, March 28, 1955, 11 a.m." *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXXVII, 71.

[32] *Department of State Bulletin*, May 14, 1956, 79.

across the alliance.[33] Some of the allies, especially those from the southeastern limits of NATO, hoped that such projects could lead to more money for their troubled economies.[34]

But much of the talk, regardless of the nationality of the speaker, concentrated on the coordination of external policy. External coordination itself had many interpretations. Some allies, especially the French, but also other European states like Belgium, were eager to establish a means for coordinating economic aid from NATO states to the developing world. Soviet gifts and loans to developing countries - the Soviet economic offensive - had shown the powerful effects of strategically coordinated financial power and assistance.[35] Johan Beyen, the Dutch foreign minister, told his colleagues that they were approaching "something in the nature of an economic cold war."[36] France's Pineau, who arrived at the meeting with the strongest views, called on NATO states to take the initiative in the United Nations and establish a new organization to distribute aid.[37] Most Ministers opposed any such effort by NATO to participate

---

[33] Telegram from the United States Delegation at the North Atlantic Council Ministerial Meeting to the Department of State. May 5, 1956. 2 am. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 22.

[34] The Italians, for instance, wanted, within NATO, a commission to examine the economic needs of member states and distribute aid accordingly. "Compte Rendu de la Réunion Tenue le 2 Mai 1956 entre MM. Pineau et Dulles à Paris." *DDF*, 1956, vol. 1, doc. 289.

[35] This is the subject of chapter 4.

[36] "Summary Record of a meeting of the Council held at the Palais de Chaillot, Paris XVIe, on Friday, 4th May, 1956 at 3.30 pm." NATO/C-R(56)21.

[37] The "Pineau Plan" as it was termed, was so unpopular with almost every other ally that despite France's forceful support its not implemented. For Pineau's presentation see "Procès-verbal de la session ministérielle du Conseil de l'O.T.A.N." May 16, 1956. *DDF*, 1956, vol. 1, doc. 322. His later memorandum elucidating his idea is "Mémorandum du Gouvernement Français. 'Coopération économique au sein de l'O.T.A.N." June 9, 1956. *DDF*, 1956, vol. 1, doc. 379. See also records of the Committee of Technical Advisors, AC/110, NATO.

in the distribution of aid, worrying that aid with a "NATO label" might appear to have political or military strings attached and thus be counterproductive.[38]

Thinking about an external, coordinated NATO approach to economic policy quickly mixed with thinking about a broader coordination of foreign policy. The Dutch, concerned about being isolated on Indonesia, argued that NATO members must undertake "increased consultation on all non-military matters before taking position on any matter before outside world."[39] The German minister, too, argued that NATO should "switch to a kind of political 'forward strategy,'" whereby NATO could discuss what "political, economic, social or psychological measures should be taken." This consultation might "lead to joint or concerted action."[40] Selwyn Lloyd, the British foreign minister, also advocated for NATO to take the offensive. Just because "NATO was a defensive Alliance from the military standpoint," Lloyd explained, it did not follow that it need also be on the defensive in the political field."[41]

These statements, while vague, represent a common thread of thinking among NATO's Western European allies that NATO should take the "offensive" in political and economic affairs in the Middle East, Africa and Asia.[42] Each state saw a concerted NATO policy as essential to various national projects, including maintaining colonial rule or ensuring that the end of colonial

---

[38] It seems that Spaak, here, coined "NATO label" as pejorative. "Summary Record of a meeting of the Council held at the Palais de Chaillot, Paris XVIe, on Friday, 4th May, 1956 at 10.15 am." C-R(56)20, NATO.

[39] Telegram from the United States Delegation at the North Atlantic Council Ministerial Meeting to the Department of State. May 5, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 3.

[40] "Summary Record of a meeting of the Council held at the Palais de Chaillot, Paris XVIe, on Friday, 4th May, 1956 at 3.30 pm." See also "Procès-verbal de la session ministérielle du Conseil de l'O.T.A.N." May 16, 1956. *DDF*, 1956, vol. 1, doc. 322.

[41] "Summary Record of a meeting of the Council held at the Palais de Chaillot, Paris XVIe, on Saturday, 5th May, 1956 at 11 am." C-R(56)22, NATO.

[42] Notable exceptions were the Scandinavian countries and Canada.

rule passed peaceably; ensuring access to important resources, especially oil; and maintaining and improving conditions for foreign investment and trade. At root, nevertheless, was a belief that NATO could and should move beyond a solely military focus so that it was better suited for the current environment. As Lloyd told the Council, he did "not think Soviets want war, nor to risk a war." The USSR was still thinking of "'steamroller' tactics", but they were now tactics of the technical, economic, and arms trade variety, and no longer military.[43] This point of view contrasted with the American perspective: Dulles argued at the Ministerial that NATO's primary and enduring concern must be to achieve and maintain a military posture to both deter armed aggression and prevent the Soviets from using military position and threat of violence to extract concessions.[44]

At the May 1956 Ministerial, France broke the taboo against discussing North Africa. Previously France had refrained from raising Algerian issues in the Council because of a well-founded fear of criticism and because Paris preferred to consider the uprising an internal matter. But in a bid to gain support, Pineau gave a speech to the Council defending French policy in Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria as defense of the NATO area and the prevention of civil war. He was comfortable discussing North Africa in the Council, he said, because "NATO, unlike UNO [the UN], was an Alliance within the close ranks of which it was normal for member governments to explain their national problems."[45] Pineau acknowledged that France relied on NATO's assistance in regard to its campaigns in Algeria, since it was French troops taken from NATO's order of battle who were fighting in North Africa. This was no trifling number of troops,

---

[43] Telegram from the United States Delegation at the North Atlantic Council Ministerial Meeting to the Department of State, May 5, 1956.

[44] Ibid.

[45] "Summary Record of a meeting of the Council held at the Palais de Chaillot, Paris XVIe, on Friday, 4th May, 1956 at 10.15 am."

either. According to NATO military plans, France was to field fourteen divisions within thirty days of any full mobilization by the Soviet bloc. By July 1956 nine of these divisions were stationed in North Africa.[46] Before the Ministerial, the French had hoped the Council would publicly express its support for the transfer of these troops from their European responsibilities. The Americans, however, worried blessing the transfer might set a precedent for NATO support of troop deployments elsewhere, such as Portuguese deployments to Goa.[47] Without American support, any idea of a NATO public statement on Algeria was a non-starter.

Dulles's concern grew with the number of European foreign ministers who used their speeches to address issues outside the North Atlantic region. He tried to rein in the conversation, arguing that it would be "reckless" for the ministers to continue discussing these areas under present circumstances. Many members of the Council, he pointed out, "are not intimately conversant with all aspects of the problem to express an opinion." Dulles wanted to wait for a study of how best to consider external problems.

The study to which Dulles referred was the one tangible product of an otherwise disappointing meeting.[48] The Council agreed to appoint a "Committee of Three" - the foreign ministers of Canada, Italy, and Norway - to "examine actively further measures which might be

---

[46] Despatch from the Embassy in France to Department of State, July 25, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXVII, 27.

[47] "Daily Intelligence Abstracts of Interest to Working Groups No. 586," Operations Coordinating Board, March 26, 1956. DDRS, CK3100328983.

[48] Reports from American embassies in London, Bonn and Lisbon all criticized the Ministerial for not having produced any results. "Daily Intelligence Abstracts of Interest to Working Groups," Operations Coordinating Board, May 14, 1956. DDRS, CK3100329232. Dutch frustrations reported by Paul Mason to Harold Caccia, May 22, 1956, FO 371/124804, NAUK.

taken at this time to advance more effectively [the] common interests" of the NATO allies.[49] The Suez Crisis soon overshadowed the committee's work, but the 'Three Wisemen' did establish a committee structure that would play an important role in the later 1950s. On the issue of external coordination, the Three Wise Men's most important contribution was a heartfelt but weak call for greater consultation in NATO.

The Ministerial and the nomination of the Committee of Three were a disappointment to all involved, and the allies shared a sense that Dulles' call for consultation had been nothing but fodder for the American electorate.[50] But Dulles left the meeting disappointed, too. He wrote to Eisenhower to say he was "tired and cynical" after the presentations of his colleagues. On the matter of internal coordination, he thought the allies wished to "have NATO turned into an economic organization which can probably extract a little more money out of the United States."[51] On the issue of external coordination, Dulles thought the European allies had been evasive when pressed for specifics, and he thought calls for joint policy abroad were really just a trap to have the United States submit "its foreign policy for review by NATO."[52]

Dulles was worried about differences between NATO allies in North Africa, over Cyprus, in the Middle East, and British action in Buraimi. If all of these problems continued, Dulles

---

[49] "Summary Record of a meeting of the Council held at the Palais de Chaillot, XVIe., on Saturday, 5th May, 1956, at 3 p.m.," May 5, 1956, C-R(56)23, NATO.

[50] There was a general sense, articulated in the British FO, that Dulles had engaged in an "extravagant previous build-up of the meeting" solely for domestic political purposes. Christopher Steel to Harold Caccia, May 16, 1956, FO 371/124804, NAUK.

[51] Message From the Secretary of State to the President, May 5, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 27. This was a theme he continued back in Washington to the National Security Council, where he reported that he had "detected among his colleagues more enthusiasm over the possibility of the United States giving economic aid through NATO." "Memorandum of Discussion at the 284th Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington, May 10, 1956." *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 30.

[52] "Memorandum of Discussion at the 284th Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington, May 10, 1956." *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 30.

thought, NATO "could never be maintained," and "the Western powers would gradually drift apart, as had happened in the past as the aftermath of a war."[53] Dulles would later argue that the European conception of alliances, which he understood as the belief that "allies should support each other on all political issues and in all places," was unacceptable to the United States. If the Europeans had their way, he thought, the United States would come to "be associated with colonialism everywhere."[54]

Few historians have considered the connection between NATO and the rest of the world in the late 1950s and 1960s.[55] The next four chapters reveal that the question of NATO's relationship with the rest of the world, be it the United Nations, former colonies, or the global Cold War, raised challenging questions about whether to improve the NATO machine or use it at all.

---

[53] Ibid.

[54] "Memorandum of Discussion, Wednesday, November 6, 1957, at the State Department." Undated. DDRS, CK3100307791.

[55] In a recent study of NATO, Lawrence Kaplan examined the complicated relationship between NATO and the UN, and two of his chapters focus on this period. Lawrence S. Kaplan, *NATO and the UN: A Peculiar Relationship* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2010).

CHAPTER 1: INFINITE CRISES

"Les crises se sont succédé à l'infini: Suez, Budapest, pétrole, finances, Israël, Tunisie, Algérie, Syrie, Liban, Jordanie, la révolution non sanglante de la France…

- Hervé Alphand, French Ambassador to Washington[1]

***

Historians have suggested, rightly, that the Suez crisis was a turning point for NATO's relationship with the rest of the world. But the direction in which NATO turned has been debated. One argument holds that after Suez, NATO completely abandoned any pretense of responsibility for the Middle East.[2] Second, and contrary to the first, is the notion that Suez caused the United States to press its allies to consult more closely and coordinate their policies outside the North Atlantic area.[3] Neither is exactly right: the Suez Crisis was one of several crises in the Middle East in the late 1950s in which the NATO allies debated the purpose and value of the alliance in a crisis short of general war. Events in Suez, but also in Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan, tested the willingness of the allies to use NATO for something short of war with the Soviet Union. The reached no agreement, and thus NATO was left on the sidelines of each crisis. At Suez, the primary reason was the unwillingness of the Americans to transform the crisis into an East-West showdown. In Syria, the active policies of both the British and Americans were largely covert, and their fear was subversion. NATO was simply not equipped to participate in such a conflict. Finally, during the Anglo-American interventions in Lebanon and Jordan, NATO was an afterthought to the intervening powers. These crises led a number of officials and leaders

---

[1] Hervé Alphand, *L'Étonnement d'Être: Journal 1939-1973* (Paris: Fayard, 1977), 287.

[2] Sten Rynning, "NATO and the Broader Middle East, 1949-2007: The History and Lessons of Controversial Encounters," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 30, no. 6 (2007): 913.

[3] W. M. Roger Louis and Ronald Robinson, "The Imperialism of Decolonization," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 22 (1994): 486 & n186.

on both sides of the Atlantic to think how best NATO could be reorganized to meet changing world conditions.

***

1.1.1 Suez: *L'O.T.A.N. est mort pour le moment*

The Suez Crisis exemplifies the ambiguities at the heart of NATO. 1955 and 1956 had heard much talk by Allied ministers about the need to coordinate their policy around the world. Egypt seemed like the perfect case for such cooperation: trouble in Egypt would not bode well for any NATO ally. The frustrations and conflict between allies in NATO resulted from the different and competing national interests of the allies.[4] But more important, the tensions were caused by competing understandings of what NATO could and should be. The British believed that the NATO allies should be sympathetic to their goals because of the tight-knit nature of the alliance and the French viewed the Suez Crisis as a true test case of the members' tough talk about taking an interest in combatting threats to Europe outside the Atlantic region. But American officials, especially John Foster Dulles, wanted NATO kept as far away from the crisis as possible so as not to ossify diplomacy along the lines of the Cold War bloc confrontation. In the diplomacy over Suez, especially at the United Nations, the Americans believed it was essential not to alienate those undecided states that were not NATO allies. Dulles, with Eisenhower, saw Suez as a trap that NATO might stumble into, only to emerge tainted as the champion of colonial prerogatives.

Since 1955, the NATO allies worried that Soviet involvement in North Africa and the Middle East, when mixed with emerging nationalism in these areas, might destabilize NATO's flanks.

---

[4] Douglas T. Stuart and William T. Tow, *The Limits of Alliance: NATO out-of-Area Problems since 1949* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990); Elizabeth Sherwood-Randall, *Allies in Crisis: Meeting Global Challenges to Western Security* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 71.

The Middle East was of special importance, for the oil produced in the region was essential. Petroleum from the area, all of which required the Suez Canal for transit to Europe, fueled and lubricated the armies that made up NATO. More important, the oil and other products from the region provided much of the fuel and energy for Western Europe's recovering, but fragile, economy. In December 1955, Dulles had warned the North Atlantic Council that the Soviets would stir up trouble where it would hurt the allies most. In the Middle East, he warned, the "squeeze is definitely on."[5]

Half a year later, in June 1956, Dulles and the French Foreign Minister Christian Pineau agreed that the NATO allies should consult on Egypt. Egypt was a worry because of its links to the Soviet Union, its key position on the oil route, and the "possibility that Egypt would become a base for hostile operations, and a gateway for the penetration of Africa."[6] In the summer of 1956, all eyes had been on Gamel Abdul Nasser: The very week that Dulles and Pineau met, the British Cabinet considered a memorandum posing the question: "Whether, given the great and growing dependence of NATO countries on Middle East oil, there should not be a co-ordinated NATO political line in regard to the Middle East."[7]

But nothing had been coordinated or prepared when the Egyptian leader, Nasser, nationalized the canal and restricted access to it on July 27 while also closing oil pipelines. On July 29 both London and Paris feared Europe was now "totally dependent" on the mercy and goodwill of the Arab powers. Already, in July, French officials were thinking about relieving this dependence by

---

[5] Telegram from the United States Delegation at the North Atlantic Ministerial Meeting to the Department of State. December 16, 1955. 1 am. 29-30 *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, doc. 11.

[6] Memorandum of Conversations, Department of State, Washington, June 18 and 19, 1956, *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXVII, doc. 26. "Comptes Rendu des Conversations Franco-Américans (Washington, 18-19 juin 1956)" *DDF*, 1956, vol. 1, doc. 417.

[7] "Future of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization," Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, June 15, 1956, C.P.(56)142, NAUK.

military force.[8] In London, Eden's instinct was not to go to NATO but to call on Eisenhower to join an Anglo-French-American tripartite meeting to determine how best to bring the "maximum pressure to bear on the Egyptian government."[9] The American embassy said the United States favored such consultation, but also suggested broadening the discussion to include other NATO allies.[10]

American officials believed that if intervention was necessary, it would be preferable that a "collective organization," like NATO, rather than a handful states, intervene.[11] Eisenhower favored taking the Egyptian issue to the North Atlantic Council in Paris. If indeed "sweeping action is taken," the President said, he did not want it to occur on a tripartite basis, but by a broad coalition of allied powers.[12] Robert Murphy of the State Department also pressed the NATO idea on his British and French counterparts in London, suggesting NATO could be "useful" in this scenario and should not be overlooked.[13] Summing up the emerging consensus in Washington, Undersecretary of State Herbert Hoover wrote to Dulles: while the United States did not think "confiscation" of the canal was "sufficient for a military invasion," if there was to be action, it

---

[8] Telegram from the Embassy in France to the Department of State, July 27, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, doc. 2.

[9] Message from Prime Minister Eden to President Eisenhower, July 27, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, doc. 5.

[10] Telegram from the Embassy in the United Kingdom to the Department of State, July 27, 1956.

[11] Memorandum of a Conference with the President, White House, Washington, July 27, 1956, 8:30 a.m. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, doc. 3. Allen told Couve that the collective organization might be the UN, NATO or a new organization. "M. Couve de Murville, Ambassadeur de France à Washington, à M. Pineau, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères." No. 4618 - 4629. *DDF*, 1956, vol. 2, doc. 91.

[12] Memorandum of a Conversation with the President, White House, Washington, July 28, 1956, 10 a.m. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI ,16.

[13] Telegram from the Embassy in the United Kingdom to the Department of State, July 29, 1956, 6 p.m. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, 21.

could be taken in the "name of NATO" and thus might be more effective than a UN operation and "more suitable than tripartite measures."[14]

A month passed after the American suggestion before Eden told his Foreign Secretary, Selwyn Lloyd, to consider raising the issue in NATO. Eden was always against going to the United Nations Security Council. But in Paris, at NATO, "we are among friends, and it would be in accordance with the wider political character which many wish to give NATO." Britain, he said, had been urged to discuss Cyprus at NATO, why not Suez? It was, after all, "even more important to the survival of the majority of its members." Eden was "trying to find a method of giving free Europe a chance to consider this together."[15] The idea of discussing the matter in NATO was encouraged by other allies, in particular the Canadians.[16]

As per Eden's plan, the British prepared to take the issue to NATO for "intimate" and "franker speaking" with the hope of mobilizing support ahead of any Security Council meeting.[17] The Foreign Office directed the UK Delegation at NATO to initiate a "full but confidential discussion" of the Suez problem in NAC, since it was "clearly most important that we should carry the North Atlantic Alliance" in case the situation "developed." However the situation unfolded, the FO reasoned, there would be aspects of any crisis, "including economic and other forms of pressure," for which the British could use allied support.[18] The British coordinated their plan with France, and the Permanent Undersecretary, Ivone Kirkpatrick, told the French

---

[14] Telegram from the Department of State to the Secretary of State, at Lima, July 298, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, 14.

[15] Prime Minister's Personal Minute M.191/56 to Foreign Secretary, August 26, 1956, FO 371/119174, NAUK.

[16] Secretary's Notebook for August 28, 1956, C.M.62(56), NAUK.

[17] FO No. 1495 to Paris, August 28, 1956, FO 371/119174, NAUK.

[18] FO No. 1494 to Paris, August 28, 1956, FO 371/119174, NAUK.

Ambassador in London that it was "in the spirit of our European Alliance that we should have a short meeting at which our European allies could frankly ask questions or express views on our conduct of affairs."[19]

On September 5, Lloyd, along with a handful of allied foreign ministers and the permanent representatives of the other allies, met in Paris. Lloyd opened by saying that "if consultation within NATO was to mean anything it was right for us all to have a frank discussion of the Suez problem."[20] He explained that Britain was making military preparations in case Nasser refused to negotiate, but that the British government "hoped above all for a peaceful solution." The other members of the Council echoed this last sentiment, stressing the need for a peaceful solution and the utility of the United Nations. The Belgian foreign minister, Paul-Henri Spaak, noted that it was unfortunate that it had taken so long for the issue to rise in the NAC, especially since Eden had called it "the most serious event since 1946." Pineau, taking up Spaak's point, said there was no point trying to strengthen the alliance through other means, such as the Committee of Three, if consultation on "a problem so important as Suez had not taken place."[21] While the French used the meeting to make a clear justification for a resort to force, Pineau and French officials spoke of Suez as a test of the purpose of the alliance.[22] "NATO," Pineau later wrote, "was the key to my thinking, not the United Nations."[23]

---

[19] Washington No. 1758 to FO, August 29, 1956, FO 371/119174, NAUK.

[20] UKDel No. 635 Saving to FO, September 6, 1956, FO 371/119175, NAUK.

[21] "Summary Record of a meeting of the Council held at the Palais de Chaillot, Paris, XVIe, on Wednesday, 5th September at 3:30 pm," September 8, 1956, C-R(56)48, NATO.

[22] For the Council proceedings see UKDel No. 635 Saving to FO, September 6, 1956, FO 371/119175, NAUK. Terence Robertson argues "Pineau was always of the opinion that the crisis was more of a NATO affair than one for the United Nations." Terence Robertson, *Crisis: The inside Story of the Suez Conspiracy* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1964), 100.

[23] Robertson, *Crisis, 130.*

The British hoped to convince the NATO allies to support the Anglo-French position in the UN. They stressed a desire for peaceful resolution, although the rigid French view undermined their efforts to some extent. The greatest inhibitor to a full and frank discussion in NATO, however, was a changed American position. While in July, the President and his advisors were all for taking the issue into the broader NATO forum, by September the Americans were annoyed that the British had played up the meeting as some sort of special session rather than a regular meeting of the Council.[24]

Dulles had become increasingly wary of discussing the Suez situation at NATO for two reasons. First, as State Department officials explained to the British Embassy in Washington, it was important for Washington and London to maintain flexibility in their policy and avoid being tied down by any consensus in Paris. While talking in NATO was good, they hoped the British would "avoid giving the impression [that NATO members] will be consulted in advance on any future moves we may make over Suez."[25]

More important, however, was Dulles' desire to avoid affiliating NATO with the crisis in any way. Dulles instructed the American Embassy in London to "speak soonest" with Ambassador Selwyn Lloyd and warn him that the United States thought it "essential NATO per se should not appear become involved in deciding future courses of action re Suez." Dulles' reasoning was that the London Conference had been managed carefully in order to avoid an East-West split, and the United States was worried that if NATO was implicated, the solidarity of the 18 London nations would fall apart. If it were to become public that NATO was "directing Suez policy," the alliance would become a "whipping boy of anti-NATO (anti-white, anti-colonial)" states, and would

---

[24] Memorandum of Discussion at a Department of State-Joint Chiefs of Staff Meeting, Pentagon, Washington, August 31, 1956, 11:30 a.m. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, doc. 156.

[25] Washington No. 1758 to FO, August 29, 1956, FO 371/119174, NAUK.

serve as a rallying cry for Arab unity. It "should be made clear to press and public that Suez is not [a] NATO problem."[26]

Nonetheless, the British had gone to NATO, and the Americans remained silent. When Lloyd complained, the American Permanent Representative George Perkins replied - ominously, in retrospect - that if he had spoken, it "would have looked like failure to support British and French positions." Perkins could hardly have taken the floor, he explained, without addressing the statements made by others, and it was "quite undesirable" to start an argument that risked publicity and, worse, "might have encouraged participation by others." It "might have been worse than keeping quiet."[27] Displeased by Perkins's silence, Pineau argued that now, NATO, with "a unique occasion to affirm our solidarity, we take contrary positions. If the world knew … no one would believe that if threatened we would ever do anything serious in common."[28]

Throughout the late summer and early autumn, Dulles made clear in public and private that the United States would not support military action against Egypt. On October 5th, he urged Pineau to consider the implications of the French use of force in Suez: Force, he warned, would not "improve our prospects in Asia and Africa." And if force were used, the West would lose the allegiance of several of the non-NATO states such as Pakistan, Ethiopia and Iran that Dulles was trying to keep away from Soviet influence.[29]

---

[26] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy of the United Kingdom, August 30, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, doc. 154.

[27] Telegram from the Office of the Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to the Department of State, September 5, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, 176. This raises doubts about Lloyd's claim that the NATO meeting, and support shown by allies in Council, "helped us make up our minds" to act in Suez. Quoted in Sherwood-Randall, *Allies in Crisis*, 75.

[28] Robertson, *Crisis*, 100.

[29] Memorandum of a Conversation, Secretary Dulles' Suite, Waldorf Astoria, New York, October 5, 1956, 10:15 a.m. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, doc. 300.

At the end of October, Dulles brought with him to a meeting with Eisenhower an extract from the 1949 Foreign Relations Committee hearings on the ratification of the North Atlantic Treaty. It had been obvious in those hearings (in which Dulles had participated) that the American ratification of the treaty "was not to be construed as endorsement of the colonial policies of other NATO countries."[30] The United States, they decided, had no obligation to support the British and French on Egypt and did not bother to engage on the issue in the North Atlantic Council.

American officials had, in the summer of 1956, thought NATO the preferred grouping for action over Suez. But Dulles, despite spending the early part of the year calling for an expanded interpretation of NATO, wished for nothing of the sort when it rubbed up against issues of decolonization or the diplomacy of the non-aligned movement.

1.1.2 The Blackest Day & Beyond

In October, British, French, and Israeli officials met secretly in Sèvres, France and agreed to a plan whereby the Israeli military would invade the Sinai. Immediately afterwards, British and French forces, acting ostensibly to separate the warring parties, would enter Egypt and open the Canal. On October 29, the Israelis invaded. London and Paris issued their bogus ultimatum the next day.

That day, October 30, 1956, according to Dulles, was "the blackest day which has occurred in many years in the relations between England and France and the United States." While the pretense and collusion with the Israelis were not widely known, the British and French were taking unilateral action without their allies. How could these countries, Dulles

[30] Memorandum of a Conference with the President, White House, Washington, October 27, 1956, 11 a.m. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, 387.

asked, possibly restore "the former relationship of trust and confidence" after it had been broken so badly? When the French Ambassador, Hervé Alphand, claimed that the "North Atlantic Alliance is of the greatest importance to France," Dulles retorted that "France was making no effort to preserve it."[31]

On the morning of October 31, in Paris, Lord Ismay, who had spent his tenure as NATO's first Secretary General as a mediator bringing the allies together, was lachrymose; he warned the Council the rift over the ultimatum represented the greatest threat to NATO since the signing of Treaty.[32] Perkins, speaking for the United States, emphasized that Washington had in no way participated in the Anglo-French ultimatum, and repeated that the U.S. sought a peaceful resolution to the developing crisis.

The British Permanent Representative, Christopher Steel, warned the Foreign Office that the "feeling of the Council ran strongly against us, and the atmosphere was bad."[33] There would be economic fallout for the European allies from the Anglo-French actions, but this was not what made for a bad atmosphere on October 31. Of greater concern was fear that the Anglo-French action might draw NATO into a conflict with the Soviet Union. What if the Soviets intervened, and attacked British or French forces? Throughout the crisis, both French and British officials called on NATO to take an interest in and discuss Egypt and the Suez Canal. Pineau and the

---

[31] Memorandum of a Conversation, Department of State, Washington, October 30, 1956, 3:28 p.m. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, 431.

[32] UKDel No. 182 to FO, October 31, 1956, FO 371/121783, NAUK.

[33] Ibid. It seemed to Perkins that the British "have probably secured the support of the Netherlands for their action against Egypt. Apparently all the other members of the NATO Council are opposed to the Anglo-French action, though Portugal may yet line up on the British and French side thanks to its colonial preoccupations in India." Memorandum of Discussion at the 302d Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington, November 1, 1956, 9 a.m. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, 455.

French Prime Minister Guy Mollet emphasized NATO's stake in Suez, and Lloyd had appeared at the North Atlantic Council in a bid to build support for the Anglo-French cause.

Nonetheless, on October 30 Steel walked back Britain's earlier claims. He said that the "events in question were taking place outside the NATO area" and that "in speaking of consultation," the allies should realize that the "degree of consultation had to be governed by the relative responsibilities of the Powers concerned." By this formulation, which was essentially rhetorical muddle, Steel argued that since British and French interests in Suez were greater than their NATO allies, they would be the ones making the decisions, and their obligation to consult was nil.[34]

Further, Steel tried to mitigate fears about NATO being drawn in the conflict by arguing that because the "present crisis was clearly not envisaged in the context" of the North Atlantic Treaty, "there could be no question of any automatic involvement" of the NATO allies in the crisis.[35] Alphand, in Washington, had a different interpretation: France, he said, expected NATO obligations to be activated if the Soviets intervened directly against British and French troops.[36] Considering this, Eisenhower agreed that if the "Soviets attack the French and British directly, we would be in war."[37]

On October 31 Britain and France began bombing Egypt. In response, Nasser ordered the scuttling of dozens of ships in the Suez Canal, rendering it impassable. Days later, on November 5th, British and French paratroopers landed in Egypt. Both Dulles and Eisenhower were furious

---

[34] UKDel No. 182 to FO, October 31, 1956, FO 371/121783, NAUK.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Memorandum of a Conversation, Department of State, Washington, November 5, 1956, 4 p.m. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, 508.

[37] Memorandum of a Conference with the President, White House, Washington, November 5, 1956, 5 p.m. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, 509.

with their British and French allies for attacking Egypt. Dulles complained that "what the British and French had done was nothing but the straight old-fashioned variety of colonialism of the most obvious sort."[38] Eisenhower asked rhetorically, "how could we possibly support Britain and France if in doing so we lose the whole Arab world?"[39] As the British and French applied military power against Egypt, the United States took dramatic action against its allies.[40]

The Suez crisis, as Diane Kunz has written, was a "striking example of the militant use of financial power" - by one NATO ally against others.[41] In the 1950s, the United States controlled all the levers of international financial system; on the American say-so, Britain could be denied access to the International Monetary Fund, would be prevented from getting any credit at the Export-Import Bank, and sterling would be imperiled. Humphrey, the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury, had insisted that the British agree to a ceasefire and present a timetable for withdrawal or Britain would be denied access to the IMF.[42] Memories of privation in Britain during and after the Second World War had not faded, and British officials had vowed that such poverty and neediness should occur "never again."[43] Harold Macmillan, now Chancellor of the Exchequer,

---

[38] Memorandum of Discussion at the 302d Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington, November 1, 1956, 9 a.m.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Scholars of NATO, especially those who have emphasized that shared democratic values sustained NATO, have an awkward time explaining the Suez Crisis, especially the American reaction. See for example Risse-Kappen, *Cooperation among Democracies*, 4.

[41] Diane B. Kunz, "The Importance of Having Money: The Economic Diplomacy of the Suez Crisis," in *Suez 1956: The Crisis and Its Consequences*, ed. William Roger Louis and Edward Roger John Owen (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 215; *The Economic Diplomacy of the Suez Crisis* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991).

[42] Richard E. Neustadt, *Alliance Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 26-29; Kunz, "The Importance of Having Money," 228-31.

[43] Peter Hennessy, *Never Again: Post-War Britain, 1945-51* (London: J. Cape, 1992).

understood better than most the precariousness of Britain's entire financial and economic system, and immediately impressed upon the Cabinet that the invasion must end.

Through the early stages of the Suez crisis, most NATO allies agreed with the American policy of caution and then swift action to end the violence in Egypt. But as November dragged on, the Canal remained closed, and the two strongest powers of Europe - Britain and France - were weakened and humiliated, this support melted away. As an American diplomat reported, allied "approbation" for American policy was "mixed with anxiety."[44]

The closing of the Suez Canal and the destruction of oil pipeline terminals had a resounding impact on the European NATO allies, and the economic hardship did not discriminate between those allies who supported and those who opposed the invasion. In December Baron Coleridge, the Executive Secretary of NATO, drafted a study of the continuing impact of canal closure on the allies. He reported that the European allies' industrial output, balance of payments, dollar and gold reserves, prices, and even budgetary positions were suffering. NATO's European members were not only dependent on the canal for oil, but also for other natural resources. By early December, stocks of oil, rubber, copper, tin, lead, and long-fiber cotton were at precarious lows, and the lack of oil had a knock-on effect on European steel, glass, cement and chemical production. While NATO's North American allies had their industrial production stimulated by increased European demand, in Europe, Coleridge warned, "the overall rate of industrial progress is being compromised." There simply was not enough shipping tonnage to provide Europe with what it needed from North America.[45] State Department officials worried that if the

---

[44] Memorandum of Discussion at the 305th Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington, November 30, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, 6

[45] "The Impact of the Present Crisis on the Economies of NATO Countries," Memorandum to the Secretaries of Delegations from the Executive Secretary, December 7, 1956, RDC/524/56, NATO.

United States seemed unresponsive to the emerging economic situation, the United States might lose the "unreserved cooperation with respect to Western defense and NATO" of the Scandinavians, and perhaps the Low Countries as well.[46]

Lord Ismay called Eisenhower in a "desperate," tearful mood. Eisenhower found Ismay to be "adopting the European conviction that we deserted our two friends in their hour of trial, and now won't even help them out with oil and gas, etc." NATO, Ismay lamented, "might be broken up."[47] Ismay thought the British position was foolish, but, he argued, the ramifications of American policy were damaging for NATO. Most of the NATO allies were caught between an unyielding American position on one-hand, and, on the other, an unwavering Anglo-French conviction that Nasser must be dealt with by force. [48]

Besides the psychological impact on NATO countries, and the real impact on the European economies, the crisis was having a direct effect on NATO military forces. The U.S. Department of State was certain "that military stocks in Europe will be drawn down with adverse effects on NATO's readiness to withstand attack." Any long-lasting financial crisis in Britain would weaken the ability of Britain to contribute to NATO's defenses in the long term.[49] And in fact, the Suez crisis did create enough financial strain in Britain that the UK began a decade long effort to

---

[46] Memorandum from the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs (Elbrick) and the Assistant Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Kalijarvi) to the Acting Secretary of State. November 17, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, 585.

[47] Memorandum of a Telephone Conversation Between the President in August, Georgia, and the Secretary of State in Key West, Florida, November 27, 1956, 9:25 a.m. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, 618.

[48] See, however, the argument in Kaplan, *NATO and the UN*, 48.

[49] Memorandum from the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs (Elbrick) and the Assistant Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Kalijarvi) to the Acting Secretary of State.

reduce its continental commitment.[50] If the downward spiral continued, warned one American, Britain would "almost certainly sink to the status of a second-rate power in a material sense and would consequently be forced to reduce defense expenditure drastically. The consequences to NATO could be devastating."[51] After shutting the financial tap, the United States turned it back on. The severity of the American financial pressure on Britain was matched, if not exceeded, by the massive financial support the United States provided Britain after the crisis.[52]

From Paris, the American Embassy reported of a "traumatic shock" to the French government caused by the American position during the crisis. The diplomats in Paris warned that while the present government might stay a sound ally, if it were to be replaced by a right-wing government, France might be "capable of quitting [the] UN and NATO and retiring into neutralistic isolation," and making deals with the U.S.S.R. The only solution was the "earliest possible return to policy of collaboration" with Paris. Any new government in France, warned the embassy, might have a "potential for damage to Western security … infinitely greater than that of Nasser."[53]

The German Foreign Minister, Heinrich von Brentano, summed up the mood when he said that "NATO is dead for the moment" but that it must be resuscitated.[54] How though, could the Alliance be put back together? The Embassy in Paris recommended the United States officials

---

[50] The economics of the continental commitment is discussed in Chapter 8.

[51] Memorandum from the Officer in Charge of United Kingdom and Ireland Affairs to the Director and Deputy Director of the Office of British Commonwealth and Northern European Affairs, November 26, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXVII, 247.

[52] Kunz, "The Importance of Having Money," 231.

[53]Telegram from the Embassy in France to the Department of State, November 28, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXVII, 30.

[54] "M. Couve de Murville, Ambassadeur de France à Bonn, à M. Pineau, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères." No. 3607-3610 . *DDF*, 1956, vol. 3, doc. 275.

seek to work closely again with allies in a "generous spirit, drawing curtain over past and concentrating on future."[55] The State Department issued a circular telegram to all NATO capitals telling American diplomats that US confidence in NATO's future "should be hammered home explicitly."[56] The goal was to "counter unfavorable reports of rifts arising from the Suez situation."[57]

But was it time for a new form of relations between the NATO allies or reversion to old patterns? Dulles was not sure whether it was better once again to hold tripartite meetings of the Anglo-French American heads of state, the "Big Three." He thought this a bad precedent, but also thought "intimate consultation" in NATO was increasingly worthless. The British and French had, after all, plunged "the 'life line' of Europe into active hostility," without any consultation, so how could the Americans expect lesser decisions to be agreed to through NATO? So grim were allied relations in November that Dulles had reservations about holding the regularly scheduled NATO Ministerial in December. He was inclined to postpone it perhaps until the New Year and letting the "matter settle."[58]

All eyes were on Dulles, for the allies believed Dulles' position would determine the future of NATO.[59] Dulles chose not to postpone the December ministerial. Another crisis in

---

[55]Telegram from the Embassy in France to the Department of State, November 28, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXVII, 30.

[56] Department of State Circular No. 362 to NATO posts and others, November 6, 1956, RG84, OAEO, Subject Files, 1955-59, box 41, folder: "NATO (Nov – Dec 1956)," NARA.

[57] "Intelligence Notes," Operations Coordinating Board, December 10, 1956. DDRS, CK3100327348.

[58] Memorandum of Conversation, November 12, 1956. DDRS, CK3100237673.

[59] Hallstein, quoted in "M. Couve de Murville, Ambassadeur de France à Bonn, à M. Pineau, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères." No. 3607-3610. *DDF*, 1956, vol. 3, doc. 275. Eyes were on Dulles because the allies believed he was the force behind Eisenhower's foreign policy, and also because severe illness had taken him out of the decision-making process during the fall. It was not clear what his decision would be, nor whether he would be able to make and

autumn 1956 motivated his decision: Hungary. As Dulles said in a speech before the Ministerial, Soviet actions in Budapest "tragically demonstrated" the need for NATO to overcome the strain of Suez and "the coming Council meeting affords and opportunity to rebuild a unity and strength."[60] While NATO's response to the Hungarian crisis amounted to little more than Council discussions about what each country was doing to aid refugees, the Hungarian invasion provided a stark reminder of the strength and proximity of Soviet armor to the capitals of many NATO allies. What had been a "violent family squabble" over Suez, Dulles told the National Security Council before departing for Paris, was "not one which was likely to end in divorce."[61]

1.1.3 A Rival to the United Nations?

Lester Pearson, the Canadian secretary of state for external affairs, expected that the Ministerial in December would help smooth things over, both in discussions within the Council, but "particularly outside" - that is in the hallways, the cocktail parties, and the dinners - the formal NAC meeting.[62] Pearson was right. According to Belgian Foreign Minister Paul-Henri Spaak, his colleagues met in Paris "more NATO-minded than ever before."[63] In the formal

---

implement a decision. Cole C. Kingseed, *Eisenhower and the Suez Crisis of 1956* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995), 117.

[60] Untitled Draft Statement by the Secretary of State, December 3, 1956, box 4, folder "Meetings with the President Aug. Thru Dec. 1956 (2)" in *The Papers of John Foster Dulles and of Christian A. Herter, 1953-1961: The White House Correspondence and Memoranda Series* (Maryland: University Publications of America, 1986) [hereafter *WHCM*].

[61] Memorandum of Discussion at the 305th Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington, November 30, 1956. Dulles understood that Suez, and particularly the American policy, had "left deep and sensitive scars in France and in the United Kingdom." But these frustrations, he believed, were not acute, and were ultimately "susceptible to amelioration with time, understanding, and patience." Western European Chiefs of Mission Conference, Paris, May 6-8, 1957: Summary Conclusions and Recommendations. May 8, 1957. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 251.

[62] Telegram from the Mission at the United Nations to the Department of State, December 6, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, 638.

[63] Paul Henri Charles Spaak, *The Continuing Battle: Memoirs of a European, 1936-1966*, trans. Henry Fox (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), 259.

sessions of the Council, there was some condemnation of the Suez action, notably from the Scandinavian countries. The Norwegians complained of the "shock and surprise at lack of consultation and disregard of [the] NATO treaty and UN charter" shown by the British and French. Such actions as the Suez Crisis could "only harm relations with the Afro-Asians nations and Western influence there."[64] But Spaak defended the British, French, and colonial powers, which Dulles took as a good sign of rapprochement. Dulles wrote to Eisenhower that there were "no serious fireworks and there is every evidence ranks will be closed."[65]

Dulles avoided any meeting in Paris with just his British and French colleagues, and he was relieved neither Pineau nor Lloyd asked for one. It was "increasingly difficult," he told Eisenhower, "to maintain the illusion that France was one of the great world powers."[66] Both he and Eisenhower were relieved that neither Pineau nor Lloyd had "asked for a tripartite meeting." He hoped - wrongly as the next years would show - that the problem "is perhaps disposed of for the time being."[67]

Instead of meetings *à trois*, Dulles spent his time outside of the Council in bilateral meetings. In these private talks, Dulles resolutely held to the U.S. position on Suez. He told Lloyd that the administration acted as it did because it had been "convinced that there would

---

[64] Telegram from the Delegation at the North Atlantic Ministerial Meeting to the Department of State. December 11, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, 647.

[65] Message from the Secretary of State to the President, December 11, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 45.

[66] Memorandum for various State Department officials from John W. Hanes, Jr. [Excerpt of Dulles' remarks], December 5, 1956, Dulles Papers, White House Memoranda Series, box 4, folder: "Meeting with the President January 1956 through July 1956 (1)," DDEL.

[67] Paris 6080 (DULTE 7) to Secretary of State, December 10, 1956. DDRS, CK3100231439. Eisenhower's relief is apparent in Col. Goodpaster to Minnich [Eisenhower to Dulles], December 12, 1956. WHO, OSS, Subject series, State Department Subseries, box 1, folder: State Department - December 1956 - January 1957 (1), DDEL.

be little chance of establishing a world order or avoiding World War III if we acquiesced in the British action."[68]

But in Council, Dulles took a conciliatory tone. Rather than look back on the frustrations of 1956, Dulles called on the allies to find, together, "a philosophy of faith, for living and acting, at [this] critical point in our history"[69] American diplomats in allied capitals would later report that this had been highly effective. Joseph Bech, the well-connected Prime Minister of Luxembourg who was one of the founding fathers of the European Community, lauded Dulles for the "highly successful" meeting and claimed that the "broken China [was] mended."[70]

While NATO's strained relations might have been mended, the same cannot be said for the United Nations - or at least the views of European states, especially Britain and France, toward that institution. The "general sentiment" which Dulles gained from "practically all of the delegations" at NATO was a feeling that the United Nations "was failing" and had fallen into the hands of "new countries." He "sensed a tendency to want to try to build up NATO as a rival to the United Nations."[71] With limited success Dulles sought to defend the UN against the withering criticisms. Spaak told the Council that the United Nations was now "bankrupt." Was there any point, he asked, for NATO powers to continue to attend the UN, "only to be in a minority, accorded scant consideration by a majority which included among its member many

---

[68] Memorandum of a Conversation, Ambassador Dillon's Residence, Paris, December 10, 1956, 9:45 a.m. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, 643.

[69] Paris POLTO 1393 to Secretary of State, December 12, 1956, RG84, OAEO, Subject Files, 1955-59, box 41, folder: "NATO (Nov – Dec 1956)," NARA.

[70] Luxembourg No. 126 to Secretary of State, December 18, 1956, RG84, OAEO, Subject Files, 1955-59, box 41, folder: "NATO (Nov – Dec 1956)," NARA.

[71] Message from the Secretary of State to the President, December 11, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 45.

countries who were without political wisdom[?]" "Without going to extremes," said Spaak - though he sounded ready to do so - he "wondered under what conditions the United Nations Organization could henceforth fulfill its task."[72]

The European NATO allies in the 1950s had no interest in using the United Nations as an arena for working out their differences.[73] Indeed, the debates at the United Nations - and votes by the United States, as well as Canada and others, against Britain and France - cut the deepest during Suez.[74] French leaders already deeply disdained the United Nations, which, they believed, had worked against their interest in North Africa. In Britain, there emerged from Suez a dislike for the "new" United Nations and its growing membership. Richard "Rab" Butler, the British politician many Americans expected and hoped would succeed Eden, warned the American embassy that if the UN did not act quick to clear the canal, Britain might "withdraw from the UN."[75] Eisenhower was not worried that Britain would leave NATO over Suez, but he thought there a greater possibility Britain might leave the UN.[76] Just before the NATO Ministerial, when the British Cabinet discussed their strategy, Lord Salisbury, the Lord President of the Council,

---

[72] "Summary Record of a Meeting of the Council held at the Palais de Chaillot, Paris, XVIe., on Tuesday, 11th December, 1956 at 3.30 p.m." December 11, 1956, C-R(56)70, NATO.

[73] Kaplan has argued that, while NATO was largely marginalized during the Suez crisis, the United Nations instead "served as an arena for NATO partners to work out their differences." *NATO and the UN*, 1, 27.

[74] After Cabot Lodge's vote in the United Nations on November 24, 1956, Keith Kyle argues it was the "almost unanimous verdict of the Western alliance – the United States and Canada excepted – that they heralded the ultimate end of NATO." *Suez* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1991), 13.

[75] Telegram from the Embassy in the United Kingdom to the Department of State, November 26, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, 614; Secretary's Notebook for November 29, 1956, C.M.92(56)/205, NAUK.

[76] Memorandum of a Telephone Conversation Between the President in Augusta, Georgia, and the Secretary of State in Key West, Florida, November 27, 1956, 9:25 a.m. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, doc. 618.

warned Lloyd not to "alienate the U.S. over N.A.T.O.," since, he wishfully projected, they "may intend to build it up instead of U.N."[77]

If the UN was to survive, however, the British, French, and others including the Belgians and Portuguese yearned for NATO to organize itself as a bloc at the United Nations, taking common positions and not - as had happened in the autumn - voting against each other.[78] A few of the alliance's members disagreed with this idea. Halvard Lange of Norway, for instance, worried that a common policy would propagate a "myth" that "the defence of colonialism is one of the main aims of NATO policies."[79] Dulles too, disagreed with the general idea. It was difficult, he complained, "to find and to follow the narrow path between, on the one side, strengthening NATO, and, on the other, avoiding the appearance of 'teaming up' and taking positions in the UN as a bloc."[80] But calls from the European powers were more than just a desire to cooperate at the United Nations. Many wanted to establish a coordinated, even common, policy toward the world outside of Western Europe.

The 1956 Ministerial and subsequent developments show that some NATO allies wished for a much greater involvement of NATO outside the European area. These efforts to closely consult and coordinate policies, however, came not from the United States, but from European states – and not exclusively European colonial powers. Italy's Foreign Minister Gaetano Martino,

---

[77] Salisbury, a noted imperialist, was no friend of the United Nations. His concern was that Britain would alienate NATO, or the US over NATO, by withdrawing troops from Germany for financial reasons. Secretary's Notebook for December 7, 1956, C.M.97(56), NAUK.

[78] "Verbatim Record of the Seventy First Meeting of the held on Wednesday, 12th December, 1956 at 10.30 a.m. at the Palais de Chaillot, Paris, XVIe.," December 12, 1956, C-R(56)71, NATO.

[79] Verbatim Record of the Sixty Ninth Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday, 11th December, 1956 at 10.30 a.m. at the Palais de Chaillot, Paris XVIe." December 11, 1956, C-VR(56)69(Final), NATO.

[80] Memorandum of Conference with the President, Washington, December 15, 1956, 2:30 p.m., *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 54.

Chair of the North Atlantic Council, and one of the Three Wisemen, told the Council that "our security is incomplete if our co-operation leaves out of account spheres of action extending beyond the area of our Alliance."[81] Spaak, one of the strongest voices calling for NATO's involvement in events outside of Europe, said the allies "should have generally agreed policy toward Asian and African countries."[82] Selwyn Lloyd spoke on the issue at length, arguing that NATO must consider its flanks; he even argued that Suez had "brought these problems to a head and given NATO and the UN a new opportunity."[83] In the years to come, British officials would be the loudest and most consistent voice in trying to draw the attention of their allies in Council toward problems in the Middle East and elsewhere.

The French had their own opinions about expanding NATO's geographic commitments. The conventional argument is that the Suez crisis led, in a fairly direct line, to the French withdrawal from NATO integrated military command a decade later, in 1966.[84] And there are some connections between Suez and French disillusionment with NATO, discussed in the chapters that follow.[85] Pineau, however, showed no signs of distancing France from NATO at the

---

[81] "Verbatim Record of the Sixty Ninth Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday, 11th December, 1956 at 10.30 a.m. at the Palais de Chaillot, Paris XVIe," December 11, 1956.

[82] Telegram from the United States Delegation at the NAC Ministerial Meeting to Department of State, December 12, 1956. Message from the Secretary of State to the President, December 11, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, doc. 43.

[83] Telegram from the United States Delegation at the North Atlantic Ministerial Meeting to Department of State, December 11, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, doc. 41.

[84] Risse-Kappen, *Cooperation among Democracies*, 104; Maurice Vaisse, "Post-Suez France," in *Suez 1956: The Crisis and Its Consequences*, ed. William Roger Louis and Edward Roger John Owen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

[85] Neustadt, *Alliance Politics*, 28; Victor H. Feske, "The Road to Suez: The British Foreign Office and the Quai D'orsay, 1951-1957," in *The Diplomats, 1939-1979*, ed. Gordon Alexander Craig and Francis L. Loewenheim (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994), 193; George Armstrong Kelly, *Lost Soldiers: The French Army and Empire in Crisis, 1947-1962* (Cambridge, Mass.,: M.I.T. Press, 1965), 192-93.

Ministerial. He wanted NATO to address issues of the Middle East and North Africa, and he told Dulles that NATO needed common policies applying to "all four corners [of the] world."[86] Pineau asked his colleagues in the Council whether NATO "can be less than worldwide in the geographic limits of solidarity." In response to Dulles and Lange's worries about how NATO might appear to others, he called on them to "recognize the realities of a world which is not as moral as we might wish."[87]

It was remarkable how quickly the NATO allies were to put their differences behind them. Perkins reported that the "alliance had survived quite well the shocks of the past year."[88] Part of the explanation lies in the juxtaposition of the Suez and Hungarian crises. A common enemy and common outrage often cauterize an alliance's wounds. But the extent to which members looked to NATO as the solution to their problems outside of the European area is another explanation for the rapid healing. In 1949, just after the Treaty's inception, some had worried that NATO might overtake or even mark the end of the UN.[89] Since 1949, NATO had seemed to be a necessary buttress to the UN; by 1956, however, the new argument was that NATO should replace UN as the fulcrum of Western and global security. Charles de Gaulle took this idea to the extreme in 1958, but the idea was planted in 1955 and 1956.[90]

---

[86] Telegram from the Delegation at the North Atlantic Ministerial Meeting to the Department of State, December 11, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, 647.

[87] Telegram from the United States Delegation at the North Atlantic Ministerial Meeting to Department of State, December 11, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 41.

[88]Northern European Chiefs of Mission Conference, London, September 19-21, 1957: Summary of Proceedings. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 252.

[89] Thomas M. Campbell Jr., "NATO and the United Nations in American Foreign Policy: Building a Framework for Power," in *NATO after Thirty Years*, ed. Robert Clawson (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1981), 133.

[90] See Chapter 3 for de Gaulle's ideas and similar plans of other NATO officials.

1.1.4 Syria: An Unfortunate Lack of Ideas

In early 1957, Dulles observed that the Suez Crisis had "simply brought to a head something that had been brewing for a long time": allied concern about the Soviet subversion and anti-Western nationalism in the Middle East. Now, with the British and French suffering from a "sudden and total bankruptcy in the area," the United States was forced to take unilateral responsibility for the problem. Its response was to announce, under the banner of an "Eisenhower Doctrine," a commitment to providing the area with economic and military aid.[1] The Doctrine was a trigger for the crisis in Syria that once again forced NATO's partners to confront the question of NATO's purpose, reach, and unity.[2]

NATO Ministers, especially Britain's Selwyn Lloyd, also wished to keep NATO focused on the Middle East. In an "absolutely secret" discussion at the 1957 spring Ministerial, Lloyd warned his colleagues that the Soviets might turn the "flank" of NATO and leave it in "mortal danger." The problem, he explained, was not military; the Soviets would risk an "open assault." The real Soviet objectives were to "prevent political stability in the area, to cut economic ties between the Middle East and the West, and to eliminate Western influence." The Soviets were trying to break up the Baghdad Pact, deny bases and oil supplies, control Suez, and "supplant us" as suppliers of arms and military advice. These non-military threats could not be met with

---

[1] Dulles is quoted by C.D. Jackson in Memorandum to Mr. Luce from C.D. Jackson, January 24, 1957. Jackson papers, box 69, folder: Log-1957 (1), DDEL. For pre-Suez British-American cooperation, see Peter L. Hahn, *The United States, Great Britain, and Egypt, 1945-1956: Strategy and Diplomacy in the Early Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991). For the origins of the Eisenhower doctrine see Ray Takeyh, *The Origins of the Eisenhower Doctrine: The US, Britain, and Nasser's Egypt, 1953-57* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000). On the implementation of the doctrine see Salim Yaqub, *Containing Arab Nationalism: The Eisenhower Doctrine and the Middle East* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

[2] Yaqub attributes the Syrian crisis to the Eisenhower Doctrine. *Containing Arab Nationalism*, 147.

military responses. The solution put forward by the British was to support the Baghdad Pact diplomatically, to foster economic ties in the region, employ propaganda, and raise the "standards of living and technical achievement" of the peoples of the Middle East.[3] Just weeks after the Ministerial, Dulles warned that the Soviets were continuing their endeavor to "covertly establish Communist domination" in the Middle East, and that they may have already succeeded in Syria.[4]

The origins of the 1957 crisis in Syria remain ambiguous. In 1955, the United States made offers of economic support to Syria that Damascus declined. The Syrians turned to the Soviet Union for money and arms, and in the summer of 1956, Moscow arranged a large arms transfer of fighter jets, tanks and artillery.[5] This accelerated planning by American and British intelligence services to overthrow the Syrian regime by coup.[6] In response to the Anglo-American chicanery, and also because it was good domestic politics, the Syrian government took an "increasingly unfriendly attitude," as Dulles put it, toward the United States. In a breach of diplomatic protocol, an American diplomatic courier was stopped and searched, thirty armed

---

[3] Bonn No. 142 Saving to FO, May 3, 1957, FO 371/127758; "Verbatim Record of the Twenty Seventh Meeting of the Council held on Thursday, 2nd May 1957 at 3.30 p.m. at the Foreign Office of the German Federal Republic," May 2, 1957, C-VR(57)27, NATO.

[4] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Syria. May 28, 1957. FRUS,1955-1957, XIII, 352.

[5] For the dispute over the quantity of arms provided, see UKDel No. 662 Saving to FO, October 9, 1957, FO 371/128253, NAUK.

[6] Stephen Blackwell, "Britain, the United States and the Syrian Crisis, 1957," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 11, no. 3 (2000); Matthew Jones, "The 'Preferred Plan': The Anglo-American Working Group Report on Covert Action in Syria, 1957," *Intelligence & National Security* 19, no. 3 (2004); Douglas Little, "Cold War and Covert Action: The United States and Syria, 1945-1958," *Middle East Journal* 44, no. 1 (Winter 1990).

men surrounded the American chancery in Damascus, and the Syrian government declared several American diplomats as persona non grata.[7]

Tensions boiled over in August when Syrian saboteurs infiltrated Jordan. In London and Washington, it looked increasingly like Syria might become a Soviet satellite and destabilize the "already delicate Middle East situation."[8] The United States sped up delivery of previously scheduled arms shipments to Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Turkey.[9] The expedited delivery was made to deter Syria from launching an attack of its own, but the ostentatious delivery only heightened the tension in the region.

At the end of August, Dulles wrote to Harold Macmillan urging that their two countries coordinate policies in the region. Macmillan was relieved that the Americans seemed finally to grasp the importance of the Middle East.[10] It was the Prague Coup in 1948 that Macmillan credited with spurring the creation of NATO; in Syria Macmillan saw history repeating itself. The Syrian crisis, he told Dulles, "may be the Czechoslovakia we need to make a NATO for the

---

[7] Notes of the Secretary's Staff Meeting, Department of State, Washington, August 19, 1957, 9:15 a.m. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XIII, 359. While not definitive, the evidence, on balance, suggests these were CIA officials involved in organizing a coup against Damascus. Yaqub, *Containing Arab Nationalism*.

[8] Memorandum of a Conversation, Department of State, Washington, August 19, 1958, 3:45 p.m. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XIII, 360.

[9] The weapons, including hundreds of tanks, jeeps mounted with recoilless rifles, and other vehicles and ammunition, were delivered under through the Military Assistant Program. Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Lebanon, August 28, 1957. *FRUS 1955-1957, XIII,* doc. 376; Special Staff Note, Prepared in the White House, September 20, 1957. *FRUS 1955-1957, XIII,* doc. 403.

[10] "The Americans are learning their lesson and are realising the vital importance of the Middle East: I only hope it is not too late." Macmillan to Eden, September 29, 1957, Papers of Maurice Harold Macmillan, 1st Earl of Stockton [hereafter Macmillan papers], MS. Macmillan, c.310, Prime Minister's Personal Correspondence, Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford [hereafter BL].

Middle East."[11] Dulles was cool to this idea, for he thought London was already attempting to use the security organization in the area, the Baghdad Pact, as an "instrument of British policy."[12] He preferred that Britain and the United States cooperate *à deux*, and they did so for the duration of the crisis.

But what about NATO itself? The other allies, too, had reason to be concerned. Suez had made the European allies especially sensitive to possible economic repercussions stemming from problems in the Middle East. This was worry enough in itself. But the escalation of the crisis in the fall offered an even worse prospect: the alliance being dragged into a general war.[13]

Turkey's border with Syria embroiled one NATO ally directly in the crisis, and any attack on Turkey would require, per the North Atlantic Treaty, that the allies come to Turkey's defense. Turkish forces assigned to NATO were usually deployed in such a way as to protect the Dardanelles in case of war with the Soviet Union.[14] But Turkish leaders, fearing a two-pronged attack - in the southeast, from Syria, and in the northwest from Bulgaria - moved their troops to the Syrian border for exercises. The action frustrated Lauris Norstad, NATO's Supreme Commander, who did not give permission or approval for the move.[15] The troop movement also upset the Soviets: Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko delivered what Dulles thought to be

---

[11] Entry for August 27, 1957 in Peter Catterall, ed. *The Macmillan Diaries, Vol. 2: Prime Minister and after, 1957-1966* (London: Macmillan, 2011), [hereafter *MD:PM*], 55.

[12] Douglas Little, *American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East since 1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 130. See also Washington No. 1832 to FO, September 14, 1957, FO 371/128253, NAUK.

[13] Yaqub, *Containing Arab Nationalism*, 147.

[14] Daily Top Secret Summary. August 19, 1957. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XIII, 358.

[15] N.J.A. Cheetham (Paris) to Sir William Hayter (FO), September 12, 1957, FO 371/128253, NAUK.

"perhaps the bitterest attack ever made by a Soviet official on the United States," and threatened to mass Soviet troops on the Turkish border.[16]

Dulles responded to Gromyko with a statement that the United States would come to Turkey's assistance "with armed force" if necessary. He also promised to ensure the uninterrupted flow of oil from the region.[17] Dulles, however, avoided mentioning NATO's links to Turkey in his speech, even though he clearly understood the obligations.[18] The Turks, too, did not press NATO to make any public comment regarding NATO's commitments to Turkey, if only so as not to water the "good wine" of Dulles' strong statement.[19] In the late summer, Dulles wished to keep NATO in the background. As in the Suez Crisis, the American invocation of NATO might have limited Dulles' diplomatic choices or risked increased Soviet activity in the region. And just as important, Anglo-American efforts in the region had been conducted in the shadows.

By mid-September 1957 the situation was more precarious. Fighting on the Lebanese-Syrian border left eleven dead. At the same time, Iraqi officials announced that Syrian "extremists" were cooperating with "a secret organization which aimed at large scale assassinations of Iraq leaders and a plot against the Government."[20] The crisis seemed ready to burst into a regional

---

[16] Memorandum of Discussion at the 336th Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington, September 12, 1957. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XIII, 398.

[17] Washington No. 1848 to FO, September 14, 1957, FO 371/128253, NAUK.

[18] Senator William Knowland, for example, wanted to put NATO in the speech; Dulles also said to Knowland that the American 'disposition is to stand back of the Turks and tell them they are members of NATO" and also protected by the Middle East Resolution. Memorandum of a Telephone Conversation Between the Secretary of State and Senator William F. Knowland, September 11, 1957, 2:40 p.m. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XIII, p. 700.

[19] From "Chancery [Ankara]" to "[Southern] Department," December 20, 1957, FO 371/128125, NAUK.

[20] FO No. 815 to UKDel, September 17, 1957, FO 371/128253, NAUK.

conflagration. Dulles decided that the time had come for NATO to discuss the issue, and that the Turks should take the initiative. In Ankara, Turkish, American and British officials discussed how and when to raise the issue in the North Atlantic Council.

What exactly to say in NATO, and what NATO could do, was not clear to anyone. The American Permanent Representative gave the Council a brief overview of American actions, including Dulles's speech and the delivery of American supplies to Arab countries. He warned that Syria's neighbors continued to express "grave concern" over the situation. Turkey seconded this statement, warning that Syria was becoming a Soviet satellite. [21]

The European allies, however, were uneasy with the situation. The Italians complained about the "spectacular way" in which the weapons had been airlifted and naval ships sailed about had alarmed their countrymen. Surely, the decision to make such large deliveries had been made earlier, so why had the United States not informed their NATO allies?[22] France, too, wanted more information and a meeting specifically to discuss Syria. The British stalled, saying that it would take a few days for all of the Permanent Representatives in Paris to be briefed by their capitals.[23]

Despite the repeated promises by NATO members to "consult" the NAC, the Americans had not done so over Syria. Instead, as the crisis deepened in September, the Council was informed about actions taken, but not consulted as the policies were developed. While the allies

---

[21] "Summary Record of a Meeting of the Council held at the Palais de Chaillot, Paris, XVIe. On Thursday, 12th September, 1957 at 10.15 a.m." September 16, 1957, C-R(57), NATO.

[22] Indeed, instructions on the arms transfer had been given in August. Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Lebanon. August 28, 1957. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XIII, p. 376. The Arab States had wished for a spectacular delivery to symbolize American support and their improved readiness. Memorandum of a Conversation Between the Secretary of State and General Lauris Norstad, Department of State, Washington, October 28, 1957. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XIII, 415.

[23] "Summary Record of a Meeting of the Council, September 16, 1957," C-R(57), NATO.

not directly involved wanted discussion, the United States, Turkey and the United Kingdom, all of whom were pursuing their own policies in the region, were not eager to have a full scale debate over what to do next. They sought to avoid discussion in the Council for fear that it would be "undesirable to reveal" British, American or Turkish policies "to so large a forum as that of the North Atlantic Council.[24]" This left the Council, at first, in limbo.

1.1.5 Banging Heads Together

NATO's new Secretary General broke the impasse. Paul-Henri Spaak, former Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Belgium and an influential supporter of European unification who had served as the first President of the European Coal and Steel Community, replaced Lord Ismay as Secretary General of NATO, in 1957.[25] This was a necessary change for NATO in an era of crises. Some, like NATO's Deputy Supreme Commander Bernard Montgomery, had been arguing for Ismay's replacement. While NATO's first Secretary General had been "good enough at free-wheeling along," the alliance needed "someone who would pedal like hell."[26] From 1957 until 1961, Spaak was "a vigorous and effective" if controversial Secretary General.[27] As

[24] Untitled minute by Hayter, September 16, 1957, FO 371/128253, NAUK.

[25] The consensus had been, originally, for Lester Pearson of Canada. But he declined because of the Canadian election cycle, and Spaak was the next candidate agreeable to all parties. "Question of Successor to Lord Ismay," Memorandum for the President, October 23, 1956, box 14, folder "October 1956(1)," *The Papers of John Foster Dulles and of Christian A. Herter, 1953-1961, Chronological Correspondence Series* (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1986) [hereafter *DHCC]*.

[26] Untitled minute by Reading, June 14, 1956, FO 371/124805, NAUK.

[27] As Secretary General, Spaak took the responsibility for ensuring consultation occurred in Council very seriously. Spaak, *The Continuing Battle: Memoirs of a European, 1936-1966*, 258-59.

Canada's Permanent Representative noted critically, Spaak "has made his name banging the heads of the European countries together, and now naturally wants to do the same in NATO."[28]

Syria was Spaak's first effort both to bang heads together and to create a common policy outside of Europe. He sent out a questionnaire to each delegation posing questions about the Syrian crisis. "To what degree," the questionnaire asked, is Syria "satellized" or "on the road to satellization"? How much control does Moscow hold over the Syrian government? Is there a valid distinction to be made between "Communist infiltration there and specifically Russian domination?" Did the situation in Syria pose "an immediate danger" to the West, and if so what kind? Was there a possibility of military action? Was this is a "long-term danger," and again, of what kind? And what could NATO states do about it? "What countermeasures can Western countries take against long-term dangers of the situation without tending to aggravate the situation and transforming long-term danger into immediate one?"[29] The questionnaire and answers were to serve as the framework for discussion of Syria in private sessions of the Council.

Neither London nor Washington was much interested in the questionnaire, and Dulles left it to Perkins to decide whether to respond. [30] Perkins opted to respond in detail. He stressed the American appreciation that "Syria has become or is about to become [a] base for military and

---

[28] Shuckburgh Diary entry for September 12, 1958, Shuckburgh Diary, MS 191-1-2-6, Cadbury Research Library: Special Collections, University of Birmingham [hereafter CRL]. See also Dean Acheson to Lucius Battle, AP, Gen. Corr., box 2, folder: 26.

[29] "Syria and the Middle East," Secretary General to Permanent Representatives, September 13, 1957, PO/57/1095, NATO.

[30] Untitled minute by Hayter, September 16, 1957.

subversive activities in [the Middle East] designed to destroy independence of those countries and to subject them to Soviet Communist domination."[31]

The present danger, as the Americans saw it, was subversion. The Syrian intelligence agency was smuggling arms and agents into Lebanon, and would later expand their operations to Iraq and Jordan.[32] The best countermeasures, Perkins judged, was not action by NATO but efforts by member states to strengthen the internal and military security of Syria's neighbors, counter hostile propaganda, give economic aid to strengthen governments, and stand-by commitments to assist and safeguard the integrity and independence of the Arab States.[33]

As other countries provided their answers to the questionnaire, Spaak and his staff tabulated the answers and sought to establish "a basis for planning of concerted action by the NATO member countries." Spaak organized these potential actions into Political, Military and Economic categories: Politically, the NATO states could encourage Saudi Arabia's King Saud to become the leader of the Arab world, replacing Nasser. Or perhaps NATO states could, at the United Nations, reaffirm their "resolve to maintain the status quo in the Middle East." Or they could work with Arab leaders to establish normal relations with Israel, and get Israeli leaders to make peace with the Arabs.[34] Economically, it "seemed essential" to grant aid to the countries of the Middle East, and such aid should be coordinated between NATO states and "within the

---

[31] This first made privately to Spaak. See Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in France, September 17, 1957 - 6:15 pm. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXIV, doc. 364.

[32] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in France. Washington, September 17, 1957 - 6:15 pm. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XIII, 400. On later infiltrations see Washington No. 1990 to FO, October 2, 1957, FO 371/128253, NAUK.

[33] UKDel No. 266 to FO, September 18, 1957, FO 371/128253, NAUK.

[34] "Syria and the Middle East," Secretary General to Permanent Representatives, October 15, 1957, PO/57/1276, NATO. See also amendment of October 16, 1957, PO/57/1286, NATO.

framework of the Baghdad Pact.[35] The Baghdad Pact figured into Spaak's thinking on the military front, too: he called for liaison between the two organizations. NATO should also "retain and consolidate … strategic positions," "strengthen the military potential" of allies in the region, and "oppose any extension of Soviet military influence in the Middle East such as the establishment of bases in the area and the encirclement of Turkey."[36]

Spaak realized quickly, however, that it was "far from easy" to arrive at such common policies in NATO.[37] His potential policies were either too abstract or opened up too much disagreement between allies and none offered NATO a solution to the immediate crisis. There was still disagreement between the NATO allies as to what, precisely, was happening in Syria. In a private discussion in the Council, delegations vigorously debated whether the Syrians were "pro-Communist" or "pro-Russian." To the frustration of the Americans, the French delegate engaged in a long soliloquy on the difference between "satellization" and "vassalization."[38] And although the United States had, throughout the 1950s, been opposed to any coordination of economic activity in NATO, Perkins now pushed for economic aid to countries in the region, especially Jordan.[39] Yet many of the other allies worried this would create an imbalance of arms between Arab states and Israel.[40]

Spaak's attention to the military component of the crisis boiled down to giving support to Syria's Arab neighbors. But the line between the political and military facets of the Syrian crisis

---

[35] "Syria and the Middle East," October 15, 1957 and amendment.

[36] Ibid.

[37] UKDel No. 622 Saving to FO, September 21, 1957, FO 371/128253, NAUK.

[38] UKDel No. 619 Saving to FO, September 21, 1957; American reactions passed on to British in Washington No. 1990 to FO, October 2, 1957.

[39] Washington No. 1990 to FO, October 2, 1957; R. M. Hadow to Cheetham, October 7, 1957, FO 371/128253, NAUK.

[40] UKDel No. 622 Saving to FO, September 21, 1957.

was blurry. From the beginning, General Norstad, had been "disturbed and irritated" by the Turkish movement of troops to the Syrian border, fearing they would only inflame the region.[41] He was particularly frustrated because the three divisions had been originally deployed for the defense of the Dardanelles in accordance with NATO's overall defensive strategy.[42] Norstad told the Turkish Prime Minister and chief of staff not to "waste any sleep" on the matter, for the Soviets would not take any half measures short of general war, in which case all of NATO would back Turkey. Norstad's thinking revolved entirely around his responsibilities for deterring, and if necessary, defending against, the Soviet Union in a war. Overall, he thought the idea of an attack on Syria "ridiculous." He told Frank Roberts, the British Permanent Representative at NATO, that the United States had "unnecessarily blown up and exaggerated" the situation and Roberts agreed.[43]

Dulles's priorities were politics and prestige. The Soviets were out to prove they were "top dog" and the United States, and its allies, had to show strength, even if it meant disturbing Norstad's defense plan.[44] This dispute raised serious questions about the role of NATO's supreme commander and NATO's military strategy in events short of war. When should his responsibility for planning for and ensuring the defense of the North Atlantic Treaty area be subsumed to allow for military demonstrations? The questions would be asked again during the Berlin Crisis. There was no easy answer. For Frank Roberts, a confidant of Norstad and a careful observer of NATO, it was Norstad's duty to "warn soldiers under his command that they are not

---

[41] N.J.A. Cheetham (Paris) to Sir William Hayter (FO), September 12, 1957, FO 371/128253, NAUK.

[42] The need to defend the Dardanelle Strait, which is vital to transit from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean, was pivotal to inviting Turkey to join NATO.

[43] Roberts to Hayter, September 23, 1957, FO 371/128253, NAUK.

[44] "Turkey, NATO, and the Middle East," Memorandum of Conversation, October 28, 1957, box 15, folder: "October 1957 (1)," *DHCC*.

helping NATO by making troop dispositions which are inconsistent with NATO planning." But it was not his job to discuss with the Turkish chief of staff "the dangers of internal subversion in Jordan and the Lebanon."[45]

It was subversion, nonetheless, that was at the core of Anglo-American fears over Syria. General Nathan Twining, the Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, argued that Soviet efforts in the region were not "indicative of preparation for general war." Rather, they "clearly indicate[d] an intensification of the Cold War;" Dulles concurred.[46] While the Syrian army's becoming "sufficiently trained in the use of Russian arms" posed a long-term military threat, there was no immediate danger.[47] The real problem was expected to be "the next round" of activity by Syrian intelligence agents in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq, which could lead to "widespread terrorist and subversive activities." These activities potentially were not only economically destabilizing; they might also create a "Damascus-Cairo-Moscow axis."[48]

Spaak and Norstad, NATO's two key leadership figures, missed the point - or at least the point according to London and Washington. Norstad's concern was with "general war," which, in the American lexicon, was different than the "Cold War" playing out in the Middle East. And Spaak's document had offered nothing to defend against subversion in non-NATO states. Meeting two months after the crisis, Dulles and Lloyd agreed that the "imminent and pressing danger" was a "politico-economic-subversive offensive," and that this was a problem of world-wide dimensions. While the need to coordinate action around the world might logically suggest

---

[45] Roberts to Hayter, October 3, 1957, FO 371/128253, NAUK.

[46] Memorandum of a Conversation with the President, White House, Washington, September 7, 1957, 10:07 a.m. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XIII, 388.

[47] UKDel No. 266 to FO, September 18, 1957.

[48] R. M. Hadow to Cheetham, October 7, 1957; UKDel No. 266 to FO, September 18, 1957, FO 371/128253, NAUK.

"a world-wide organization or an effort by NATO to take on world-wide responsibilities ... we doubt that either of these is desirable."[49]

What could NATO offer then, apart from insurance against an all-out war with the Soviet Union? Washington and London, during the crisis in Syria, did not consider NATO to be a viable instrument of the "Cold War." British and American cold war policy was not made or discussed in the North Atlantic Council but shaped in a secret Anglo-American Working Group that could take into account the intelligence and covert side of foreign policy that were simply not discussed with other allies.[50]

While the working groups were secret, British and American efforts to avoid consultation in the Council were obvious to the allies. Where the other NATO allies, and even Britain, had previously called for NATO to expand its responsibilities for both regions and policies beyond the military defense of Europe, NATO was kept in the dark over Syria. Spaak sensed a "malaise in the Council" which he feared might lead to despondency reminiscent of the Suez crisis.[51] He became worried that NATO's silence on the Syrian crisis might be interpreted around the world as a lessening of NATO's importance and stature. But there were a number of good reasons for NATO not to make a public statement on behalf of the alliance: it would give

---

[49] Dulles to Selwyn Lloyd, December 4, 1957. Dulles, Chronological series, box 15, folder: December 1957 (3), DDEL.

[50] The British were unwilling to spearhead any NATO initiative on the region, and anything they said in NATO had "to be cleared fully with the Americans to fit in the broader picture." FO No. 4209 to Washington, October 17, 1957, FO 371/128253, NAUK. See also Draft letter. Original, partially redacted, is: R. W. Hadow to John Cheetham, October 1, 1957, FO 371/128253, NAUK. On the Working Groups see Matthew Jones, "Anglo-American Relations after Suez, the Rise and Decline of the Working Group Experiment, and the French Challenge to NATO, 1957-59," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 14 (2003). On covert operations in Syria, see "The 'Preferred Plan': The Anglo-American Working Group Report on Covert Action in Syria, 1957."; Little, "Cold War and Covert Action: The United States and Syria, 1945-1958."

[51] UKDel No. 305 to FO, October 17, 1957, FO 371/128253, NAUK.

propaganda opportunities to Moscow, Cairo, and Damascus, might consolidate Arab support for Syria, and embarrass the Iraqis.[52] This left Spaak discouraged; Syria had "had revealed to him with unpleasant clarity the limitations upon N.A.T.O.'s effective role in really important matters."[53] As to how NATO could play any role at all in international affairs outside of its Treaty area, but which deeply affected its members, there was nothing but "an unfortunate lack of ideas."[54]

1.1.6 Lebanon & Jordan: Doing Another Suez

NATO's dysfunction during the Syrian crisis was largely kept secret. Nonetheless, and despite efforts to maintain secrecy, there were leaks to the press that the NAC frequently discussed the Middle East. These leaks were not big news in the newspapers of member states, but it was a different story in the Middle East itself. In the weeks before the December 1957 NAC meeting, Lebanese, Jordanian, and Saudi leaders wrote to Eisenhower worried that NATO was going to take decisions affecting the Middle East without consulting them.[55] After these requests, NATO allies reached a secret agreement to instruct Spaak to draft letters to the secretaries-general of the Baghdad Pact, the Organization of American States, and the South East Asian Treaty Organization. The letters proposed "simple and discreet arrangements, and suggest[ed] exchanges of information on economic, social, cultural and information

---

[52] FO No. 4134 to Washington, October 15, 1957, FO 371/128253, NAUK.

[53] UKDel No. 318 to FO, October 21, 1957, FO 371/128253, NAUK.

[54] UKDel No. 661 Saving to FO. October 9, 1957, FO 371/128253, NAUK.

[55] "Memorandum to the President, "Reply to Lebanese President's Letter," December 11, 1957. DDRS, CK3100255456; Beirut No. 1331 to FO, December 12, 1957, FO 371/127758; "Verbal Memorandum" December 10, 1957, FO 371/127909, NAUK.

problems, with emphasis on free world security."[56] The OAS declined the invitation, but SEATO and the Baghdad Pact accepted. A limited relationship developed between NATO and the Baghdad Pact, including the exchange of study papers and plans for a future coordination of "defence plans" between both organizations.[57] By the time the next crisis broke in the Middle East, however, the NATO-Baghdad Pact relationship was nothing more than introductory letters. And the Arab leaders who had written to Eisenhower and Macmillan need not have worried that NATO allies would act in the region without consulting them, for it was the Arab leaders themselves who asked the western powers to take action.

On the morning of June 14, 1958, Lebanese President Camille Chamoun, confronting a coup, requested aid from Britain, France and the United States. The Americans were not willing to suffer the "halitosis effect," as the British had termed it during Suez, of cooperation with France in the Middle East.[58] And while Anglo-American planning groups had prepared contingency plans for joint military action in the region, the United States decided it was best to intervene alone, rather than leave France as the odd man out.[59] On July 15, 1958, U.S. Marines landed in Lebanon.[60]

---

[56] Secretary's Notebook for December 20, 1957, CC(57)84, CAB 195/17/4, NAUK "Staff Notes No. 290," January 29, 1958, DDRS, CK3100256067.

[57] Macmillan, Spaak and the Turks pushed this idea; most countries were non-committal, and the Scandinavians and Canadians were especially opposed. Note by the Canadian Delegation, Committee of Political Advisers [hereafter CPA], April 24, 1958, AC/119-WP(58)341, NATO. See also "Relations Between NATO and the Baghdad Pact," Report by the CPA, February 15, 1957, CM(57)20, NATO.

[58] Kyle refers to the halitosis effect repeatedly in *Suez*.

[59] Yaqub, *Containing Arab Nationalism*, 226.

[60] On the crisis and its implications, see Douglas Little, "His Finest Hour? Eisenhower, Lebanon, and the 1958 Middle East Crisis," *Diplomatic History* 20 (Winter 1996). Also Ritchie Ovendale, "Great Britain and the Anglo-American Invasion of Jordan and Lebanon in 1958," *The International History Review* 16, no. 2 (May 1994); Irene L. Gendzier, *Notes from the Minefield:*

In London, Macmillan and his ministers feared that the United States would "go do the Lebanon" but ignore the intertwined crises in neighboring Jordan and Iraq. Macmillan worried that a series of crises in Iraq, Syria and the Suez would dry up oil for Britain. After learning that American troops were en route to Beirut, Macmillan telephoned the White House and told Eisenhower: "you are doing a Suez on me." Eisenhower laughed, but Macmillan believed he made clear to the President that he expected "the Americans to stand by us + to see the thing through" in the Middle East. The next day, the British government agreed to give "moral support" to the Americans.[61] On July 17, Britain launched its own intervention, deploying paratroops from bases in Cyprus into Amman, Jordan. Again, as in 1956, two NATO allies sent combat troops into the Middle East without informing the North Atlantic Council.

Nonetheless, the Americans believed their intervention was in direct support of NATO. A few months after the invasion, Randolph Burgess, Perkins' replacement as the United States Permanent Representative, would claim that the actions had been critical to NATO's survival. If the United States had "shown any weakness," in the Middle East, Turkey might have entered talks with the Russians, and there would have been doubts about NATO in the rest of Europe. "If any such impression got going," said Burgess, "the Alliance would be in serious danger."[62] By showing support for non-NATO allies, the Americans thought they were sending a message to their European partners that Washington would maintain its commitments.

United States Intervention in Lebanon and the Middle East, 1945-1958 (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006).

[61] Macmillan diary entry for June 14, 1958, Macmillan papers, MS. Macmillan, Dep.d.32, Diaries, BL.

[62] "Summary of Discussion by Ambassador Burgess and USRO Staff with McCloy-McMarney Subcommittee of Draper Committee," January 13, 1959. DDRS, CK3100097639.

But things looked differently from Europe, especially in Paris, Bonn, and Rome. Evelyn Shuckburgh, a high-ranking diplomat from the British Foreign Office on secondment as assistant secretary general of NATO, noted wryly that "nothing very terrible seems to have happened as a result of our landing, except that the French, Germany and Italians are very angry at not having been consulted."[63] In Council, German Permanent Representative Herbert Blankenhorn "insisted" that there be "consultation in advance of any further unilateral action."[64] Burgess said this had been impossible in the Lebanese case. Had the intervention been postponed for even 24 hours to inform the Council, American troops "might well have found Chamoun dead."[65] In keeping with the Council's decorum, the Europeans avoided direct criticism of the interventions, but made clear their displeasure in private conversations.[66]

After the landings, Spaak arranged frequent meetings of the Council to keep the allies informed of the developing situation in the Middle East. A rough balance sheet drawn up by British officials put Spaak, the Benelux countries, and Canada as supporters of the invasion, while the French, Germans, and Italians maintained a "disturbing attitude." [67] The Norwegians, always the most wary of NATO involvement in the Middle East, found support from other smaller allies in their warning that the consequences of the landings could be "incalculable." The greatest fear, articulated most clearly by the Germans, was that Britain would extend its

---

[63] Shuckburgh diary entry for July 18, 1958, MS. Shuckburgh, MS191-2-6, Special Collections, Cadbury Research Library Special Collections, University of Birmingham, UK.

[64] UKDel No. 199 Saving to FO. July 17, 1958, FO 371/133820, NAUK.

[65] UKDel No. 200 Saving to FO. July 18, 1958, FO 371/133820, NAUK.

[66] Still, both the American and British delegations found Council's general tone to be reserved and not better than "moderately satisfactory." Advance copy of UKDel Savingram 193 to F.O , FO 371/134132, NAUK.

[67] UKDel No. 149 to FO, July 18, 1958, FO 371/133820, NAUK.

intervention to Iraq.[68] Indeed, such concerns were well founded, for Macmillan had alluded to the need for a "much larger operation" in the region.[69] The Germans, supported by the Italians, repeatedly called for a NATO-wide approach - a "long-term common policy" - toward the Middle East.[70] Spaak, too, hoped to use the momentum of crisis to build a common NATO policy toward the region.[71] But what would this common policy look like? When Sir Frank Roberts privately confronted those who called for a "new approach in the Middle East" and asked them to be more precise, he found them much "less eloquent."[72]

In the week following the interventions, the British and Americans assured their allies that there were no plans to expand the invasions into a regional war, which improved the mood of the Council.[73] But the most important ramifications of the Lebanese and Jordanian operations were still brewing in Paris, if not at NATO's headquarters then at the Elysée Palace, France's presidential residence. The new French leader, Charles de Gaulle, let it be known that he was "very unhappy about the lack of prior consultation" over both Lebanon and Jordan.[74] Throughout the crisis, British diplomats observed that France had not been as "difficult" as the Germans or Italians, but had, instead, been "simply sulking." The sulkiness, assumed Frank Roberts, was

---

[68] UKDel No. 203 Saving to FO. July 19, 1958, FO 371/133820, NAUK.

[69] Yaqub, *Containing Arab Nationalism*, 227. See also Shuckburgh diary entry for July 16, 1958, MS 191-2-6 – July 16 – end, CRL.

[70] Advance copy of UKDel Savingram 193 to F.O, FO 371/134132, NAUK. The British believed that the Italians and Germans were really worried because of threats to their commercial interests in the region. UKDel No. 148 to FO, July 18, 1958, FO 371/133820, NAUK.

[71] Advance copy of UKDel Savingram 193 to F.O.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Memorandum of a Conference with the President, White House, Washington, July 20, 1958, 3:45 p.m. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, XI, 205; UKDel No. 204 Saving to FO. July 22, 1958, FO 371/133820, NAUK.

[74] UKDel No. 150 to FO, July 18, 1958, FO 371/133820, NAUK.

because "they do not feel sufficiently in the picture."[75] The Lebanese and Jordanian, perhaps even more than Suez, created tension between France and an emerging Anglo-American idea of NATO that we shall return to in Chapter 3.

By the end of 1958, crises in Suez, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan had all demonstrated the limits of consultation in the North Atlantic Council. At Ministerials since 1955, there had been repeated calls for member states to coordinate their military, foreign and economic policies. But in crisis, there was no quick and easy agreement as to whose policy should be the common one. It was rarely specified in debate whether a NATO policy meant one taken by the organization, or taken by the member states on behalf of the organization, or simply all of the member states adapting the same policy without any mention or reference to their formal alliance. The debate was further complicated by the perception of many of the allies that NATO was a four-letter word in the rest of the world and that the NATO moniker should not be attached to any actions beyond the defense of the Atlantic.

Britain's Lord "Sammy" Hood, reflecting on how to achieve a common policy in NATO beyond military affairs, wrote that "this is not a problem which can be solved simply by elaborating a new piece of machinery. The problem is really whether the member governments, notably the U.S.A. and U.K. wish to use N.A.T.O. as the place where they will formulate their policies."[76] But the crises of 1956, 1957 and 1958 led several NATO allies to assume that machinery - whether informal coordination or formal obligations - offered the best chance of finding a common policy. The next two chapters detail efforts to establish a pattern of policymaking - one informal, the other informal - to coordinate allied actions around the world.

---

[75] UKDel No. 148, to FO, July 18, 1958.

[76] "Sir I. Kirkpatrick's minute," Minute by Lord Hood, March 26, 1956, FO 371/124801, NAUK.

CHAPTER 2: THE APPLE CART:

FORGING THE ANGLO-SAXON DIRECTORATE

"He [Dulles] realises that America cannot stand alone, still less 'go it alone.' I responded, with quite a romantic picture of what U.S. + U.K. could do together - practically the last act of applecart."

– Harold Macmillan diary entry for October 23, 1957.[1]

VANHATTAN [rising, blandly triumphant]: […] The Declaration of Independence is cancelled. The treaties which endorsed it are torn up. We have decided to rejoin the British Empire. … But England will not perish. She will merge - merge, sir - into a bigger and brighter concern."

– His Excellency the American Ambassador Mr. Vanhattan to the King of England, in Act II of George Bernard Shaw's *The Apple Cart*[2]

***

Washington and London chose to manage the Syrian, Lebanese, and Jordanian crises through Anglo-American, rather than NATO, cooperation. Yet the basis of the Anglo-American alliance in the Eisenhower and Macmillan era was closely linked with American plans for NATO. The "Special Relationship," kindled by Harold Macmillan and Dwight Eisenhower, helped to meet Britain's nuclear needs and American desire for a partner to act abroad. But the relationship was also a part of Eisenhower's plan to use close but informal relations between London and Washington to inspire a sense of unity amongst all NATO allies. The reborn Anglo-American "common law alliance" like that between Roosevelt and Churchill during the Second World War, with all of the benefits of close cooperation without the rigid formalities of an institutionalized relationship, was Eisenhower's ideal.[3]

---

[1] Macmillan diary entry for October 23, 1957, *MD:PM*, 157.

[2] Bernard Shaw, *The Apple Cart: A Political Extravaganza* (London: Constable & Co., ltd., 1930), 63.

[3] Typically, perhaps, both an American and Britisher can lay some claim to this styling. See William Stevenson, *A Man Called Intrepid: The Secret War* (London: Macmillan, 1976).

Eisenhower wished to expand this spirit of cooperation and unity into NATO itself, believing that the Anglo-American relationship could serve as the hub for the other allies. Macmillan was less enthusiastic about Eisenhower's visions but exploited them when they suited Macmillan's needs. Eisenhower and Macmillan ensured that close Anglo-American relations would remain at the heart of NATO. They did offer a model to their allies, and gradually, the Anglo-American practice of informal and ad hoc cooperation would come to be NATO's, too. The value of such a strong core for NATO reveals itself in the coming chapters, for most of the critical decisions on NATO's future rested on Anglo-American agreement. Still, it was not easy to invite others into a common law relationship that rested on so much history, and neither Eisenhower or Macmillan had a plan for just how to imbue NATO with this habit of cooperation other than a long and tumultuous courtship like that between London and Washington in the first half of the twentieth century.

***

1.2.1 Washed Off the Slate

In the aftermath of Suez Winston Churchill wrote Eisenhower about the need for Anglo-American harmony to effectively confront the Soviet Union. Eisenhower replied that he hoped "this one [the discord over Suez] may be washed off the slate as soon as possible."[4] The U.S. President acted quickly and graciously to meet with Harold Macmillan, the new British Prime Minister who had replaced the sick and humiliated Anthony Eden.[5] Eisenhower considered

---

[4] Quoted in Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Waging Peace, 1956-1961: The White House Years*, ed. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1965), 99.

[5] The Americans watched Eden's succession carefully, and worried that a new Prime Minister from the Conservative's "Victorian" element would throw Britain into a general election. A general election would leave Britain rudderless for the December NATO and might result in a withdrawal of British troops from the continent. Memorandum of Discussion at the 305th Meeting of the National Security Council, November 30, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XVI, 626; Memorandum from the Officer in Charge of United Kingdom and Ireland Affairs to the

Macmillan, with whom he had served in the war, the "outstanding one of the British." They met in Bermuda, where the British side could play host.[6] State officials wanted the conference to re-establish close consultation and "frank interchanges of views," to avoid more crises like Suez.[7] But also of "major importance" was the presentation of the two nations' unity. It was important that Macmillan and Eisenhower speak, but also be seen speaking; the US Embassy in London hoped there would be photos of the two men relaxing, casually, together.[8]

Macmillan and his officials took every opportunity to put the renewed friendship on display: they filled the main thoroughfares with Union Jacks and Star Spangled Banners, and there was much military pageantry and ceremony and other "razzmatazz."[9] The conference itself was casual, and both parties, aware of the need to both have and appear to have intimacy, played up their collegiality. Alistair Horne, in his biography of Macmillan, records that Eisenhower and Macmillan acted like old school chums, visiting each other in their bedrooms, sometimes even in pajamas.[10]

Eisenhower and Dulles and Macmillan and Lloyd spoke in sweeping terms that placed them on the same side of grand historical developments. They discussed how they were, together, at a "critical point in history" brought on by decolonization. Britain, said Macmillan, was the "junior

---

Director and Deputy Director of the Office of British Commonwealth and Northern European Affairs, November 26, 1956. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXVII, 247.

[6] Memorandum of Conference with the President November 201, 1956, 5:30 p.m., November 21, 1956, box 4, folder: "Meetings with the President Aug. Thru Dec. 1956 (2)," *WHCM.*

[7] Position Paper Prepared in the Bureau of European Affairs, February 13, 1957. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXVII, 257.

[8] Telegram from the Embassy in the United Kingdom to the Department of State, March 7, 1957. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXVII, 261.

[9] John Dickie, *'Special' No More: Anglo-American Relations, Rhetoric and Reality* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1994), 98.

[10] Alistair Horne, *Harold Macmillan*, vol. 2, *1957-1986* (New York: Viking, 1989), 25.

partner" of the pair. But, he warned, if the two countries did not work together, the "survival of classical civilization as we know it was at stake."[11]

The desire for cooperation between Macmillan and Eisenhower was authentic. Neither man thought he could achieve his goals without the other. But the displays of camaraderie, and somewhat subservient tones of Macmillan's presentation, were carefully calculated dimensions of Macmillan's pageantry.[12] And on policy issues, Britain and the United States were not always so close. They differed over the role of the United Nations, with the British still deeply resentful of the General Assembly's role in the Suez crisis. They also disagreed on the importance of Britain's commitment to keep troops in Europe assigned to NATO. Macmillan, eager to find savings by reducing the British Army on the Rhine (BAOR), announced a large withdrawal just before the conference and despite last minute appeals from Eisenhower.

Still, Eisenhower and Macmillan both thought Bermuda a success and likened it to their intimate relations during the war.[13] Writing much later, in his autobiography, Eisenhower claimed that Nassau "did much to restore Anglo-American understanding and thus to strengthen the North Atlantic community of nations."[14] Similarly, a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State told a conference of Chiefs of Mission, "the US-UK relationship is at the core of NATO."[15] For

---

[11] Memorandum of a Conversation, Mid-Ocean Club, Bermuda, March 21, 1957, 10:30 a.m. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXVII, 268.

[12] Macmillan, in his memoirs, recounts how he laid in wait ready for the moment "when my close ties with America and my former association with the President could be usefully exploited." Bermuda was the first moment. Harold Macmillan, *Riding the Storm, 1956-1959* (London: Macmillan, 1971), 240.

[13] Diary Entry by the President, March 21, 1957. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXVII, 271. Eisenhower reiterated the point in *Waging Peace*, 124. For Macmillan's account, see Washington No. 92 to FO. March 25, 1956. PREM 11/1836.

[14] Eisenhower, *Waging Peace,* 125.

[15] Northern European Chiefs of Mission Conference, London, September 19-21, 1957: Summary of Proceedings. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 252.

American officials, but especially Eisenhower, relations between London and Washington beat at NATO's heart.

1.2.2 A Turning Point in the Organization of the Free World

On October 4, 1957, the Soviet Union launched a small satellite into space. On its own, Sputnik was a technological marvel. Taken as an indication of Soviet expertise in rocketry, it signaled a capability to launch nuclear weapons that could target the United States. This created panic in the United States and other NATO countries.[16] In the U.S., Sputnik led to severe criticism of the President and his administration for not keeping pace with Soviet technical advances. In Western Europe, there were fears that the United States, no longer protected by vast oceans, might dramatically change its Cold War commitment to NATO. A few weeks after the launch, Harold Macmillan visited Washington for a series of meetings. One historian has explained these visits as an effort "to begin planning a coordinated Western response to Sputnik."[17]

Sputnik provided another opportunity for Macmillan to exploit the developing Anglo-American relationship.[18] On October 10 he asked Eisenhower, "[W]hat are we going to do about these Russians?"[19] Had not the time come "when we could go further towards pooling our efforts and decide how best to use them for our common good?" Macmillan claimed his ideas were "very general and abstract." His reference to nuclear weapons, however, indicates that they were at the core of his thinking. Macmillan believed that Britain's "future as a first-class power"

---

[16] Robert A. Divine, *The Sputnik Challenge* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 17; W. W. Rostow, *The Diffusion of Power: An Essay in Recent History* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), 74-85.

[17] Divine, *The Sputnik Challenge*, 34.

[18] "Exploit" was, indeed, the word used not only by Macmillan but also British diplomats in describing the relationship.

[19] Letter from Prime Minister Macmillan to President Eisenhower, October 10, 1957. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXVII, 304.

would depend on its development of nuclear knowledge, and Sputnik opened the door for the British to press for renewed Anglo-American nuclear cooperation shut by the British atomic spy cases.[20]

Eisenhower replied the next day, seconding Macmillan's thoughts about cooperation. The U.S. President pointed to his own record of advocating "closer ties between our two countries," which, he agreed, the world looked to for leadership.[21] Eisenhower was always a polite correspondent who looked for opportunities to agree with his interlocutors. In this case, nevertheless, his enthusiastic response to Macmillan was genuine. In a discussion with Dulles about Macmillan's suggestion for the pooling of resources, Eisenhower said he was "very strong for action of this sort," and recalled his "bitter disappointment" that Truman had ended Anglo-American joint staff planning after the Second World War.[22] After the two reached general agreement by correspondence, they agreed to meet in Washington so that they might begin, in Macmillan's words, to "organize the free world as a whole in the struggle against communism."[23]

Macmillan's letters to Eisenhower stressed that Anglo-American coordination must come first, and then be extended to "those of our friends all over the world."[24] This purposefully mimicked Eisenhower's suggestion to Selwyn Lloyd that while the Anglo-American alliance

---

[20] Ibid.; Harold Caccia to Philip de Zulueta, September 18, 1957. PREM 11/2329, NAUK.

[21] Letter from President Eisenhower to Prime Minister Macmillan, October 11, 1957. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXVII, 305.

[22] Memorandum of Conversation with the President, October 15, 1957. Dulles Papers, WHM, box 5, folder: Meetings with the President - 1957 (2), DDEL.

[23] Letter from Macmillan to Eisenhower, Undated (but transmitted on October 16, 1957). *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXVII, 306.

[24] Ibid.

should be at the core of the free world, "it should also spill out into N.A.T.O. and, quite possibly, into other allied countries of Asia."[25]

But a concern for expanding Anglo-American coordination to NATO was near the bottom of Macmillan's thinking. Just before departing for Washington, Macmillan told the Cabinet that the primary goal of his trip was to seek the repeal of the McMahon Act. Second, he hoped for continued and deepened "Anglo-U.S. study of policy and plans, political economic and military, and means of giving effect to it either through international organisations or otherwise." Since there were and would be more informal and covert arrangements, these must not be announced publicly as it would create jealousies among others.[26] The Foreign Office saw this bilateral cooperation as a useful alternative to expanding NATO's responsibilities. What was required for organizing the defense of the West was a "less spectacular approach; and to begin by welding more closely together those countries which have the greatest practical contribution to make," that is, to link more closely Anglo-American policy, particularly by developing "machinery."[27]

Eisenhower, Dulles, and senior officials tried to take stock of the international situation and decide what they needed to achieve with Macmillan. The most daunting problem was a sense that America's alliances, including NATO, were in what Dulles called a "precarious state." Even the British, keen to cut back on their troop commitments to NATO, seemed to "feel dissatisfied with our present alliance.[28] In Macmillan's letter about the Anglo-American relationship, Dulles

---

[25] Washington No. 2088 to FO, October 15, 1957, PREM 11/2329, NAUK.

[26] Secretary's Notebook for October 21, 1957. TNA/C.C.74 (57).

[27] "Washington Talks - Outline of British Approach," October 20, 1957. PREM 11/2329, NAUK.

[28] "Memorandum of Conference with the President, October 22, 1957. October 31, 1957. WHO, OSS, Subject series, State Department subseries, box 2, folder: State Department - 1957 (August-October) (7), DDEL. We urgently need to strengthen further the sense of community in

saw "an opportunity and a peg for constructive action."[29] Action and results became the key words in planning for the conference. Officials took note of a *Daily Mirror* article warning that "nothing could damage the Western cause more" than another meeting, and another communiqué, "full of flannel, cordiality, and meaningless diplomatic twaddle."[30] Where Bermuda had been seen as an important but largely intangible exercise, Washington must be different.

The purpose of the conference, for Eisenhower and Dulles, was to let the British make specific proposals - they had no ideas of their own. [31] Then, as Dulles put it, London and Washington could "project any new collaborative element into our other alliances."[32] He brushed off concerns from his State Department advisors that this plan would cause offense to others. Dulles retorted that the mantra "a new and closer phase in Anglo-American relations" could be "projected into relations we both have with other friendly countries."[33] Dulles had no illusions about Macmillan's motives in coming to Washington. He opined to Eisenhower that while the Americans wanted to use the conference to "demonstrate our interest in all of our allies," the British sought only to stress the "special relationship." Eisenhower had come to a similar conclusion; he noted that it seemed the British were pressing "for a formally recognized two-

---

the NATO Alliance." "An Appraisal of NATO," Undated brief for Macmillan Talks, October 23-25, 1957. DDRS, CK3100229038.

[29] Record of a Meeting, Secretary of State Dulles' Office, Department of State, Washington, October 17, 1957, 5 p.m. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXVII, 307.

[30] Memorandum of a Conversation, Department of State, Washington, October 18, 1957. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXVII, 308.

[31] Ibid.

[32]Record of a Meeting, Secretary of State Dulles' Office, Department of State, Washington, October 17, 1957, 5 p.m. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXVII, 307.

[33] Memorandum of a Conversation, Department of State, Washington, October 18, 1957; Record of a Meeting, Secretary of State Dulles' Office, Department of State, Washington, October 17, 1957, 5 p.m.

country relationship." Eisenhower suggested the US try to "turn this [British plan] around and work through our alliances to maintain the closest possible contact with the British." He and Dulles agreed that actions taken in Washington could then be "broaden[ed] to the whole alliance."[34]

To facilitate the American planning for the conference, Dulles recalled Ambassador Livingston T. Merchant from Ottawa. In a shrewd memorandum to Dulles, the veteran diplomat and former Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs confirmed that the American strategy of building a closer relationship with Britain was in the United States' best interest. But he warned that the United States was playing a dangerous game by focusing so heavily and publicly on the Anglo-American relationship. Merchant warned that any partnership with Britain to assert "world leadership" will "send shivers down the back of most our allies in NATO." What was worse, if this leadership is not exercised "adequately," the United States could "destroy the effectiveness of NATO." In Merchant's judgment, the primary British goal was not, like Washington's, to establish a broader coalition of powers, but rather "a supreme effort" to "regain their war-time position of exclusive and equal partnership with the U.S." This was not abstract reasoning. What the US and UK would be doing, warned Merchant, was in essence to set up a "NATO Political Standing Group" of just the US and UK. This would deeply upset the Germans, but it would "slay the French." [35]

Heading into the conference, Dulles and Eisenhower knew that Macmillan was looking out for British interests. They were not averse to meeting his demands. But they hoped to then turn

---

[34] Memorandum of Conference with the President, October 22, 1957. October 31, 1957. WHO, OSS, Subject series, State Department subseries, box 2, folder: State Department - 1957 (August-October) (7), DDEL.

[35]Memorandum from the Ambassador to Canada (Merchant) to the Secretary of State, October 19, 1957. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXVII, 309.

the Washington-London axis inside out, from a closed bilateral relationship into a multilateral, NATO-wide, understanding.[36] This, Dulles believed, would be "a turning point in the organization of the free world." How this maneuver was to be achieved, however, was not carefully considered, and, instead, expressed largely in platitudes: The briefing paper Dulles gave to the President before his meetings with Macmillan noted, vaguely, that if they were successful in tightening their relations with the British, they "should develop this stronger sense of community with our other allies."[37]

1.2.3 The Last Act of The Apple Cart

Macmillan was renowned by contemporaries, and later by historians, as a thespian able to play the roles required by his situation and audience.[38] He opened the Washington talks, on October 23, by announcing dramatically:

> These days may well be decisive for the next few centuries. For several hundred years the Christian West had dominated the world. Now it faced the question of whether that kind of society would be submerged for several centuries by "Communist Socialism" with Communist Parties working underground as super-governments. It may well happen that what takes place in the next two days can reverse the whole trend.[39]

Macmillan recorded in his diary that he had painted "quite a romantic picture." His performance was "practically the last act of [The Apple Cart]," the Shavian play in which the Americans tear up the Declaration of Independence, renounce their own sovereignty, but then

---

[36] As Dulles later put it to Lloyd: "just as our bilateral Declaration of Common Purpose was designed to express ideas which could be projected into NATO, so NATO in turn should express ideas which could equally apply to and be received by all the free world." Dulles to Selwyn Lloyd, December 4, 1957. Dulles, Chronological series, box 15, folder: December 1957 (3), DDEL.

[37] Memorandum from the Secretary of State to the President [with enclosures], October 21, 1957. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXVII, 310.

[38] Desmond Donnelly to Acheson, September 28, 1960, AP, Gen. Corr., box 8, folder: 105. Also Peter Hennessy, *Muddling Through: Power, Politics and the Quality of Government in Postwar Britain* (London: Indigo, 1997).

[39] Memorandum of a Conversation, British Embassy, October 23, 1957, 3 p.m. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXVII, 316.

subsume Britain in a new Atlantic merger. Despite this theatrical bravado, Macmillan left the first meeting thinking the conversation rather "scrappy."[40] He sensed that Dulles and Eisenhower agreed on the need for greater cooperation between these two countries, but they "seemed unwilling to discuss just how it was to be done in practice."[41]

The next day, when Dulles visited the British Embassy to lunch with Macmillan, he brought with him the American draft of a "Declaration of Common Purpose" that would serve as the communiqué for the Washington talks. Macmillan read the document, and saw, at the end of the third paragraph, that the Americans would seek "the end of the McMahon Act - the great prize!"[42]

The Declaration itself was an important document; it would come to be known also as the Declaration of Interdependence. Its emphasis on a shared sense of solidarity and resource-sharing between the two countries paid homage to all of the sentiments Macmillan and Eisenhower had expressed in their replay of the Roosevelt-Churchill correspondence. But to Macmillan, focused so narrowly on the nuclear agreement, this other business was simply "a lot of verbiage."[43]

When Macmillan told his Cabinet that he would "exploit" any American inclination toward a "merger," he had done so in the hope of reducing British expenditures, especially for the maintenance and development of the British atomic arsenal.[44] But in Washington, the Americans

---

[40] Diary entry for October 23, 1957, MS. Macmillan, Dep.d.30, Diaries, Bodleian Library.

[41] Diary entry for October 23, 1957 and second entry at 7pm, MS. Macmillan, Dep.d.30, Diaries, Bodleian Library.

[42] Ibid. Eisenhower could not end the McMahon Act; what Macmillan received was a commitment to seek Congress' approval to amend the act. The act was, ultimately, amended.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Secretary's Notebook for December 31, 1957, C.C.86(57), NAUK.

wanted to continue talking about solidarity between allies. Macmillan, who had shown a penchant himself for this "verbiage" in his letters and speeches to Eisenhower, happily obliged. The record from the Washington talks, like Bermuda, shows that they revolved around big ideas, broad historical sweeps, and grandiose plans for change in the very shape of the system of states. There was lots of discussion of union and federation between Britain and the United States. Both Macmillan and Dulles referred to the work of Clarence Streit who, through his prolific correspondence, publications, and lectures advocated political union between Britain and the United States. Dulles argued that Streit's call for "Union Now" was an "unimpeachable" diagnosis but was "impractical politically."[45] Macmillan, separately, argued that "looking fifty or sixty years into the future" he doubted that "we would still be existing in our separate and independently sovereign relationship."[46] Nonetheless, he did not think that "in five or ten years we could create a unified government of the free world."[47]

Thus while Dulles and Macmillan thought that such a relationship might be theoretically desirable, it was a long-range goal, "a dream" to use Macmillan's word. In the near term, both used union as a rhetorical extreme, from which they could retreat to make clear that an Atlantic federation was not just around the corner.[48]

---

[45] "The Present Political Situation," Memorandum of Conversation, October 23, 1957. DDRS, CK3100243120.

[46] "Closer US-UK Relations and Free World Cooperation," Memorandum of Conversation, October 23, 1957. DDRS, CK3100322048.

[47] "Free World Cooperation; Meeting Presided over by the President and Prime Minister Macmillan," Memorandum of Conversation, October 24, 1957, 10:30 am. DDRS, CK3100075459.

[48] Macmillan, for example, told Dulles that "Union Now" was, "in practical politics unthinkable" and only "a dream." "But," Macmillan went on, "it might be by other processes possible to attain the advantage which it might have." "An Appraisal of NATO;" "Closer US-UK Relations and Free World Cooperation," October 23, 1957.

Macmillan's bait-and-switch, his tactic of discussing union and then focusing on cooperation in the areas he wanted, appealed strongly to Eisenhower's thinking on the organization of the free world. On October 24 Eisenhower summarized for Macmillan what he thought the world needed: "closer union of the United States and the United Kingdom in order to serve better the cause of the free world and its several defense organizations (NATO, SEATO, and the Baghdad Pact.)."[49] They should do this, said Eisenhower, "almost to the point of operating together under one general policy."[50] Eisenhower throughout the talks maintained that closer Anglo-American relations would strengthen the free world. He expected the effect to result largely from psychological forces, however. Anglo-American comity would give the "whole free world" a "shot in the arm," and provide "inspiration for the long journey ahead" by demonstrating the benefits of pooling resources.[51]

As it happened, Secretary General Paul-Henri Spaak was visiting the United States during the Macmillan talks. As Sputnik orbited the globe, "Spaaknik," as he was privately referred to by State Department officials, toured America.[52] American Permanent Representative to NATO Randolph Burgess had initially worried that the "Big Two" talks would overshadow

---

[49] "Free World Cooperation; Meeting Presided over by the President and Prime Minister Macmillan," October 24, 1957, 10:30 am.

[50] Ibid. After the Washington talks, officials from London and Washington would form secret Working Groups and coordinate policy and operations, for instance in Syria. Matthew Jones, "Anglo-American Relations after Suez, the Rise and Decline of the Working Group Experiment and the French Challenge to NATO, 19157-1959," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 14, no. 1 (March 2003).

[51] Memorandum of a Conversation, White House, Washington, October 24, 1957, 10:30 a.m. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXVII, 320. CHECK Maybe this should be footnote for whole paragraph: Memorandum of Conference with the President, October 24, 1957. October 31, 1957. WHO, OSS, Subject series, State Department subseries, box 2, folder: State Department - 1957 (August-October) (7), DDEL.

[52] Timmons to Wolf, October 30, 1957, RG 59, EUR, Records of the Director, 1955-60, Correspondence Files, 1955-1959, box 1, folder: "RA Correspondence, 1957," NARA.

Spaak's visit.[53] But in the event, Spaak's visit offered Dulles and Eisenhower their first opportunity to try to transform Anglo-American talks into a plus for NATO. Spaak's meetings in Washington on October 24 and 25 were scheduled to overlap with the Macmillan visit to Washington and give the public and Spaak a sense of connection with what Macmillan called his own "Honeymoon at Washington."[54] Eisenhower told Spaak that the Macmillan talks had not been meant to "forge an Anglo-American alliance, but to strengthen our alliances everywhere and particularly the North Atlantic Treaty Organization."[55]

Before the meetings with Spaak, Eisenhower suggested to Macmillan that at the next NATO Ministerial conference in December, - the semi-annual meeting of the foreign ministers of the NATO member states - each allied state should send its leader as their national representative. Such a meeting of the NATO Heads of Government might "give a lift to NATO at an important juncture." It would give a "moral boost," he thought, but it would "almost compel constructive thinking and planning in terms of the kind of thinking we had spoken of" in Washington. Eisenhower could not very well invite himself to such a meeting, but if Macmillan could induce Spaak to make such an invitation, he "would be disposed to accede to the suggestion."[56] Spaak did not need any convincing. He issued the invitations.

---

[53] Burgess to Elbrick, October 17, 195, RG 59, EUR, Records of the Director, 1955-60, Correspondence Files, 1955-1959, box 1, folder: "RA Correspondence, 1957," NARA.

[54] Macmillan, *Riding the Storm*, 313.

[55] "Memorandum of a Conversation, Department of State, Washington, October 25, 1957. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 59. Eisenhower had been warned before the meeting that the Macmillan talks "may be interpreted in some NATO quarters as indicating that the Anglo-American Alliance will henceforth be the forum in which the basic Western decisions will be taken." Memorandum for the President. October 23, 1957. DDRS, CK3100/238980.

[56] Memorandum of a Conversation, White House, Washington, October 25, 1957, 2:05-2:32 pm. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXVII, 332; Memorandum of a Conversation, Washington, October 23, 1957. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, XXVII, 317.

By the end of the Washington Talks, then, Macmillan had received his "great prize." The British and Americans had agreed to a number of practical, coordinated activities, and Spaak had agreed to host a Heads of Government meeting. But what had the Americans gained from the meeting with Macmillan? Dulles was focused more closely on how cooperation with Britain offered the best and most immediate solution to pressing problems, especially the need for close cooperation in the Middle East.[57]

Eisenhower, however, had come at the talks from a different angle. He believed deeply in the value of the Anglo-American alliance, but also in NATO; for him, the two were not only non-exclusive, but amounted to the same thing. Eisenhower had said as much publicly when he toasted the Queen earlier in October. "At the heart and foundation of all this [that is, NATO]," the President proclaimed, the "English-speaking peoples march forward together."[58] Eisenhower's experience had prepared him to take this position, having played one of the most important roles in leading the predominantly Anglo-American effort to defeat Hitler on the Western front in the Second World War, and his tenure as SACEUR saw him oversee what had been originally a military force primarily composed of 'English-speaking peoples.' Now, as President, Eisenhower wished to rebuild "much more intimate collaboration between the British and ourselves in the military field."[59] But he wanted this collaboration to occur within the larger

---

[57] On the imperatives for, and difficulties of, cooperation in the Middle East, see in particular Nigel John Ashton, *Eisenhower, Macmillan, and the Problem of Nasser: Anglo-American Relations and Arab Nationalism, 1955-59* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996). See also W. Scott Lucas, *Divided We Stand: Britain, the US and the Suez Crisis* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1991).

[58] Quoted in Eisenhower, *Waging Peace*, 214.

[59] Memorandum of a Conversation, White House, Washington, October 23, 1957.

context of NATO, within which the United States and United Kingdom "would have primary responsibility in certain fields."[60]

Historians have suggested that this relationship was built primarily upon the rapport between Eisenhower and Macmillan.[61] Given Britain's much weaker hand after Suez and the sheer military and economic strength of the United States relative to the United Kingdom, the rapprochement might be misunderstood as a brilliant maneuver by the savvy Macmillan against a sentimental Eisenhower. Overriding Eisenhower's sentimentality and Macmillan's brilliant personal touches was the President's belief that regarding both the Anglo-American alliance and the NATO alliance, what was good for the goose was good for the gander.

In a follow-up letter to the conference, Dulles wrote to Lloyd, saying that Washington had "laid the ground for even greater things to come."[62] Eisenhower directed his government to prepare for the NATO meeting to be attended by all the Heads of Government.

1.2.4 Greater Things To Come

The purpose of the NATO Heads of Government's meeting, Dulles wrote, was to apply the general principles agreed to between Eisenhower and Macmillan "to a specifically NATO context." This application would not require "major surgery on the very effective structure of NATO," he argued, "but rather reinvigoration and rededication to attainable new objectives."[63]

But applying the principles of the Washington Talks to NATO would be difficult given the nature of what had been agreed upon between Eisenhower and Macmillan. The President and the

---

[60] Memorandum of a Conversation, White House, Washington, October 23, 1957.

[61] David Nunnerley, *President Kennedy and Britain* (London: Bodley Head, 1972), 26.

[62] Dulles to Selwyn Lloyd, November 2, 1957, box 15, folder: "November 2, 1957," *DHCC.*

[63] Dulles to Nitze, November 3, 1957, box 15, folder: "November 1957 (3)," *DHCC*.

Prime Minister had worked to ensconce machinery and relationships that were necessarily highly secretive: information policy and psychological warfare, covert planning, intelligence sharing, and the exchange of nuclear information. There was little left for alliance-wide consumption. As a result, the focus of American planning for the NATO Heads of Government meeting was the Declaration of Common Purpose and the call for greater unity among allies.[64]

To complement the traditional bureaucratic process, and to build bipartisan domestic support for Eisenhower's NATO effort, Dulles invited a leading Democrat, Adlai Stevenson, Eisenhower's opponent in both 1952 and 1956, to translate the American basic policy toward NATO - the Declaration of Common Purpose - into concrete actions.[65] Stevenson undertook a thorough study to determine how best to increase NATO's strength "by restoring mutual confidence and enlarging the sense of an interdependent community among its members." He noted that traditional security methods were not the only or the best means to "arrest neutralism" and "restore mutual confidence among the allies and reassure the larger world about Western intentions and capabilities." The "main threat," argued Stevenson, was not military aggression, but "subversion by propaganda, economic bribery and political penetration."[66] Stevenson

---

[64] In the Eisenhower administration, one official was usually tasked with coordinating all of the briefing papers and other preparation for a major head of State visit. While initially the Macmillan Talks and the NATO meeting had their own coordinators, the decision to combine these positions as the responsibility of one person shows how closely the administration linked the two meetings· Fisher Howe to the Under Secretary, "NATO Heads of Government Meeting," November 4, 1957. WHO, SANSA, SAS, Subject Subseries, box 6, folder: NATO Meeting - December 1957 (1), DDEL.

[65] Dulles to Stevenson, November 5, 1957, box 15, folder: "November 1957 (3)," in *DHCC.*

[66]"Preliminary Memorandum RE: U.S. Position at North Atlantic Treaty Council December 1957," Adlai E. Stevenson. November 4, 1957. DDRS, CK3100210807.

developed, at length, policy prescriptions for meeting these threats.[67] When it was apparent to him that the administration was not interested in putting these non-military policies into practice, he refused to attend the meeting in Paris.[68]

On the bureaucratic side, the preparation for the meeting focused almost entirely on the less tangible elements of the Declaration, including building a sense of community within NATO. This sense of community played a curious and undefined role: it was American policy to develop a sense of community in NATO, but officials in Washington also argued that a sense of community could overcome policy disagreements between allies.

The initial planning document for the NATO meeting stated that the "Declaration of Common Purpose" had set out to give NATO "a much greater sense of community and reciprocal trust."[69] After much hard work, drafting of position papers, and interagency coordination, a "scope paper" - that is the document that outlined the overall American position for the NATO meeting - stated that, like Anglo-American relations, NATO needed a "sense of strength, unity and confidence."[70]

In those cases where NATO allies did differ, especially colonial questions, the "only hope of progress lies in willingness to recognize 'Atlantic community' interests in Asian-African relations and coordination of policies." An enormous quantity of ink was spilled on memoranda

---

[67] "NATO Heads of Government Meeting," Stevenson to the Secretary, November 29, 1957, and "Economic Defense Coordination," Stevenson to the Secretary, December 5, 1957, both in PPC, Subject Files, 1954-1962, box 151, folder: "Europe, 1957," NARA.

[68] For the international confusion caused by Stevenson's appointment and then failure to attend the meeting, see "Relations with the Soviet Union," Cabinet Memorandum, January 21, 1958. C. (58) 9

[69] Untitled memorandum [early draft of scope paper], November 7, 1957. WHO, SANSA, SAS, Subject Subseries, box 6, folder: NATO Meeting - December 1957 (1), DDEL.

[70] "December NATO Meeting of Heads of Government: Scope and U.S. Objectives." Third Draft. November 7, 1957. WHO, SANSA, SAS, Subject Subseries, box 6, folder: NATO Meeting - December 1957 (1), DDEL.

and papers in the lead up to the Ministerial. But for all of the paperwork, there was no tangible piece of policy that could project the Anglo-American relations into NATO. In fact, in the final round of documents circulated in the Department of State, the Americans almost managed to talk themselves out of the need to foster unity, claiming "Close analysis indicates that most of the complaints heard about "lack of unity" within NATO are exaggerated."[71]

The one concrete policy plan that the United States prepared for the NATO Ministerial Meeting was for distributing IRBMs to the allies. In October, General Norstad had written Eisenhower to highlight the importance of the United States "assuming the initiative in emphasizing the qualities of solidarity and mutual trust on which the NATO Alliance is based." Norstad had already called for creating a NATO nuclear stockpile, and the United States had suggested the policy. The launching of Sputnik seemed to "add weight" to the case for the stockpile.[72] A month later, Norstad wrote Eisenhower again to stress that the Europeans were "searching their minds" for something that would provide tangible evidence of their commitment to the allies. Maybe the atomic stockpile would offer such a joint project?[73] Dulles himself especially favored the idea of a NATO stockpile, arguing that "now is the time, otherwise alliances will fall apart."[74]

---

[71] "Harmonization of NATO Policies Through Political Consultation (Background Paper), NATO Heads of Government Meeting, Paris, December 16-18, 1957. December 4, 1957. DDRS, CK3100241796.

[72] Paris No. 1993 to Secretary of State, October 21, 1957. DDRS, CK3100116246.

[73] Norstad to Eisenhower, November 7, 1957. DDRS, CK3100662590.

[74] Memorandum of Conference with the President, October 22, 1957. October 31, 1957. WHO, OSS, Subject series, State Department subseries, box 2, folder: State Department - 1957 (August-October) (7), DDEL. A few weeks later, Dulles invited a number of former officials who had experience with NATO to weigh in. Several of them suggested giving nuclear weapons to the European allies. "Memorandum of Discussion, Wednesday, November 6, 1957, at the State Department." Undated. DDRS, CK3100307791.

There were fears about the alliance's durability across the Atlantic, too. In Bonn, Chancellor Adenauer told John McCloy that if NATO did not find new inspiration, "this would be the end of NATO." The Germans were still upset about the lack of consultation in NATO, and worried that in the Suez and in Jordan, NATO had been close to war without all of the allies being consulted.[75] A few days later, Adenauer wrote Dulles to recommend a "gesture of reaffirmation" in NATO.

But beyond a public gesture, Adenauer wanted concrete actions taken to bind the members of the alliance together. He told both McCloy and Dulles that, politically, the Permanent Representatives to the NAC should have more power and be in closer touch with their home Cabinets, and, on the military side, there should be greater standardization of weapons, coordination of logistics, and a deeper integration of military force. "The whole thing," Adenauer told McCloy, "should be organized as [the] EDC was planned [with] air and ground combined and integrated force."[76] German diplomats in Washington continued to press Dulles on improving NATO, especially pressing the United States to consult the NAC before taking actions in the Middle East.[77]

In Paris, just before the Heads of Government meeting got underway, Dulles complained to Macmillan about the pressure from the Germans. "It is hard," Dulles said, "to expose one's plans to fifteen countries debating in the North Atlantic Council." Dulles, who had earlier railed

---

[75] Telegram from the Ambassador in Germany (Bruce) to the Department of State, November 19, 1957. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 61.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Memoranda of Conversation, Department of State, Washington, November 21 and 24, *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 64 & 65.

against leadership of an alliance by the strongest states, now thought there should be "more trust by the coalition in the leadership of a few countries."[78]

As the Heads of Government meeting neared and the planning for the meeting ended, the various members were not focused on a specific policy prescription but a single person: The President of the United States. The National Security Council expected that Ike's very presence would "in itself provide a rejuvenation of NATO."[79] Eisenhower's staff drafted and re-drafted his speech to the North Atlantic Council; Robert Cutler, the White House Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, sought to craft an oration such that "when this great citizen strikes his initial note at the Meeting," it will "bring to bear the full weight of his massive, well-known personality."[80] Eisenhower threw out initial drafts of the speech, calling for more "hard-hitting paragraphs" and "punchy statements," in an effort to present an image of American "solidarity, cooperation, and vitality."[81]

Eisenhower almost did not attend the meeting at all; he suffered a stroke.[82] But the President was determined to attend the NATO conference and, he wrote in his memoirs, set the

---

[78] Memorandum of a Conversation, British Embassy, Paris, December 14, 1957, 11:30 a.m. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 72.

[79] Memorandum of Discussion at the 348th Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington, December 12, 1957. *FRUS, 1955-1957*, IV, 69.

[80] "Comments by Robert Cutler on Draft #3 - December 9, 1957." WHO, SANSA, SAS/Subject Subseries/box 6, folder: NATO Meeting - December 1957 (2), DDEL.

[81] Memorandum of Conference with the President, December 11, 1957 - 10:00 AM. December 12, 1957. WHO, OSS, ITM, box 3, folder: NATO Meeting, December 1957, DDEL. Eisenhower's wish for solidarity, cooperation and vitality is recorded by Cutler, Memorandum to the President from Cutler, "NATO Meeting," November 26, 1957. WHO, SANSA, SAS, Subject Subseries, box 6, folder: NATO Meeting - December 1957 (2), DDEL.

[82] It was "clear" to Goodpaster that the President "would not attend a NATO meeting in December." General Norstad, SHAPE, from General Goodpaster. November 26, 1957. WHO, OSS, ITM, box 3, folder: NATO Meeting, December 1957, DDEL.

conference as "a personal test" to decide whether he would remain as President.[83] He flew to Paris with strict instructions from his doctors that he must keep his hat on during the ceremonies upon his arrival at Orly airport in France.[84]

After the ceremonies at Orly airport, Eisenhower was driven through Paris to the cheers of large, adoring crowds. His aide, Andrew Goodpaster, thought the welcome given by the people along the route "was the most enthusiastic and emotional I have ever seen on the part of the French, or think I ever will see. [The i]mpact was terrific."[85]

Due to his lack of strength and speech problems, Eisenhower's speech did not go off as planned. He handed the second half to Dulles to finish.[86] Still, Eisenhower maintained his role as the centerpiece of the conference. On the night of December 17th, at a dinner of 200 guests, Eisenhower answered the toast by French President Félix Gaillard. While he "stumbled over a few words," Macmillan thought he was "in excellent form." On the last day of the conference, Eisenhower even took part in drafting the conference communiqué.[87]

Eisenhower's presence was a boon for NATO. After the meeting, Eisenhower and Macmillan both agreed the meeting "was a definite plus for the free world."[88] But already, on December 14, Macmillan was starting to worry it was not enough, especially with the heightened

---

[83] Eisenhower, *Waging Peace*, 230.

[84] Memorandum of Conference with the President, December 11, 1957 - 10:00 AM. December 12, 1957. WHO, OSS, ITM, box 3, folder: NATO Meeting, December 1957, DDEL.

[85] White House communication from Goodpaster to Adams, December 17, 1957. DDRS, CK3100268729; John S. D. Eisenhower, *Strictly Personal* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1974), 197.

[86] Macmillan diary entry for December 16, 1957, *MD:PM*, 77.

[87] Macmillan diary entry for December 17, 1957, Macmillan papers, MS. Macmillan, Dep. d. 30, Diaries, BL. See also "Record of Prime Minister's Meeting with President Eisenhower," December 16, 1957. PREM 11/1845, NAUK.

[88] Department of State 4558 to London (Eisenhower to Macmillan), December 26, 1957. DDRS, CK3100216007.

expectations and press attention given the conference. He faulted Dulles for thinking that the Ministerial "could be just a sort of 'jamboree,'" whereby the allies would accept the IRBMs, "give 3 cheers for ourselves and 1 for Uncle Sam and then go home." Macmillan, who had done so much to encourage this line of thinking about unity and interdependence, found Dulles' vision "foolish … but Foster has no other ideas at present"[89]

Nonetheless, after the meeting, Macmillan and Eisenhower looked back on 1957 as a successful year for NATO. Macmillan had gained the President's commitment to modify the McMahon Act and put Britain back in the nuclear loop. He also had been happy to see other NATO states thinking more about the rest of the world, looking "outwards" to NATO's "flanks." The "leaven," now should be "left to work."[90] Eisenhower and Dulles, for their part, had introduced the IRBM plans at NATO. These plans, designed to fuse the allies closer, were important symbols of the American commitment to NATO's defense after Sputnik, but also opened a can of worms on nuclear control discussed in Chapter 6. Far more important at the time especially to Eisenhower, was the reaffirmation of his connection with Macmillan and the thickening ties between American and British officials of many levels. Given Eisenhower's conception of NATO, a strong Anglo-American relationship was the best remedy to any ailment.

Macmillan himself ultimately decided that Heads of Government meeting had been enough to satiate the allies; he told his Cabinet that "Fear of Anglo-US hegemony was dispelled, primarily through private talks."[91] However, there was a nagging fear in some quarters of the British and American government that the other allies felt left behind. When the British

---

[89] Entry for December 14, 1957, *MD:PM*, 76. Similarly, he told the cabinet that "they" - the Americans - "are short of ideas." Secretary's Notebook for December 31, 1957, C.C.86(57), NAUK.

[90] Secretary's Notebook for December 20, 1957, CC(57)84, CAB195/17/4, NAUK.

[91] Ibid.

Ambassador to France, Gladwyn Jebb, read the records of the Washington Talks, he was dumbfounded. Writing after the Heads of Government meeting, he observed that the Eisenhower-Macmillan talks had focused exclusively on what Macmillan called NATO's "inner core of Anglo-American partnership." In classic British understatement, Jebb said he was "a little surprised" that the outer core of the alliance and changes in Europe were not acknowledged. There was an "entire absence of any reference" to the European idea, and there seemed no consideration, whatsoever, of effects the policy might cause on the continent. What seemed certain from the records to which Jebb had access was that, informal or otherwise, "an Anglo-American Directorate of some kind has now been created." Jebb knew the enormous benefits of cooperation with the United States, but warned that such a directorate was a "well-known bogey of the French, and indeed, I think of most 'Europeans.'" The NATO Heads of Government meeting showed, with its lack of concrete results, that an Anglo-American Directorate, "flattering though it may be to our self-esteem, will be an insecure basis for our foreign policy" unless it is involved within "a rather larger framework."[92]

1.2.5 France Wants Some Participation

Jebb's diagnosis was directly informed by his presence in Paris. For the first half of 1958, France seethed as victory in Algeria slipped further and further away. In June 1958, Charles de Gaulle was named Prime Minister. De Gaulle's ascension was welcomed by London and Washington, if only because it provided some stability after the never-ending succession of short-lived governments of the Fourth Republic.[93] But many wondered what de Gaulle's return to power would mean for NATO.

---

[92] "Comments on the Record of the Washington Conference," Jebb to Lloyd, January 15, 1958. PREM 11/2329, NAUK.

[93] Irwin M. Wall, *France, the United States, and the Algerian War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), xi.

French diplomats and politicians immediately sought to quell any rumor de Gaulle's rise to power threatened NATO. Hervé Alphand, the ambassador in Washington, declared "NATO would be safe."[94] Antoine Pinay only took a post in de Gaulle's cabinet on assurance that de Gaulle "would abide by NATO." De Gaulle, Pinay conceded, did not like some aspects of NATO. He was concerned, for example, that the French military was "too remote from US planning and control." Nonetheless, Pinay and a number of French officials assured the Americans de Gaulle's criticism would be raised in a private, rather than public, forum."[95]

In June 1958 - the month de Gaulle became Prime Minister (he would become President of France, inaugurating France's Fifth Republic in 1959) - Eisenhower and Macmillan met again for a series of bilateral talks. Eisenhower, Macmillan and Dulles all expected de Gaulle would press for a "tripartite relationship" between France, Britain, and the United States. This was no lucky guess; de Gaulle had pushed the idea in 1949, and governments throughout France's Fourth Republic had sought to deepen and formalize the three-state connection.

At the June bilateral, the British and Americans decided that tripartite talks might be appropriate on certain subjects, such as on the reunification of Germany or in preparation for Summits; any case where there existed "an historical basis" for tripartitism. Otherwise, however, Eisenhower and Macmillan agreed to deal with France bilaterally or through NATO. They also

---

[94] Memorandum of Conversation, May 21, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, Vol. VII, Pt. 2., 8.

[95] Telegram from the Embassy in France to the Department of State, June 10, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, Vol. VII, Pt. 2., 19; Telegrams from the Embassy in France to the Department of State, May 21 and June 10, 14, 19, 30, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, Pt. 2., 9, 19, 21, 22 & 29.

agreed that the odd man out of any Anglo-French or Franco-American bilateral talks would be kept "fully informed" of the proceedings.[96]

This solution contradicted the recommendation of the State Department, which initially counseled more proactive efforts towards de Gaulle, including deferring to de Gaulle's view on NATO military and political policies. They even suggested it might be time to reconsider atomic information sharing with France and possibly resuming "Big Three" meetings.[97] But Eisenhower and Dulles, relieved to have been finished with "Big Three" talks in 1956, and Macmillan, still striving to build on the close working relationship with Washington, had no interest in diluting the Anglo-American bond.

After the June Anglo-American meeting, Macmillan, then Dulles, visited Paris to meet de Gaulle. In both meetings, de Gaulle was eager to share his complaints about NATO and to outline - if vaguely - his solutions.

De Gaulle told Macmillan frankly that he "attached great importance to a reorganization of NATO." The need for reorganization was, first and foremost, related to France's participation in the decision to use atomic weapons. After becoming Prime Minister, de Gaulle seemed to have learned that NATO, itself, did not have any "overall strategic plan known to and approved by the Alliance" for the use of the American or British nuclear arsenal.[98] This was, indeed, true -

---

[96] This part redacted from *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 344, but available in "Anglo-American Relations with General de Gaulle's Government," Memorandum of Conversation, June 9, 1958. DDRS, CK3100050804.

[97] Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs (Elbrick) to Acting Secretary of State Herter, May 27, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 12.

[98] This is what de Gaulle told Jebb. Paris No. 331 to Foreign Office, June 25, 1958. PREM 11/2326, NAUK.

starting atomic war was not a NATO, or even North Atlantic Council responsibility, per se.[99] The lack of any such plan was in keeping with British and American opinion on the matter. Washington and London had always considered the decision their own. As a briefing note for Macmillan put it, "We hope that our Allies will trust us to use them [nuclear weapons] responsibly."[100] De Gaulle's trust was not so easily extended, however. He would not accept a situation where by "only the Americans and the British could in fact loose atomic war whenever they wanted."[101]

De Gaulle's next concern was that NATO was "too narrow geographically." He explained that NATO should cover "at least North Africa," perhaps down to the Sahara and even Central Africa. It seemed necessary, from "a strategy point of view" to extend it even further, over the whole of the Middle East, the Red Sea area, the Arctic and the Indian Ocean."[102] De Gaulle's advisers had apparently convinced him that the North Atlantic Treaty itself would be too difficult to change, for such a change would require unanimous agreement from all allies. Instead, he wanted to "link Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria in some way to N.A.T.O. without new formal arrangements."[103] He promised to send formal proposals soon.[104]

---

[99] See Chapter 6.

[100] "Brief No. III (b) 'N.A.T.O: Military Strategy'" for Prime Minister's Visit to Paris, June 29-30. Undated. PREM 11/2326; "Record of Conversation with M. Spaak at her Majesty's Embassy, Paris, on June 30, 1958." PREM 11/2326, NAUK.

[101] Paris No. 331 to Foreign Office, June 25, 1958. PREM 11/2326, NAUK.

[102] "Record of Conversation with M. Spaak at her Majesty's Embassy, Paris, on June 30, 1958." PREM 11/2326, NAUK.

[103] Paraphrased in Minute by A.D.F. Pemberton-Pigott, July 6, 1956, FO 371/137819, NAUK. On the advice that it was too difficult to change the Treaty, see UKDel No. 141 Saving to FO, July 3, 1958, FO 371/137819, NAUK.

[104] "Record of Conversation with M. Spaak at her Majesty's Embassy, Paris, on June 30, 1958."

The British were confused by de Gaulle's plans: how could NATO be expanded thus? Would the states under its protection be admitted as members? Despite the confusion, the British had recently called for NATO to take greater interest in regions outside the Treaty Area. Selwyn Lloyd - who passed on de Gaulle's ideas to Spaak - thought it was good that de Gaulle recognized "NATO was affected by what happened outside its present limits."[105]

When Dulles arrived in Paris, de Gaulle told him much the same thing: "NATO is not satisfactory." It was not broad enough geographically, and the military commands needed to be reconsidered. De Gaulle also noted the troubles brewing in the Middle East; he told Dulles that if there was going to be an Anglo-American intervention in the area, "France wants some participation."[106]

Even the recent efforts of the United States to revitalize NATO, including the atomic stockpile plan to equip French forces with atomic weapons, held "little interest" for de Gaulle. The Frenchman figured that the "disadvantages of having nuclear weapons on French soil," that is, making France a target for Soviet weapons in case of a war, "were not equalized" by their presence, since France would not have complete control over the weapons.[107] After Suez, the Americans had been seeking to inspire NATO with a sense of unity of membership, and offered ideas for sharing nuclear weapons as a major step in this direction. De Gaulle's preference for closer ties between the three powers and his dislike of the nuclear sharing plan left virtually no common ground on policy between Paris and Washington.

---

[105] "Record of Conversation with M. Spaak at her Majesty's Embassy, Paris, on June 30, 1958." PREM 11/2326, NAUK.

[106] Memorandum of Conversation, July 10, 1958. DDRS, CK3100297901; "Notes of Conversation, Dulles and de Gaulle July 5, 1958 at the Hotel Matignon," undated. Bohlen Records, box 12, folder: "361.1 De Gaulle 1958," NARA.

[107] "Memorandum of Conversation, Dulles and de Gaulle July 5, 1958 at the Hotel Matignon."

Like the British, the Americans were puzzled by de Gaulle's reference to expanding NATO. American diplomats followed up with their French contacts: what did de Gaulle have in mind? Louis Joxe, the permanent Secretary General at the Quai d'Orsay, could only say that "it was difficult to explain de Gaulle's concept in detail and how it could be put into effect."[108] The Americans generally assumed Gaulle wanted to expand the membership of NATO, perhaps to include at least Tunisia and Morocco, and perhaps even more countries.[109] Dulles, musing about de Gaulle's ideas with his staff, thought that it would be "increasingly difficult" to keep NATO together if it were to include "nations having different political and cultural backgrounds and institutions."[110]

The French, too, were less than optimistic after taking stock of the meetings with Macmillan and Dulles. For Alphand, the talks had been superficially pleasant, but this friendliness hid their "negative side." It was obvious that French relations within the alliance were to be limited to either bilateral meetings or meetings of the entire NATO membership.[111] De Gaulle found these limits unacceptable, but they were real and emphasized by events in the Middle East and Asia in the summer of 1958. In July, the Americans landed in Lebanon and the British deployed troops to Jordan; in neither case was France invited to participate despite de Gaulle's explicit wish for an invitation to do so. When, later in the summer, the United States edged closer to the brink of war with the People's Republic of China during the shelling of Quemoy and Matsu, de Gaulle became convinced that war on the far side of the world could erupt into a global conflagration. As things stood in the summer of

---

[108] Memorandum of Conversation, July 5, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 355Memorandum of Conversation, July 9, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 39.

[109] Memorandum of Conversation, July 9, 1958.

[110] Memorandum of Conversation, July 10, 1958, DDRS, CK3100297901.

[111] Alphand, *L'Étonnement d'Être*, 290.

1958, he had no means of influencing or restricting use of American nuclear weapons. Underlying the acute crises of the Middle East and Asia was the festering French wound in Algeria - without a doubt the largest policy concern for French governments in the late 1950s, which continued to worsen without any sign that the allies would aid France.[112] In light of these crises, waiting for the expansion of a common law alliance did not work for de Gaulle; he wanted a very public wedding.

[112] Wall, *France, the United States, and the Algerian War*; Alphand, *L'Étonnement d'Être*.

CHAPTER 3: TIED TOGETHER BY HISTORY:

GREAT MEN AND GRAND IDEAS

"With us it is easy; you and I are tied together by history."[1]
- Charles de Gaulle in conversation with Dwight Eisenhower, May 1960

"We were now at a period where the "great men" were using personal visits and diplomacy, with each seeking to push his own policy, but with little attempt to evolve a common approach in the common interest.[2]
- Paul-Henri Spaak, August 1960

"In the first place history seems to show that in international politics relatively small importance attaches to personal relationships. Individuals disappear; it is only institutions which have any lasting value."[3]
- Sir Gladwyn Jebb, British Ambassador, January 1958.

***

In September 1958, Charles de Gaulle demanded that NATO change, and that France receive a prominent position in NATO alongside the informal but very real Anglo-American directorate. De Gaulle's plan for reorganizing relationships between the NATO allies had far-reaching and long-lasting consequences. A memorandum he wrote to Eisenhower and Macmillan outlining his demand is the most important document in NATO history beyond the North Atlantic Treaty. More than any crisis, de Gaulle's memorandum displayed the confusion as to what NATO was

[1] Memorandum of Conversation, May 18, 1960. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 173.

[2] USRO Airgram POLTO-G-252 to Secretary of State, August 17, 1960. DDRS, CK3100195230.

[3] "Comments on the Record of the Washington Conference," Jebb to Lloyd, January 15, 1958. PREM 11/2329, NAUK.

and what it should do both in the Atlantic area and abroad.[4] Later, he would use it as a lever to pry France from NATO's integrated command structure.[5]

But de Gaulle's memorandum was connected first, and foremost, to the relationship between the NATO allies and the world beyond Europe. De Gaulle's memorandum was written after NATO, and most NATO allies, had been frustrated by the crises in Suez, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan, and not consulted during the Sino-American crisis. For France in particular, these crises were set against the backdrop of the Algerian war. The memorandum was understood by allies, at least initially, as a new effort to broach the question: What is NATO's relationship with the world outside Europe? De Gaulle sought to institutionalize NATO with formal structures beyond what already existed, and he sought to strike while those other great men he had known for so long, Macmillan and Eisenhower, were in office. But if the struggles to expand the Anglo-American directorate to include other allies had provide difficult, so too did efforts to impose a tripartite directorate. London and Washington did anything but give de Gaulle a "clear but polite no."[6] They sought to engage with him, often agreeing with his analysis. The tripartite diplomacy

---

[4] De Gaulle added to the confusion by using the words NATO, Atlantic Alliance, and western alliance interchangeably; as explained below, he was not really writing about NATO at all. Frédéric Bozo makes the point about both language and problems of interpretation in Frédéric Bozo, *Deux stratégies pour l'Europe: de Gaulle, les États-Unis et l'Alliance atlantique: 1958-1969*, Espoir (Paris: Plon: Fondation Charles de Gaulle, 1996), 38.

[5] See Chapter 8.

[6] The "clear but polite no" is emphasized by Anna Locher and Christian Nuenlist, "NATO Strategies toward De Gaulle's France, 1958-1966: Learning to Cope," in *Globalizing De Gaulle: International Perspectives on French Foreign Policies, 1958-1969*, ed. Anna Locher, Garret Martin, and Christian Nünlist (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010), 90-91. Constantine Pagedas offers one of the few studies of the lengthy – and messy - tripartite diplomacy. Constantine A. Pagedas, *Anglo-American Strategic Relations and the French Problem, 1960-1963: A Troubled Partnership* (Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2000), 58-69. Also Richard Aldous, "'A Family Affair': Macmillan and the Art of Personal Diplomacy," in *Harold Macmillan and Britain's World Role*, ed. Richard Aldous and Sabine Lee (London: Macmillan, 1996), 22.

of the late 1950s reveals the fluidity of the idea of NATO and how allies – in this case, Harold Macmillan – were willing to barter NATO's current form against de Gaulle's vision in exchange for economic benefits for Britain.

***

1.3.1 The Times Are Out of Joint

Since de Gaulle's investiture as Prime Minister, he and his advisers had been promising that he would put his ideas for NATO into a memorandum. Prompted by the crises of summer 1958 in the Middle East and Asia, in September of that year de Gaulle sent handwritten letters to Eisenhower and Macmillan. Both events, he wrote, proved that the Atlantic Alliance "no longer corresponds to political and strategic realities." De Gaulle argued that NATO should be revised, and a new "organization" of the United States, Great Britain and France should be established to take "joint decisions" on political questions of world security and put into effect "strategic plans" regarding nuclear weapons. These three countries would form a "Permanent Group" and meet in Washington. From there they would divvy up the world into "theaters of operation" covering the Arctic, Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans.[7]

Historians have barely considered the memorandum's significance in the history of the Cold War. Too frequently it is considered in light of the Gaullist challenge to the European construction in the 1960s. Contemporary officials, like later scholars, pointed to the memorandum as an instrument that de Gaulle used to achieve a specific or particular policy.[8]

---

[7] Letter from President de Gaulle to President Eisenhower, September 17, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 45. Text of the letters and accompanying memorandum to Eisenhower and Macmillan are in *DDF*, 1958, vol. 2, documents 170 and 165 respectively.

[8] Historians have attributed two different motivations to de Gaulle's efforts: Some argue that De Gaulle believed the memorandum was a genuine expression of his desires; other argue that it was a feint, designed to cause friction and an ultimate excuse for France's exit from

Officials in Paris, London and Washington assumed that de Gaulle sought to establish himself as the voice of Europe. Others thought the main thrust and sole purpose of the memorandum was to achieve some say in the decision to use nuclear weapons.[9] These elements are part of the story, but only part. In fact, de Gaulle's memorandum was a component of a much larger effort to re-imagine and re-shape the organization of Western security in response to the changes set off by Cold War rivalry and decolonization.

De Gaulle was not alone in attempting to re-order the alliance. Nor was the NATO machine one with a fixed definition understood and accepted by all of the other allies. The events and crises of the mid-1950s left NATO's form in flux and its purpose undefined. Dulles's calls for consultation in the North Atlantic Council, Macmillan's cozying up to Eisenhower, and Eisenhower's own efforts to imbue NATO with a feeling of unity were all attempts to find a working pattern of allied relations.

Eisenhower's call for unity had few tangible results. Macmillan's plan benefited the British and few others. Dulles was frustrated by the limitations of consultation in NATO, and at times, he himself caused these limitations. In fact, in the face of both NATO's limitations and what he perceived as the deterioration of the UN, Dulles had begun musing in private about some new

---

NATO; part of what Lawrence Kaplan has called a series of "carefully calibrated steps." Lawrence S. Kaplan, *NATO United, NATO Divided: The Evolution of an Alliance* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004), 31. Bozo disagrees, arguing that the tripartite diplomacy was part of a serious attempt to restructure Atlantic relations and not "a pretext for justifying France's subsequent withdrawal from military integration." Frédéric Bozo, "The NATO Crisis of 1966-67: A French Point of View," in *The Strategic Triangle: France, Germany, and the United States in the Shaping of the New Europe*, ed. Helga Haftendorn, et al. (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2006), 108.

[9] Laloy, for one, thought it was all about nuclear weapons. "Memorandum of Conversation, Paris, October 31, 1958." October 31, 1958. RG59, WE, Subject File Relating to France, box 4, folder: "Memos of Conversation 1958 (Folder 2)," NARA. So too did Paul Nitze. Paul H. Nitze, Steven L. Rearden, and Ann M. Smith, *From Hiroshima to Glasnost: At the Center of Decision: A Memoir* (New York: G. Weidenfeld, 1989), 179.

means of organizing the "Free World." Perhaps it was time to create a new "organization comprehending all our allies, about 50 in number."[10] He intimated some of this thinking to Alphand, who hoped that perhaps Dulles might come around, if only "pragmatically," to the French memorandum.[11] Because Dulles already doubted the current structure of allied relations, he found de Gaulle's memorandum part good, part bad. It was good to think about global problems, but a "world directorate" was unacceptable. Dulles, like de Gaulle, was thinking about whether NATO was the best means of organizing the free world, and if so, how it should adapt.

Paul-Henri Spaak, NATO's Secretary General, found himself, like Dulles, "rather close to agreeing with the analysis" in de Gaulle's memorandum, especially the idea that NATO was no longer responsive to political and strategic realities. "The Communist threat today," Spaak wrote a month after de Gaulle's memorandum, "is above all Asiatic and African." As a consequence, NATO and the West "must think about extending its combined action into other parts of the world." Spaak had made this point in Council as Belgian foreign minister, and he repeated it in public speeches as Secretary General. But like Dulles, Spaak saw good and bad in de Gaulle's formulation: a tripartite organization was "neither workable nor fortunate."[12]

If de Gaulle's memorandum reflected a broader search for NATO's purpose and organization, it also closely mirrored plans articulated by one of NATO's top military commanders. In 1958, Field Marshall Bernard Montgomery retired as Deputy SACEUR, but not before he had formed -

---

[10] For similar thinking by Macmillan and Eisenhower, see "The Present Political Situation," Memorandum of Conversation, October 23, 1957. DDRS, CK3100243120; "Memorandum of Conversation at the White House, June 11, 1958 2:30 p.m." Dulles, Chronological series, box 16, folder: June 1958 (3), DDEL.

[11] Alphand to Louis Joxe, Secrétaire General du Département, 3 octobre, 1958, *DDF*, 1958, vol. 2, doc. 221.

[12] Translation of untitled and undated memorandum by Spaak, October 15, 1958. Papers of Lauris Norstad [hereafter NP], box 90, folder: NATO General (6), DDEL.

and expounded with his trademark self-righteousness - definitive ideas about the need to reform and expand NATO's military commands.

In 1957 Montgomery, quoting Hamlet, announced that "the times are out of joint." He complained that NATO was fixated on "our parish pumps" to the exclusion of other areas - the ones outside of Europe, where the security of the West was truly imperiled. NATO needed a policy toward the Middle East, and that "policy must be capable of world-wide application."[13] French officials found Montgomery's opinions to be "somewhat outrageous."[14] But before Montgomery left his post at SHAPE, he shared a paper expounding these ideas with de Gaulle, and de Gaulle agreed with and even imbibed Montgomery's ideas.[15] When Frank Roberts, the British Permanent Representative to NATO, first read de Gaulle's memorandum, he thought he was reading a French translation of an earlier Montgomery speech. The de Gaulle memo, he said, was "pure Monty."[16]

The ideas in De Gaulle's September memorandum, then, reflected a shared desire to adapt NATO to changing world conditions.[17] Yet, the memorandum differed from other suggestions; it was blunter, it was confusing, it received outsized attention, and it lacked

---

[13] "CPX 7: Final Address by D/SACEUR," April 19, 1957, Whitman File, Name Series, box 21, folder: Montgomery, F/M 1957 thru 1959 (2), DDEL.

[14] "M. Chauvel, Ambassadeur de France à Londres, à M. Couve de Murville, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères," 25 octobre 1958, *DDF*, 1958, vol. 2, doc. 283.

[15] UKDel No. 359 to FO, November 4, 1958, FO 371/137824, NAUK.

[16] Roberts to Rumbold, October 2, 1958, FO 371/137820, NAUK. "Pure Monty" was no compliment; British officials were telling their European colleagues that Montgomery was the "stupidest man in the United Kingdom on political subjects." Bonn No. 798 to the Secretary of State, October 31, 1958. DNSA, BC00226.

[17] General Ely confirmed that what de Gaulle wanted was something similar to Montgomery's concept of a "global system of commands." UKDel No. 214 to FO. June 19, 1959, PREM 11/3002, NAUK.

almost any chance of succeeding on its terms. This was apparent to almost all officials - French and allied - who read the memorandum.

While others put forth reforms that would focus on a common policy, de Gaulle took this to an extreme with his concept of a tripartite directory that would take action around the world on behalf of all the western powers. By grouping the US, UK, and France as a special class of power because each had global possessions and responsibilities, de Gaulle ignored other European allies with similar far-flung associations. Worse, he ignored what seemed apparent to all of the other allies: France was no longer a global power of the significance of the United Kingdom, let alone the United States. As one German official told the French Ambassador in Bonn, there were only two superpowers: the United States and the USSR.[18] The memorandum's ostentatious claim to French exceptionalism led contemporaries to psychoanalyze de Gaulle and to assume his idea for the directorate was simply an attempt to right the wrongs of the Second World War. During the war de Gaulle had first been kept at arm's length by Roosevelt and Churchill and then left on the periphery of that war's Big Three.[19] The post-Suez Eisenhower-Macmillan rapprochement also suggested that a new ruling combine – what Jebb had called the Anglo-American Directorate - had been created. In many ways, this was a fair description of reality.[20] Dulles and Lloyd both agreed that the Lebanon and Jordan actions did seem to indicate "existence of a secret planning organization," and it was this "mythical body" to which de Gaulle

---

[18] Seydoux to Couve, 26 octobre 1958, *DDF*, 1958, vol. 2, doc. 286.

[19] Memorandum of Discussion at the 390th Meeting of the National Security Council, December 11, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 1. 163.

[20] The fact that Anglo-American coordination was done on an ad hoc, informal basis, seems to have precluded British and American officials from understanding how joint actions were perceived abroad, especially in Paris. Minute by P. E. Ramsbotham, October 31, 1958, FO 371/137825.

sought admission.[21] Once again, a British Prime Minister and American President seemed to exclude de Gaulle.

De Gaulle argued that tripartitism was essential because Cold War rivalry had expanded to the far reaches of the globe, transforming the conflict into what one historian has dubbed the "Global Cold War."[22] De Gaulle saw the Cold War, which he defined as the struggle against communism, as a battle that required military coordination. He felt that the events in Lebanon, Jordan, and disputes with the PRC had proved that the Cold War could get hot, and quickly, anywhere in the world. Had not the French military fought communism in Indochina, and now again in North Africa?[23] Irwin Wall has argued that the French desire for allied support in North Africa was the singular force behind de Gaulle's memorandum; the historical evidence suggests that it was one of the most - but not the only - critical components driving de Gaulle's 'memorandum diplomacy.'[24]

By de Gaulle's logic, events anywhere on the globe might trigger a nuclear war that could engulf Europe and thus France. He believed he could not leave decision about the use of atomic weapons to the Americans and the British alone; they might be reckless. After the crisis with the PRC, for instance, French officials started referring to the American actions in Asia as "gambling with peace." De Gaulle told Spaak explicitly that "he wanted some control over the use of United

---

[21] Paris No. 597 to FO, December 16, 1958, FO 371/137826, NAUK.

[22] Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

[23] Kelly, *Lost Soldiers*, 9, 164.

[24] Wall, *France, the United States, and the Algerian War*.

States nuclear weapons not only in Europe but even, for example, over the dropping of a United States nuclear bomb on China."[25]

De Gaulle advocated this tripartite military and atomic coordination, yet he disliked military integration in general. French military officers complained that de Gaulle was a "mass of prejudice and preconceived notions where NATO was concerned," and "got the whole thing mixed up" with the failed EDC.[26] De Gaulle opposed integration for philosophical and practical reasons, but he especially disliked the hypothetical idea that French units might become separated from their own Army, resulting in a loss of sense of purpose and allegiance. De Gaulle based his worries about integration on what one French general officer reported was a "completely misconceived" understanding of NATO's military structure.[27]

1.3.2 The Mare's Nest

Dulles immediately told French Ambassador Hervé Alphand that the memorandum raised "very major problems."[28] Alphand knew it too; he believed there was "no hope" for achieving what de Gaulle had set out in writing. Paris should approach cooperation with London and Washington, Alphand advised, "in a pragmatic way," and would require "a lot of time and mutual trust." It could not be declared by fiat. "Sending this love letter" - *L'envoi de ce poulet*, as he put it - "will not help move things forward."[29]

---

[25] UKDel No. 146 to FO, March 2, 1959, FO 371/146394, NAUK. For "gambling with peace" see Washington No. 201 to FO, January 22, 1959, FO 371/146304.

[26] Frank Roberts to Rumbold, November 11, 1959, FO 371/146310, NAUK.

[27] Valluy, commander of Central Europe, told this to Roberts. Roberts to Rumbold, January 23, 1959, FO 371/146305, NAUK.

[28] Letter from President de Gaulle to President Eisenhower, September 17, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 45.

[29] Alphand, *L'Étonnement d'Être*, 292.

De Gaulle's memorandum, though polite, was not diplomatic or the work of French diplomats.[30] The French Foreign Minister Couve de Murville later regretted its "rigid and logical manner," claiming that if he had not been in New York for the opening of the United Nations General Assembly at the time, he "did not think this [the memorandum] would ever have happened."[31] The memorandum upset diplomats at the Quai d'Orsay as well, and French officials complained privately that de Gaulle had not "properly coordinated" the document with either the Quai or with de Courcel, the French Permanent Representative to NATO.[32] Worse, the memorandum revealed de Gaulle's extreme ignorance about how the various command and institutional elements of NATO operated.[33] As de Courcel explained to his British counterpart, Frank Roberts, de Gaulle had "mixed up the two quite separate things, western security as a global problem and the efficient functioning of NATO - the most important but not the only element in western security."[34] Efforts by French diplomats and NATO officials to inform General de Gaulle were unsuccessful. Two years after de Gaulle's memorandum, Norstad

---

[30] Laskey to de Zulueta, October 29, 1958, PREM 11/3002; Memorandum of Conversation, September 16, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 1, 156; "Memorandum of Conversation, 'de Gaulle's Proposals on NATO'," November 3, 1958, RG59, WE, France, 1944-1960, box 4, folder: "Memos of Conversation 1958 (Folder 2)," NARA; UKDel No. 275 to FO, October 3, 1958, FO 371/137820, NAUK.

[31] Paris No. 451 to FO, October 2, 1958, FO 371/137820, NAUK.

[32] UKDel No. 287 to FO [this copy is the incoming telegram to Bonn], October 7, 1958. PREM 11/3002, NAUK.

[33] "De Gaulle Letter," Memorandum of Conversation, October 20, 1958. DNSA, BC00222; Telegram from the Embassy in France to the Department of State, June 1, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 16.

[34] UKDel No. 287 to FO, October 7, 1958. See also UKDel No. 275 to FO, October 3, 1958, FO 371/137820, NAUK. UKDel No. 359 to FO, November 4, 1958, FO 371/137824, NAUK.

complained that the "basic difficulty" was that neither de Gaulle nor his top advisers "had the faintest idea how N.A.T.O. really worked and had never tried to find out."[35]

French diplomats explained to their allied colleagues that de Gaulle viewed NATO itself as "a matter of indifference." De Gaulle had, initially, planned to "simply ignore it as an association of minor importance."[36] Nonetheless, the rhetoric of Macmillan, Eisenhower, and Dulles had publicly and purposefully elevated NATO as the primary instrument of western security, and there had been much talk of expanding NATO to address global problems. By 1958, NATO had become a vague phrase that could stand in to represent the Treaty and the Organization but also all issues of transatlantic security cooperation or the anti-Communism efforts of the West in general. There is little wonder why de Gaulle foregrounded NATO so prominently in his letter. Nonetheless, as the State Department advisor - and no fan of de Gaulle - Robert Murphy put it, the letter was "a mare's nest." NATO, as a forum of allied consultation and coordination for the defense of Europe, "had almost nothing to do with what [de Gaulle] really wanted, and it was a misfortune that he had started off talking so much about it."[37]

Dulles and Spaak found elements in de Gaulle's memorandum that resonated with their search for a new approach to security. Macmillan thought de Gaulle had "put his finger on the problem" of NATO's need "to coordinate resistance on [a] world-wide scale" if NATO was not to

---

[35] UKDel No. 254 to FO, October 7, 1960, FO 371/154576, NAUK. On French efforts see "Memorandum of Conversation, Paris, October 31, 1958," RG59, WE, France, 1944-1960, box 4, folder: "Memos of Conversation 1958 (Folder 2)," NARA; UKDel No. 359 to FO, November 4, 1958, FO 371/137824, NAUK.

[36] This information passed to Shuckburgh by his French deputy on the Secretariat, Basdevant. Roberts to Hoyer Millar, December 8, 1958, FO 371/137826, NAUK.

[37] Washington No. 3342 to FO, December 11, 1958, FO 371/137826, NAUK.

become a new "Maginot Line.'[38] In the weeks after de Gaulle's memorandum, Alphand wrote to Paris that Dulles understood the need for an organization with "a wider geographic responsibilities than NATO and with policy responsibilities stronger than the UN."[39]

But Eisenhower thought de Gaulle's idea a bad one from the start. In particular, he saw tripartitism as a threat to the allied unity he wanted to foster at the NATO Heads of Government meeting in Paris. NATO's "real strength" was not any particular policy but instead, "rests in our union." Eisenhower would have much preferred if the letter had not been sent, and was not interested in engaging in a discussion of its merits; "the less said about this proposal the better."[40]

Had the memorandum been sent only to its addressees in Washington and London, perhaps Eisenhower and Macmillan might have found a way to address de Gaulle's concerns without compromising allied unity. But de Gaulle, in what one of his advisers called the General's "chief mistake," and what Macmillan called the "great gaffe," gave a copy of his memorandum to Spaak, who promptly shared it with the Italians and Germans.[41] De Gaulle had done little to sugarcoat his plans, telling Spaak that "only major world powers can define a global policy" and that Western policy should and could only be determined by the "three great Western powers."[42] Before the leak, Joxe had called the Italian and German ambassadors into his Paris office and

---

[38] The British Prime Minister, like Dulles and Spaak, thought that the "the mechanism that he had proposed for solving it showed that he was still imbued with old-fashioned ideas." FO No. 7124 to Washington, October 9, 1958.PREM 11/2328, NAUK.

[39] M. Alphand, Ambassadeur de France à Washington, à M. Louis Joxe, Secrétaire Général du Département," 2 octobre 1958, *DDF*, 1958, vol. 2, doc. 221.

[40] Memorandum of Conversation, October 6, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 50.

[41] "Memorandum of Conversation, 'de Gaulle's Proposals on NATO'," November 3, 1958; Diary entry for October 8, 1958, *MD:PM*, 163. Norstad, who held cards closer to his chest than Spaak, also received a copy of the memorandum from one of de Gaulle's lieutenants. UKDel No. 345 Saving to FO, October 15, 1958, FO 371/137821, NAUK.

[42] "Note du Département," 25 septembre 1958, *DDF*, 1958, vol. 2, doc. 200.

given them a watered-down oral account of the memorandum. When the Germans saw the actual memorandum, it was even worse than they feared. The whole affair smacked of perfidy.[43]

Adenauer's feelings were particularly hurt. In October, after the memorandum had been written but before the leak, the German Chancellor had met with de Gaulle for a symbolic meeting at Colombey-les-Deux-Eglises. After learning of the memorandum, Der Alte told Macmillan he felt "tricked and deceived."[44] David Bruce, the American Ambassador in Bonn, warned that the Germans were already prone to "suspect secret consultation behind their backs." Any signs of accepting the memorandum would cause "grievous damage" to German relations with the allies.[45] The Italians, too, were "nearly hysterical" over the memorandum, concerned Italian exclusion from a tripartite directorate would upset the delicate political balance in Italy.[46]

The memorandum put Washington and London in a difficult spot. De Gaulle's argument that NATO should be concerned with areas outside the European area echoed the thoughts expressed

---

[43] Blankenhorn, the German Ambassador, found the note "even worse than he had supposed." UKDel No. 277 to FO, October 3, 1958, FO 371/137820, NAUK.

[44] De Gaulle did not mention the memorandum, specifically, at Colombey. Bozo, *Deux Stratégies Pour L'europe*, 37. He did, however, allude to his ideas in his conversations with Adenauer. FO No. 7124 to Washington, October 9, 1958, PREM 11/2328, NAUK; UKDel No. 269 to FO, October 1, 1958; Paris No. 451 to FO, October 2, 1958, FO 371/137820, NAUK; Seydoux to Couve de Murville, 28 octobre 1958, *DDF*, 1958, vol. 2, doc. 293. Here then was one more in the long string of examples of how an era of great men - especially of a certain vintage - can lead to less than great outcomes. For a sketch of de Gaulle and Adenauer and the effects of age on their relationship and worldview, see Ronald J. Granieri, "More Than a Geriatric Romance: Adenauer, De Gaulle, and the Atlantic Alliance," in *A History of Franco-German Relations in Europe: From "Hereditary Enemies" to Partners*, ed. Carine Germond and Henning Türk (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

[45] Telegram from the Embassy in Germany to the Department of State, October 9, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 159.The Embassy reported that Adenauer was "greatly upset" by the proposal. Bonn. No. 815 to the Secretary of State, October 15, 1958. DNSA, BC00218.

[46] "De Gaulle Letter," Memorandum of Conversation, October 20, 1958. DNSA, BC00222; Memorandum of Conversation, October 6, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 50; Telegram from the Embassy in Italy to the Department of State, October 18, 1958, 11 p.m. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 61.

at NATO Ministerials since 1955. Still, Dulles thought extending the Treaty was impracticable, and dividing up the world as de Gaulle suggested looked too much like "reimposing world hegemony."[47] Dulles was concerned about the other NATO allies and their sense of exclusion. But he was more worried about how tripartite talks on global strategy would look to the new nations in Asia and Africa that the United States sought to keep out of the Soviet orbit.[48]

Eisenhower tried to render the radioactive letter inert. He wrote de Gaulle a prompt but flavorless letter in which he conceded that the Cold War was global but suggested that NATO was undergoing its own evolution to meet the challenge. In an implicit rebuff to immediate, formalized tripartitism, Eisenhower explained that the United States did not want to lose the "developing intimacy among all the members of NATO and the closer bonds it forges."[49] Dulles, too, wrote to Couve, asking him to write a new letter with more specific ideas that had a chance of success. But De Gaulle was frustrated by Eisenhower's "bleak and negative" response and thought Dulles' letter "just a blind."[50] Realizing that the United States were not going to give in easily to de Gaulle's demands, Alphand told the Americans "gloomily" that it was "a sad day for NATO."[51]

If de Gaulle sensed prevarication in response to his memorandum, it was because there was much prevaricating in Washington. Dulles waffled, and different offices of the State

---

[47] "De Gaulle Letter," Memorandum of Conversation, October 20, 1958; Washington No. 2719 to FO, October 9, 1958, FO 371/137821, NAUK.

[48] Memorandum of Conversation, October 17, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 59.

[49] Letter from President Eisenhower to President de Gaulle, October 20, 1958, *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 63.

[50] Paris No. 485 to FO, October 21, 1958. PREM 11/3002; "Note Pour le Cabinet du Ministère," 22 octobre 1958, *DDF*, 1958, vol. 2, doc. 276. De Gaulle also worried that the Italians might publish the original memorandum. On this matter, and Couve taking the issue up with de Gaulle generally, see Paris No. 483 to FO, October 21, 1958, FO 371/137822, NAUK.

[51] Washington. No. 2833 to FO, October 20, 1958, FO 371/137822, NAUK.

Department disagreed over whether to offer tripartite meetings at all. Officials responsible for bilateral relations with France insisted that "accommodation must be reached with the French." Meanwhile, officials responsible for NATO were fearful of the strain tripartite talks would place on the spirit of unity that Eisenhower championed.[52]

Eisenhower surely wished that de Gaulle had not written the memorandum, but once it was published, no responsible official in Washington believed de Gaulle could be ignored. After Spaak leaked the letter to the Germans and Italians, it became common knowledge at the top level of all NATO states, and then publicly through leaks by offended governments.[53] London and Washington could not turn down de Gaulle flat without causing grave offense. And such offense could have serious repercussions. De Gaulle's decision to share the letter with NATO's loquacious Secretary General had been as much genius as gaffe.

Because France had asked for the talks, the United States typically would have been in a strong position to impose some conditions on the French. But given the poor state of Franco-American relations in the late 1950s, things were not so simple.[54] With the U.S. unable and

---

[52] The battle was between WE, on one side, and RA and USRO on the other. Timmons to Nolting, November 28, 1958, RG59, EUR, Records of the Director, Correspondence, 1955-1959, box 1, folder: "RA Correspondence, 1958," NARA; Memorandum from Merchant to the Secretary, "Tripartite Talks on de Gaulle Memorandum," November 25, 1958, RG59, WE, France, 1944-1960, box 2, folder: "De Gaulle Government, 1958," NARA.

[53] "M. Chauvel, Ambassadeur de France à Londres, à M. Couve de Murville, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères," 25 octobre 1958, *DDF*, 1958, vol. 2, doc. 283.

[54] The list of disagreements between the two countries in 1958 was daunting: on African issues, there was disagreement at the UN over Algeria, French frustrations over FLN agents in the US, negotiations over Moroccan bases, American arms sent to Tunisia, and disagreements over Guinea and Cameroon. In Europe, there was the memorandum itself, and the problem of the Common Market and the Free Trade Area. On atomic and disarmament issues, there was de Gaulle's position on IRBMs for France and refusal to participate in the NATO atomic stockpile, French desire for an atomic submarine and atomic information, disagreements on a potential test ban treaty, and disarmament negotiations. Merchant to Lyon, December 9, 1958, RG59, WE, France, 1944-1960, box 2, folder: "De Gaulle Government, 1958," NARA. On

unwilling to give French satisfaction on a host of other issues, Livingston Merchant, the senior Europe hand in the State Department, worried that "there may be a major blow-up on the General's part." Tripartite talks, he concluded, "may be of some use in smoothing down the generally ruffled nature of French feathers." An upcoming visit to Paris, by Dulles, State officials hoped, would help resolve things.[55]

At stake was not only American relations with France, but also, as Merchant told Dulles, the "development of the European economic institutions in which French cooperation was essential."[56] The British were even more worried de Gaulle would ruin their plans for a European Free Trade Area (EFTA). Selwyn Lloyd warned Dulles that "we must keep de Gaulle friendly," and Macmillan cautioned extreme care; both feared arousing "French hostility" during negotiations for an EFTA.[57] When Macmillan gathered from a telegram that the British Ambassador in Paris "seems to think that we want Tripartite talks to take place," he used his heavy red pencil to scribble to Lloyd: "We Don't. We only want not to offend the General."[58] Wanting to avoid an outright rejection of de Gaulle by Washington, Macmillan instructed the British Ambassador to tell the Americans that de Gaulle's memorandum could not be dealt with

---

the "cold" nature of the Franco-American alliance after 1945, see Frank Costigliola, *France and the United States: The Cold Alliance since World War II* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1992).

[55] Merchant to Lyon, December 9, 1958.

[56] Memorandum on "The de Gaulle Proposals", attached to letter from Elbrick to the Secretary, "Your Meeting Today with General Gruenther and Mr. McCloy." October 16, 1958, RG59, WE, France, 1944-1960, box 2, folder: "De Gaulle Government, 1958," NARA.

[57] Caccia passed on Lloyd's caution to Dulles; see Memorandum of Conversation, October 17, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 59. For British concerns about FTA, see Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, October 8, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 51. FO No. 2308 to Paris, October 20, 1958, FO 371/137822, NAUK.

[58] Scribbled on Paris No. 483 to FO, October 21, 1958. PREM 11/3002, NAUK.

"leisurely," and "private tripartite discussions" must "take place pretty soon."[59] Dulles, despite some second thoughts, and after giving the British a sharp warning that any sort of trade of tripartite talks for de Gaulle's support of the European Free Trade Area would end the intimacy of the Anglo-American relationship, concurred.[60]

For a number of reasons, then - because of the publicity de Gaulle gave his own personal correspondence, because there was some merit in de Gaulle's diagnosis if not cure, because the British and Americans did not want a jilted de Gaulle to attack the European construction, and, partly, because they hoped to convince de Gaulle that his ideas were actually, in fact, dangerous to both NATO and the West's reputation abroad, Dulles met with Alphand in a series of talks - starting, initially, with talks about talks.[61]

1.3.3 A World Something

Alphand and Dulles met repeatedly in the weeks after de Gaulle's memorandum, and Dulles pressed Alphand to explain just what it was de Gaulle wanted. The main French idea, Alphand told Dulles, was "strategic military planning on [a] tripartite basis covering such areas as Africa and [the] Middle East as well as political planning." Other NATO allies, he said, "would not be directly involved." Did this mean, Dulles asked, the memorandum had nothing to do with

---

[59] FO No. 7124 to Washington, October 9, 1958. PREM 11/2328, NAUK.

[60] "De Gaulle Letter," Memorandum of Conversation, October 20, 1958. DNSA, BC00222. Memorandum of Conversation, October 27, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 65. Washington No. 2900 to FO, October 27, 1958, FO No. 7587 to Washington, October 28, 1958, both in FO 371/137823, NAUK.

[61] David Bruce, writing from Germany, had noted Adenauer's unhappiness with the memorandum but nonetheless recommended tripartite talks as a "means [of] opening de Gaulle's eyes [to the] major problems and dangers inherent in his proposal." Telegram from the Embassy in Germany to the Department of State, October 9, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 159.

NATO? Alphand could only say that while NATO might be involved, "neither [the] treaty area or text would be altered."[62]

One week later, Couve de Murville met with Selwyn Lloyd. Couve sought to walk back the memorandum's reference to NATO. It was "unfortunate," Couve said, that the memorandum had "become associated in people's minds only with NATO." And de Gaulle did not want a "new body" or new "organization," but instead "organized consultation," which would not be a joint decision making process as much as one designed to achieve at a common position.[63] Couve considered the initial tripartite conversations to be a negotiation, rather than the imposition of demands.[64] In Paris, de Gaulle let on that things were "not exactly taking the course he originally foresaw," but agreed things should proceed. "[W]e will see what develops."[65]

A first round of preliminary tripartite talks began in December. Couve's hopeful message was for naught - Alphand pressed the idea of expanding NATO. Ten years after NATO was formed, Alphand declared, the "conditions of global strategy had changed," requiring the West's security apparatus to change with it.[66] Lord Hood, the British Minister in Washington, asked why the French did not try to develop consultation in the North Atlantic Council. Alphand explained the conundrum he was in. He admitted that he, personally, "did not know how revision of NATO could be achieved." Nonetheless, if France does not get tripartite consultation, and NATO remains unchanged, "then France has no interests in NATO in its present form" and had the

---

[62] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in France, October 31, 1958, 8:52 p.m. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 67.

[63] Letter from the British Ambassador (Caccia) to Secretary of State Dulles, November 7, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 68.

[64] Couve to Alphand, 3 novembre 1958, *DDF*, 1958, vol. 2, doc. 310.

[65] Telegram from the Embassy in France to the Department of State. November 29, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 75.

[66] Alphand to Couve, 4 décembre 1958, *DDF*, 1958, vol. 2, doc. 390.

right to "denounce" NATO or seek a revision of the treaty.[67] The meeting broke up without satisfaction for any side, but with a prescient warning from Murphy: He warned Alphand not to forget that the Soviet goal was to dismantle the structures of Atlantic security cooperation. The West, by wanting to improve these structures, "could run the risk of destroying or paralyzing what currently exists."[68]

The British and Americans, after probing Alphand, hoped he would return with answers to their questions. Instead, de Gaulle sent his Ambassador more questions to ask: "Is it possible or not to establish a program of common action related to world problems … Is it possible or not on the military level for the three to act strategically in common in case of military conflict anywhere in the world?" Murphy was incredulous. If the answer to de Gaulle's questions were yes, than surely an "international military staff" would be required, and a formal "policy-making machinery" on par with the governmental structures within the United States, multiplied by the difficulty of representing three national policies. Alphand conceded that, "if he understood his instructions correctly," this was what de Gaulle wanted.[69]

The December talks ended with the participants more confused. Christian Herter, the Undersecretary of State, told the National Security Council that de Gaulle was seeking a "complete re-assessment of the entire NATO defense concept." Eisenhower agreed, thinking that de Gaulle's goal was to "broaden NATO" to include any region where Western interests were at stake. "This," said the President, "was just a little crazy." In Eisenhower's view,

---

[67] Memorandum of Conversation. December 4, 1958. [Tripartite Talks] *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2,136.

[68] Alphand to Couve, 4 décembre 1958.

[69] Memorandum of Conversation, December 10, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 78.

NATO had "a specific mission" and the member States needed to "just buckle down and carry it out."[70]

But did NATO have a "specific mission"? Eisenhower's comments reveal that he was perhaps the only one of his contemporaries who held the traditional or early view of NATO, with its mission to maintain and improve military cooperation between the allies for the defense of Western Europe. De Gaulle rejected this view. He told Dulles in December that NATO must be extended in Africa "at least to the portion of the continent from the Sahara North." He was frustrated about the lack of political cooperation from NATO allies, especially the United States, which had recently supported Guinea's accession to the United Nations. He complained that NATO as it currently existed gave France "no assurance that if war broke out the proper decisions would have been arranged in advance." And de Gaulle rejected Eisenhower's goal to make the defense of Europe more cooperative and efficient. He would not agree to NATO establishing IRBM bases in France, the atomic stockpile, or a more integrated air defense for Europe.

Dulles thought the only option was to "make a greater effort" in Washington and ensure the French feel "they are in on important decisions." Perhaps this would lead to more cooperation with NATO.[71] Dulles, on a December trip to Paris to attend the NATO Ministerial, attempted to placate de Gaulle. He promised to return to Washington prepared to undertake a "more substantive exchange of information" and to "discuss thoroughly" the American position on global issues with the French.

---

[70] Memorandum of Discussion at the 390th Meeting of the National Security Council. December 11, 1958. Memorandum of Conversation, December 10, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 1, 163.

[71] Telegram from Secretary of State Dulles to the Department of State. December 15, 1958. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 82.

De Gaulle was not going to settle for any less. A week after Dulles's visit, de Gaulle repeated his demands to the British in testier terms. He told Selwyn Lloyd that there must be tripartite talks, the NAT must be amended to cover Africa north of the Sahara, NATO's military commands needed to be reorganized, and some method should be found in the "sharing of atomic arms." Lloyd pressed de Gaulle, asking whether he wanted a tripartite organization or institution. De Gaulle told him "that if what he said involved institutions then that was what he meant." De Gaulle wanted ambassadors from the three countries in Washington to "consider political plans for Germany, Iran, Middle East, Pacific, North Africa and Black Africa." It would be, said de Gaulle, an *Organization Mondiale*, but if the British did not like the word organization, it could be a "World Something."[72]

De Gaulle finished by noting that he was "increasingly embarrassed" by American policy. A recent abstention by the United States at a United Nations vote on Algeria "completely proved his point about the need for tripartite agreement on Western strategy." The Guinea issue, too, had been "really tiresome" and made it clear that the "Atlantic Alliance was more and more inadequate." The whole thing, said de Gaulle, "was quite deplorable."[73]

It was under these inauspicious circumstances that Dulles agreed to go ahead with tripartite talks devoted to specific regional areas. In Paris, Dulles had told de Gaulle that Africa should be

---

[72] London to Secretary of State, No. 3311, Section 1 of 2. December 22, 1958. NP, box 99, folder: DeGAULLE, Charles (2), DDEL.

[73] Note du Département, 17 décembre 1958, *DDF*, 1958, vol. 2, doc. 427; London to Secretary of State, No. 3311, Section 2 of 2. December 22, 1958. NP, box 99, folder: DeGAULLE, Charles (2), DDEL.

the first subject.[74] The French, however, pushed to discuss the Middle East but Dulles countered by saying the area was "too difficult." This left the Far East.[75]

Before the meetings, however, Couve reminded Alphand of the need to stress nuclear strategy. France still knew nothing about plans for use of the deterrent outside the NATO area. While it was simply "not conceivable" for the United States to consult all of its allies in the North Atlantic Council about the decision to use atomic weapons, Couve wrote, the Americans must make any such decision with their allies "who have, or will have, atomic weapons."[76]

As a result of Couve's prompting, Alphand transformed a February tripartite meeting ostensibly about the Far East into a discussion of nuclear coordination. While France, Alphand said, had agreed with U.S. actions over Quemoy, it "would have wished to have had a voice in the decision before it was reached." Daridan, a French Admiral, fired off a battery of questions: In the event of a Chinese Communist attack on Quemoy and Matsu would the U.S. wage war against the mainland? "If so what sort of war, limited or general, and with what weapons?" He asked similar questions of the Americans about Formosa before turning to the British representatives. What would the United Kingdom do if China attacked Hong Kong?[77] In case those present missed the underlying message, Alphand explained that tripartite talks must consider possible scenarios in Asia and "establish in each instance" what criteria would justify "conventional war" and "nuclear war."[78] The Americans were stunned, for they expected a

---

[74] "Secretary agreed to _ _", by Lyon, December 16, 1958, RG59, Bohlen Records, box 12, folder: "361.1 De Gaulle 1958," NARA.

[75] "U.S.-UK-French Talks on the Far East," Marshall Green to Walter S. Robertson, January 15, 1959, RG59, BAA, OIAA, RPM, 1951-1963, box 4, folder: "Tripartite I," NARA.

[76] Couve to Alphand, 18 janviér 1959, *DDF*, 1959, vol. 1, doc. 33.

[77] "General de Gaulle's Plan: Record of Tripartite Meeting Held in State Department on February 3, 1959." FO 371/146306, NAUK.

[78] Washington No. 310 to FO, February 3, 1959, FO 371/146305, NAUK.

discussion of political prospects in the region. As always, they explained that the question of nuclear use was one reserved for the President.[79]

While there had been military officers at the Far East talks, the Pentagon wanted nothing to do with tripartitism.[80] Nonetheless, De Gaulle continued to expect that these tripartite meetings would discuss "blueprints of global defense." But Alphand complained that Dulles "dissembled as to whether such talks were possible."[81] In early 1959, Alphand visited Paris and returned to Washington with another major announcement from de Gaulle. Seemingly in response to the lack of military talks, de Gaulle insisted that the French fleet in the Mediterranean be removed from NATO command.[82]

Initially, American officials and NATO officials like Spaak thought de Gaulle's plan for withdrawal was a blatant effort to "blackmail" the Americans for tripartite talks.[83] But both

---

[79] "General de Gaulle's Plan: Record of Tripartite Meeting Held in State Department on February 3, 1959," and Washington No. 310 to FO, February 3, 1959.

[80] Memorandum of Conference with the President, February 9, 1959 - 10:30 am. February 10, 1959. WHO, OSS, Subject Series, DoD Subseries, box 4, folder: Joint Chiefs of Staff (6) [January-February 1959], DDEL.

[81] Memorandum of Conversation, January 9, 1959. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 87. Alphand new Dulles' dissembling meant military talks were unlikely, but he did not inform Paris accordingly. On Alphand's expectation of success, see Alphand, *L'Étonnement d'Être*, 300. For Dulles being not averse to military talks, see Washington No. 78 to FO, January 10, 1959, FO 371/146303, NAUK. On Alphand's reporting and the French Embassy's mistake in emphasis, see "De Gaulle's Views on Tripartite Consultations," Memorandum of Conversation, January 22, 1959, RG59, WE, France, 1944-1960, box 3, folder: "Memos of Conversation 1959 (Folder 2)," NARA. See also "Secretary's Conversation with General Norstad," Memorandum, February 12, 1959. DNSA, BC00762.

[82] Memorandum for the Record by the President's Assistant Staff Secretary (Eisenhower), March 3, 1959. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 1, 192.

[83] Synopsis of State and Intelligence material reported to the President. February 29, 1959. Undated but reported to the President February 28, 1959. DDRS, CK3100105145; Paris POLTO 2446 to Secretary of State, February 28, 1959. DDRS, CK3100226231.

the timing and evidence suggests de Gaulle's move was related to his thinking on Algeria.[84] De Gaulle, Alphand told the Americans, had suffered a "profound personal shock" after the United States had abstained from the recent debate on Algeria in the United Nations.[85] He was offended by the abstention itself, but also for what it revealed: A failure of the United States and NATO allies to "show solidarity with France in Algeria and North Africa generally."[86] In domestic politics, de Gaulle was trying to convince the "integrationists" - those who favored Algeria remaining French that de Gaulle would not "abandon" Algeria. A reorganization of the command arrangements would signal de Gaulle's intention to ensure nothing would come between the French fleet and its obligations to French North Africa.[87]

Most of de Gaulle's senior officials and officers were opposed to withdrawing the French fleet.[88] Officials at the Quai d'Orsay told American diplomats the decision had been made by de Gaulle over objections from the Prime Minister, foreign and defence ministers, and the top civil

---

[84] Telegram from the Embassy in France to the Department of State. March 7, 1959. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 1, 197; Undated, untitled note [re: Admiral Nomy]. [early March 1959], FO 371/146395; Memorandum of Conversation, Alexandre de Marenches and Robert Murphy, July 11, 1959, RG59, WE, France, 1944-1960, box 3, folder: "Memos of Conversation 1959 (Folder 2)," NARA; "Discussions in Paris Between C.D.S. and (1) General Ely (2) M. Guillaumat." Undated and untitled note. [December 18, 1959?], FO 371/146406, NAUK.

[85] Memorandum of Conversation, March 3, 1959. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 1, 194.

[86] This was Frank Roberts' paraphrase of information given to him by the French. UKDel No. 145 to FO, March 2, 1959, FO 371/146394, NAUK.

[87] Memorandum of Conversation, January 27, 1959. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 90.

[88] Telegram from the Embassy in France to the Department of State. March 3, 1959. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 1, 193; No. 145 to FO, March 2, 1959, FO 371/146394, NAUK.

servants at the Quay.[89] Despite objections, de Gaulle pushed through his plan in a meeting of the Defence Committee, taking all of five minutes and not permitting much discussion.[90]

The one bit of dissent raised by de Gaulle's subordinates in Committee had been the question of the American reaction. The *Bois Belleu*, the core of the French Mediterranean fleet, was after all, an American aircraft carrier, loaned to France explicitly for NATO use. Other ships in the fleet had been built with American money. De Gaulle gambled the Americans would not dare ask for the ships back, and he was right.[91]

The withdrawal of the French fleet was not a military problem for NATO.[92] In peacetime, the French fleet was not under NATO command anyhow; in war, SACEUR, through the Commander in Chief of Allied Forces Mediterranean (CINCAFMED), would simply assign the French to protecting communications with North Africa, which is what de Gaulle wanted.[93] The French commitment, after withdrawal, to "co-operate in time of war as closely with CINCAFMED as their own national demands permitted" was none too far from the pre-withdrawal status quo.[94]

Still, Supreme Commander Norstad thought it a very serious problem "psychologically and politically."[95] Herter agreed and warned Alphand that the French decision "would inevitably give the impression that the alliance was breaking up," and "might even cause the disintegration of

---

[89] "Views of FO Official on France in NATO and on U.S.-French Relations," Memorandum of Conversation, Paris, March 24, 1959, RG59, WE, France, 1944-1960, box 3, folder: "Memos of Conversation 1959 (Folder 1)," NARA.

[90] UKDel No. 148 Saving to FO, March 3, 1959, FO 371/146394, NAUK. Alphand, *L'Étonnement d'Être*, 300.

[91] No. 148 Saving to FO, March 3, 1959.

[92] Roberts to Hoyer Millar, June 18, 1958, FO 371/137819, NAUK.

[93] UKDel No. 128 to FO, March 6, 1959, FO 371/146394, NAUK.

[94] UKDel No. 251 Saving to FO, May 13, 1959, FO 371/146399, NAUK.

[95] Norstad quoted by Roberts, UKDel No. 145 to FO, March 2, 1959, FO 371/146394, NAUK.

the alliance."[96] Disintegration was no an abstract fear. In 1958, Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev issued an ultimatum: Britain, France and the United States must withdraw their garrisons from Berlin within six months.[97] To face down Khrushchev, the allies had to demonstrate they would - and could - stand united. French officials, who thought the fleet withdrawal a slippery slope, sought to slow down any official notice to the North Atlantic Council that France had withdrawn its fleet.[98] But when de Gaulle learned that official notice had not been given to NATO, he was angry, and the formal letter was rushed to NATO.[99]

American and British officials were by March 1958 extremely frustrated with de Gaulle. The Permanent Representatives to NATO thought it was time to "have it out" with him, and Norstad favored ending the tripartites.[100] Herter warned Alphand that formalizing the withdrawal would end the tripartite talks and "remove legislative justification for cooperation in nuclear field," that is, the nuclear reactor for a submarine the French had requested and Dulles had promised in 1958.[101] But Alphand told Herter his threats had been "badly received" in Paris and hinted at the possibility of an escalation of diplomatic tit-for-tat.[102] One week later, Murphy told Alphand that while no decisions had been taken, the Department of State was taking a "period of reflection" to reconsider atomic cooperation and tripartites in general. He warned Alphand, too, that Congress

---

[96] Memorandum of Conversation, March 3, 1959. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 1, 194.

[97] The Berlin Crisis is the subject of Chapter 5.

[98] UKDel No. 122 to FO, March 4, 1959, FO 371/146394, NAUK.

[99] The text of the French text presented to the Council, in English translation, is in UKDel No. 129 to FO, March 6, 1959, FO 371/146394, NAUK.

[100] UKDel No. 114 to FO, February 28, 1959; UKDel No. 148 Saving to FO, March 3, 1959; UKDel No. 122 to FO, March 4, 1959, all in FO 371/146394, NAUK.

[101] Memorandum of Conversation, March 3, 1959. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 1, 194; Memorandum From Acting Secretary of State Herter to President Eisenhower, March 4, 1959. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 1, 195.

[102] Memorandum of Conversation, March 4, 1959. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 97.

would no doubt have to pass a new law regarding the *Bois Belleau*, and this would not be easy to obtain.[103]

France's official notification of withdrawal to NATO, like the leaked memorandum, backed the United States in a corner. United States policy was limited to avoiding "anything hasty or that might look like reprisals," especially in light of Berlin. The State Department's instructions to American diplomats that the withdrawal be endured with "calm but cold dignity" underscored that de Gaulle had outmaneuvered his allies again.[104] Spaak presciently observed that if it was indeed de Gaulle's goal to limit French military cooperation so severely, and there was no way to preventing this limitation, "it might be better for the Alliance to have France out of it ... and then co-ordinating, as far as de Gaulle would permit, with France."[105]

The State Department began "stalling actions" on the tripartite meetings. De Gaulle, however, doubled down on his insistence that they continue. Alphand warned that if talks on Africa did not go forward, and if the Americans made a link between the tripartites and the fleet issue, "the General would be furious and there would be a chain reaction."[106] The Americans were not willing to call this bluff. Leaks from Paris suggested de Gaulle was planning a press conference to explain NATO's "shortcomings." This would further erode the appearance of allied unity. It would also be an unpleasant celebration of NATO's 10th Anniversary.[107]

---

[103] Alphand to Couve, March 11, 1959. *DDF*, 1959, vol. 1, doc. 148.

[104] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in France, March 6, 1959. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 98.

[105] UKDel No. 131 to FO, March 7, 1959, FO 371/146394, NAUK.

[106] Memorandum of Conversation, March 11, 1959. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 1, 201.

[107] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in France, March 22, 1959. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 1, 206.

In March Macmillan and Lloyd were back for another series of Washington Talks. They concluded that de Gaulle was "capable, any day, of asking Norstad to vacate SHAPE." This would throw the military component of NATO into disarray, and destroy the part of NATO Eisenhower believed most important.[108] The British argued that while de Gaulle was "mad" and should "be handled as a psychopath," it would be counterproductive to get tough with him, and Eisenhower agreed.[109]

The Americans were learning - if the hard way - that it was better for de Gaulle to expound his ideas in a tripartite forum rather than anywhere else, for his public declarations "pose greater danger than that which could be caused by their introduction into tripartite forum." Herter decided it was time "to take [a] more positive approach." He instructed the Ambassador in Paris to tell de Gaulle that the French "will find [the] door open in Washington."[110]

The door opened on a series of tripartite talks on Africa. But just as Alphand sought to make the Far East talks about nuclear weapons, the French representative, Joxe, spoke about military coordination. De Gaulle, he said, wanted to subdivide the world into "theaters of operation in peacetime for wartime use," in order to determine ahead of time who would be the wartime commander for each region.[111] It was necessary, the French argued, that the three countries hold military talks to establish "contingency strategic planning" for military

---

[108] "General Problems, including Far East, Near East and World Wide Strategy," Memorandum of Conversation, March 22, 1959, DDRS, CK3100493552.

[109] "General Problems, including Far East, Near East and World Wide Strategy," March 22, 1959; Memorandum of Conference with the President [Macmillan visit]. March 22, 1959, 9am. (DDRS – 1958-1960)

[110] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in France, March 22, 1959. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 1, 206.

[111] Memorandum of Conversation, January 9, 1959. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 87.

intervention lest the Soviets obtain a "bridge head in Africa itself or on the Mediterranean Basin."[112]

In the five meetings that followed, the French expounded on their ideas for subdividing Africa into "unified military commands" for North Africa, the Sahara, West and Central Africa, and one more "embracing Madagascar and the French Somali Coast."[113] The goal was to make "precise recommendations … about the organization of free world defense in Africa, including measures against subversion" which could then be coordinated with NATO plans.[114]

All of this looked to Murphy like an audacious, and impractical, global plan for "an eventual general war situation."[115] Also, it had the whiff of a French effort to cordon off Africa as a French protectorate. The United States simply could not recognize France's supposed "preeminent role in Africa," because the United States had interests there, too.[116] Worryingly for the Americans, the French had left off abstract military planning in one meeting to discuss much more concrete plans in Algeria. The military strategy they revealed suggested to the Americans that peace in Algeria was a long way off. Eisenhower and Herter expected "great difficulty in the UN this year with the French not participating but counting on our support."[117]

---

[112] "Tripartite Talks on Africa," Draft Memorandum for the President, under cover of memo from Murphy to the Secretary, April 22, 1959, rg59, BAA, OIAA, RPM 1951-1963, box 4, folder: "Tripartite 1," NARA.

[113] "Fourth Tripartite Talks on Africa," Memorandum of Conversation, April 21, 1959, RG59, PPC, Subject Files, 1954-1962, box 148, folder "Africa, 1959-60," NARA.

[114] "Fifth Tripartite Talk on Africa," Memorandum of Conversation, April 21, 1959. RG59, PPC, Subject Files, 1954-1962, box 148, folder "Africa, 1959-60," NARA.

[115] Ibid.

[116] Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs (Merchant) to Secretary of State Herter. May 5, 1959. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 111.

[117] Memorandum quoted in Editorial Note. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 143.

Because the tripartite on Africa achieved nothing, two weeks after the final meeting the French pushed again. Michel Debré, the French Prime Minister, told Herter that "the time had come to examine … the fundamental problem[s] posed in the Atlantic Alliance." First, there remained De Gaulle's memorandum and its concomitant tripartitism and call for "world-wide common policies." Second was support for France in Algeria; Debré regretted that France had not stressed this before - Algeria, for instance, was not mentioned in the 1958 memorandum - but support from NATO for the Algerian effort was essential for French support of NATO. Third, and finally, was the need for progress in the field of atomic cooperation.[118]

Lack of atomic cooperation had reached a crucial point in the late spring of 1959 while the Berlin Crisis still smoldered. As part of SACEUR's plan for defending Europe, the United States stationed three wings, or 9 squadrons, of F-100s in Eastern France to provide support to NATO forces in Germany. To be effective, the F-100s required nuclear weapons. If De Gaulle did not allow storage of nuclear weapons for NATO forces in France, Norstad claimed, the planes were "little more than attractive targets for the enemy."[119]

A letter from de Gaulle to Eisenhower confirmed Debré's hint that there would be no agreement on weapons storage in France and the F-100s would remain unarmed.[120] This was much more significant than the fleet action, prompting Herter to wonder "whether or not this was

---

[118] Memorandum of Conversation, May 1, 1959. 3:30 pm. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 109.

[119] UKDel No. 345 Saving to FO, October 14, 1958, FO 371/137821, NAUK.

[120] Letter from President de Gaulle to President Eisenhower, May 25, 1959. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 117. The atomic issue, according to Couve, was "linked" with the other issues of tripartite talks: global, strategy, military planning, and decisions on the use of atomic weapons. Memorandum of Conversation, May 24, 1959. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 116.

likely to signal the beginning of the break-up of NATO." With Eisenhower's approval Norstad threatened - and then made good on his threats - to relocate the nine squadrons.[121]

Norstad believed that his own strong action had influenced the French to be more forthcoming toward NATO policy, but his hopes were inflated.[122] De Gaulle remained convinced that his original memorandum had not received the formal reply he expected.[123] Furthermore, the United States had continued to grant visas to Algerian rebels, and when Washington refused to take a strong pro-French position at the upcoming United Nations General Assembly, de Gaulle erupted.[124] It was "inconceivable," he complained, that "the alliance does not extend to all points of the globe where we are face to face with Communism." If the United States continued to be against France in the United Nations, than the French "presence in NATO would be in question." Instead of "200 jets and the atomic bomb" leaving French soil, it would be "Norstad and the whole organization of the alliance."[125]

1.3.4 Where Angels Fear to Tread

The fallout from De Gaulle's memorandum had consequences ranging far wider than Franco-American relations. Bad Franco-American relations were, of course, bad for NATO. But de Gaulle's moves regarding the Mediterranean fleet and the nine squadrons directly affected military plans, and so Spaak took it upon himself to act as a mediator between the allies. During

---

[121] Record of Conversation between the Secretary of State and General Norstad at Checkers on June 29, 1959, FO 371/146404, NAUK; UKDel No. 209 Saving to FO, July 2, 1959, FO 371/146403, NAUK.

[122] "Memorandum of Conference with the President, March 11, 1960," March 15, 1960. DNSA, BC01845.

[123] Mollet in Roberts to Hoyer Millar, June 24, 1959, FO 371/146309, NAUK. See also Minute by Jebb to the Secretary of State, July 22, 1959, FO 371/146310, NAUK; BJSM Washington MD 380 to Ministry of Defence, London, June 13, 1959, FO 371/146308, NAUK.

[124] "Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs (Merchant) to the Secretary of State," July 10, 1959. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, XIII, Doc 294.

[125] Alphand, *L'Étonnement d'Être*, 303-04.

the 1959 Bastille Day parade, Spaak passed de Gaulle an aide-memoir in hopes of reconciling the two allies and NATO as a whole.[126]

Spaak had a reputation as a remarkable orator and was known to possess a keen mind. But he read as little as possible and preferred to get his information through discussion with close confidants.[127] According to his deputy, Evelyn Shuckburgh, such an approach "goes well usually," though "every once and a while horribly wrong."[128]

By offering a radical reorganization of NATO's political and military components, Spaak's aide-memoir was an attempt to reconcile his thinking on NATO's future with de Gaulle's memorandum. And this time, Spaak's approach went horribly wrong. Spaak had prepared his plan without advice from any military officials or from Shuckburgh who, as the NATO Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs and a British mandarin, was precisely the man to consult.

First, Spaak suggested that NATO establish a "special limited committee," consisting of the NATO states with nuclear weapons stationed on their soil. This committee would be the "decision-making machinery" for launching nuclear war. Second, Spaak wrote that it was his "belief," that on the issue of atomic assistance, "the United States would be ready to apply to France, contrary to what is sometimes said, the identical system applied to Great Britain." In the interim, the United States should define what "substantial progress" - the legal threshold required by American law for the provision of such assistance - really meant. Finally, Spaak wished to create a series of committees to study and prepare common directives for Africa, the Middle

---

[126] Roberts to the Secretary of State, July 17, 1959, FO 371/146405.

[127] Especially de Staercke, the Belgian Permanent Representative to NATO. See also Shuckburgh diary entry for August 15, 1959. Shuckburgh Diary, MS 191-1-2-7, CRL.

[128] Ibid.

East, Far East, and South Asia.[129] With these three ideas, Spaak believed he had reconciled de Gaulle's desires while negating the need for tripartitism; France could get all it wanted within NATO. With "little or no knowledge of technical military questions," as Frank Roberts observed, Spaak "had jumped in where angels would fear to tread."[130]

More damning of Spaak's memorandum were the Americans, who viewed it as a "disturbing document." The United States would not accept any special NATO machinery for nuclear decisions.[131] Such machinery might deny the United States the time necessary to fire an effective salvo, reduce the Soviet expectations of a definite response, and strip the President of his prerogative. Similarly, global planning committees were unacceptable. It was fine for NATO allies to consult in Council, but the rest of the world would be up in arms if they were to discover NATO was acting as if it was the global overlord.[132]

The worst part of Spaak's memorandum for the Americans was the part on atomic sharing. United States policy and Congressional attitudes were not in favor of granting France atomic cooperation - Spaak had been "entirely incorrect" in his assessment. [133] The real definition of "substantial progress," said Norstad, was simply "whatever progress the United Kingdom had or had not made." [134]

---

[129] "Memorandum" [Translation of Spaak's July 1959 memorandum]. NP, box 107, folder: Gen. Norstad-Miscellaneous (2), DDEL.

[130] Roberts to the Secretary of State (Lloyd), July 21, 1959, FO 371/146405. Shuckburgh's recollection of the incident is Shuckburgh diary entry for August 15, 1959.

[131] Such machinery is the subject of chapters 6 and 7.

[132] Washington TOPOL 141 to USRO Paris. July 18, 1959. 3pm. NP, box 47, France 1955-1959 (3), DDEL.

[133] Ibid.

[134] Roberts to Secretary of State, July 22, 1959, FO 371/146405.

Both London and Washington worried Spaak's memorandum would give de Gaulle a backwards impression.[135] De Gaulle, who knew little about NATO and only wished for its continuance if it met his desires, had been presented with a memorandum by the Secretary General of that very institution suggesting that all of his policies were legitimate and achievable. Spaak's memorandum fizzled, but not before complicating the issue further.

In September 1959 Eisenhower and the leaders of Britain, France, and the Federal Republic were scheduled to meet to demonstrate unity amidst the Berlin Crisis. But unity, the Americans worried, would be difficult to achieve with Franco-American relations so poor. "The "only major field" with room for agreement, argued the Department of State's Policy Planning Staff, was tripartitism. They suggested Eisenhower offer de Gaulle "greater French participation in global strategic planning."[136] Eisenhower thought about the suggestion; he told Herter he had "no objection to conversations, discussions, and even planning so long as there is never any agreement that the majority will rule." He left for Europe prepared to "go pretty far in consultations" with de Gaulle on global issues - that is, "interests outside of NATO."[137]

In Paris, de Gaulle and Eisenhower met privately and agreed NATO was necessary and should be maintained. But they differed on what NATO meant. For Eisenhower, integration of such things as air defense was absolutely essential to waging modern war. He disagreed with de Gaulle's preference for a coalition of armies rather than an integrated command structure. After

---

[135] Roberts to the Secretary of State, July 21, 1959, FO 371/146405; Washington TOPOL 141 to USRO Paris, July 18, 1959.

[136] "Some Possible Topics for Western Heads of Government Discussions," Memorandum, August 20, 1959. RG59, PPC, Subject Files, 1954-1962, box 151, folder: "Europe 1959, NARA.

[137] Memorandum of Conference with the President, August 21, 1959. WHO, OSS, Subject series, State Department subseries, box 3, folder: State Department - 1959 (May-September) (5), DDEL.

all, Eisenhower asked, if NATO consisted only of "purely national armies, where would the U.S. put their forces?" De Gaulle countered that NATO, by not covering North Africa, left France torn between "her Mediterranean and African responsibilities on the one hand and her NATO responsibilities on the other." He recited his concern about the American nuclear monopoly. France, he said, could end up committed to a war "without even knowing it."

Eisenhower then made his offer. He pledged to de Gaulle that he would "never unleash an atomic war without consultation." Furthermore, he said, "he would be very happy to have General de Gaulle participate with the British Prime Minister and himself in a study of all the problems relating to world strategy in order to attempt to reach decisions taken by joint agreement." NATO issues must still be discussed by all of the allies, but other issues could be discussed tripartitely, and even aided by the installation of a direct telephone line between the leaders.[138] The next day, Eisenhower and de Gaulle spent the night at Rambouillet talking in front of their fireplace in bathrobes - a twist on Eisenhower and Macmillan's pajamas at Bermuda.[139]

The Americans hosted tripartite talks on Laos and on arms supplies for Tunis and Morocco and started planning for both military and political talks.[140] The sense of

---

[138] Memorandum of Conversation, September 2, 1959, noon. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 130. See also Memorandum of Conversation, September 2, 1959, 4 p.m. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 131.

[139] Vernon A. Walters, *Silent Missions* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1978), 489.

[140] On Laos, see Memorandum of Conversation, September 15, 1959, RG59, WE, France, 1944-1960, box 3, folder: "Memos of Conversation 1959 (Folder 2, NARA.." On arms, see Hood to Rumbold, September 11, 1959, FO 371/146310, NAUK. On both see Memorandum for the President, "Status of the Matters Discussed with You During Your Recent Trip to Europe." WHO, OSS, Subject series, State Department subseries, box 3, folder: State Department - October 1959 - February 1960 (1), DDEL. State Department officials told the British that Eisenhower had agreed to establish "tripartite ad hoc 'staff groups'," that would include both military and political groups, since "that was what the French wanted." Hood to Rumbold, September 11, 1959, FO 371/146310, NAUK.

cooperation engendered by these talks seemed to "put to bed" the French-NATO difficulties; British officials, the American Embassy in Paris, and Norstad celebrated warmer French attitudes toward NATO's "knotty problems."[141]

The Americans were pleased. There was even optimistic talk that de Gaulle might now make France a larger military contributor to NATO and bail the United States out of difficult choices over troop reductions in Europe.[142] State Department officials noted, however, that the United States had in no way asked France to undo its previous decisions. And as would soon become evident, very little had changed.[143]

Less than a month after the Eisenhower - de Gaulle meeting, de Gaulle's diplomatic advisor, Jean-Marie Boegner, told Cecil Lyon of the American embassy that an impasse had been reached. Apart from the exchange of views in Paris, de Gaulle "didn't feel … that we had got very far." The September 1958 memorandum "remained unanswered." Boegner had already warned Lyon in August that "it seemed necessary to get back to some sort of a working agreement such as Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin had during World War II."[144] Now, at the end of September, Boegner told Lyon that nothing but "the same degree of tripartitism that existed

---

[141] "N.A.T.O. Matters," by A.D.F. Pemberton-Pigott, October 5, 1959, FO 371/146345, NAUK; Telegram from the Embassy in France to the Department of State, September 15, 1959, 5 p.m. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 137; Memorandum of Conference with President Eisenhower. November 4, 1959. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 1, 226.

[142] "Status of the Matters Discussed with You During Your Recent Trip to Europe," Memorandum for the President. WHO, OSS, Subject series, State Department subseries, box 3, folder: State Department - October 1959 - February 1960 (1), DDEL; Memorandum of Conference with President Eisenhower. November 4, 1959.

[143] "General NATO Cooperation," October 6, 1959, RG59, APMA, Subject Files, 1953-1962, box 17, folder: "France, vol. 1," NARA.

[144] Memorandum of Conversation, Paris, September 30, 1959, RG59, WE, France, 1944-1960, box 3, folder: "Memos of Conversation 1959 (Folder 2)," NARA.

between Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin" would satisfy de Gaulle. The General "was not interested in NATO and never would be."[145]

1.3.5 More Radical Suggestions

If de Gaulle was not interested in NATO, NATO was certainly interested in him - or at least what his ideas portended for the alliance and organization. A month after Eisenhower agreed to increased tripartitism, Spaak called a meeting of his senior staff to discuss NATO's uncertain future.[146] He developed a plan for NATO to act in the "new arena" of the developing world, but his ideas, according to Shuckburgh, were "very undigested and indigestible." Spaak wanted committees made of NATO's "5 Great Powers" - the tripartite three plus Germany and Italy - to create policies for NATO to take towards under-developed areas, with a special focus on aid.[147] The idea for committees, in an improved form, would be the basis for a system established to discuss policy outside the North Atlantic area and these are the subjects of Chapter 4. But in their initial incarnation, they solved little: de Gaulle remained uninterested in NATO while the Americans thought NATO committees would solve nothing. In the words of Robert Murphy, Spaak's ideas were "just nuts."[148] Spaak's plan, again, solved nothing. Any real decision on NATO's future would have to come from the summit.

Again, the leaders of Britain, France, the Federal Republic, and the United States met in December 1959. American officials expected and told their allies that Eisenhower was going to get tough and tell the General that if he did not come around he would damage the alliance.[149] Norstad assured British diplomats that Eisenhower "was no longer in his old mood of cordiality

---

[145] Jebb to Rumbold, October 13, 1959, FO 371/146310, NAUK.

[146] Roberts to Hoyer Millar, October 8, 1959, FO 371/146344, NAUK.

[147] Shuckburgh diary entry for October 6, 1959, Shuckburgh Diary, MS 191-1-2-8, CRL.

[148] Caccia to Rumbold, October 13, 1959, FO 371/146344, NAUK.

[149] Rumbold to the Secretary of State, December 16, 1959, FO 371/146406, NAUK.

and amiability, and he was feeling pretty fed up with Europe in general and with General de Gaulle and France in particular."[150] But others were not so sure. Gladwyn Jebb, the British Ambassador in France, worried the September meeting, where Eisenhower had not confronted de Gaulle, would repeat itself. Eisenhower would not wish to "spoil that atmosphere of affability and détente … and a certain congeniality" that crept into "meetings of the great." Jebb predicted Eisenhower would soften and simply wish that "NATO can, after all, get on somehow even if the French are only, as it were, sleeping members of the alliance."[151]

1.3.6 *Le Vérité du Monde*

Eisenhower surprised everyone in his meeting with Macmillan and de Gaulle at Rambouillet when he suggested "the establishment of a tripartite machinery to operate on a clandestine basis with the object of discussing questions of common interest to the three Governments."[152] A group, he said, would meet in one of the three capitals, preferably London, and consist of an official from "the political side, a military figure, and an economist." They would "ensure … some agreement between the three Governments on the facts of any given situation."[153] De Gaulle immediately replied that he was "quite satisfied" by this plan.

After the meeting, Macmillan and British officials scrambled. How did Eisenhower think such an organization could be kept clandestine? Were the Americans going to pass nuclear secrets on to Paris? What about nuclear strategy - would the French be brought in there, too, and if so, "when and how far?" The greatest concern of all in Whitehall was the Anglo-

---

[150] Roberts to Hoyer Millar, December 4, 1959. Christopher "Kit" Steel heard the same in Germany. See Steel to Hoyer Millar, December 8, 1959, FO 371/146406, NAUK.

[151] Jebb to Rumbold, December 2, 1959, FO 371/146310, NAUK.

[152] While this was a summit of four powers, some of the meetings were held without Adenauer.

[153] The American record is Record of Meeting, December 20, 1959. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 151. For the British record, see "Extract from Record of a Tripartite Meeting at Rambouillet at 10.15 a.m. on December 20, 1959." FO 371/152095, NAUK.

American defense talks, agreed to between Macmillan and Eisenhower and planned to begin in March.[154]

Macmillan's mind, however, had been turning on this issue for months. As Prime Minister, he had been focused on two problems in external affairs: First was the "cardinal point" of avoiding war. Second was his worry that the European Economic Community - the Six - would shut out Britain from European markets. "After all," he said, "we were a nation of shopkeepers, traders, industrialists, and so on. We live by trade."[155] But there was a conundrum. The American security guarantee, achieved through NATO, was essential to stabilizing the global balance of power and thus decreasing the likelihood of war. But NATO, with its informal Anglo-Saxon core, was so unacceptable to de Gaulle that France was likely to continue to reject British plans for European trade unless they agreed to a policy of tripartitism. Tripartitism, however, posed a threat not only to NATO's solidarity but also to close Anglo-American cooperation.

Everything changed with Eisenhower's suggestion. Macmillan could now have a discussion with de Gaulle that would have been "quite impossible without disloyalty to the Americans." He would make a trade. Britain would support de Gaulle on the political front, "encourage him to get the fruits of his famous memorandum, and so forth. " In return, Macmillan expected "the greatest practical accommodation that he can on the economic front."

Macmillan, unlike de Gaulle, had a good grasp of NATO's finer details and a sense of the organization's responsibilities and practices. But for him, too, they were totally irrelevant.

---

[154] Minute for Sir F. Hoyer-Millar, "Proposed Tripartite Discussions," from P. Dean. December 21, 1959. FO/371/152095, NAUK. See also Minute by Hoyer Millar, February 26, 1960, and initialed by Lloyd. Found on the back of buckslip for "The Prime Minister's visit to General de Gaulle," February 26, 1960, FO 371/152096, NAUK.

[155] To make matters worse, Germany would likely come to lead the EEC. Chronological Minute of 3 p.m. meeting, November 29, 1959. PREM 11/2679.

Consequently, NATO could be downgraded, if necessary, in favor of tripartitism. In the grand scheme of things, he asked, how important was it "whether a few French fighters are or are not to be put under the command of SACEUR"? Especially, he added, since fighters would be irrelevant in a global war anyway. "As we do not really believe there will be a global war, what is really important is British trade interests."[156]

Things started to go wrong immediately. A day after Eisenhower's comments, Herter let on that he was completely uninformed of Eisenhower's suggestions for clandestine machinery.[157] The Americans tried to back-pedal out of the President's commitment, even denying what Eisenhower said.[158] If the Americans were to forget what was said at Rambouillet, Macmillan thought, it would be "fatal" to both Franco-American and Anglo-French relations.[159]

Herter attempted such a retreat, suggesting a more informal series of "secret tripartite talks" than the "machinery" Eisenhower had mentioned. [160] De Gaulle - via Couve - was unwilling to accept what was clearly a weaker offer than Eisenhower's Rambouillet proposal, and Couve insisted that coordination must be pursued "within the spirit" of de Gaulle's 1958 memorandum. But even the mention of the 1958 memorandum was "especially dangerous" in Herter's view,

---

[156] Prime Minister's Personal Minute to the Foreign Secretary, M506/59, December 22, 1959. PREM 11/3002, NAUK.

[157] "Extract from Record of Conversation between the Secretary of State and Mr. Herter at the American Embassy in Paris on December 21, 1959." FO 371/152095, NAUK.

[158] Hoyer-Millar to Secretary of State, January 13, 1960. FO/371/152095, NAUK. De Zulueta to A.C.I. Samuel, February 1, 1960. TNA/FO/371/152095, NAUK.

[159] PM's Personal Minute to Foreign Secretary, M. 522/59, December 24, 1959, FO 371/152095, NAUK.

[160] Letter from Secretary of State Herter to Foreign Minister Couve de Murville. December 30, 1959. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 153. See also Minute by Hoyer-Millar to Dean, Rumbold, and Private Secretaries, January 11, 1960, FO 371/152095, NAUK.

and he wrote Couve again in an attempt to "sidestep this proposal" while meeting the "substance" of what the French had in mind.[161]

There was no movement toward establishing Eisenhower's clandestine tripartite machinery before de Gaulle, Eisenhower, and Macmillan met again in March 1960 to discuss the ever-present Berlin Crisis.[162] De Gaulle had strongly backed the American position and Macmillan, sensing Eisenhower's willingness to work with de Gaulle, urged Eisenhower "in other words to revive the Rambouillet proposals" when the three met.[163]

Eisenhower, again without any advice or warning to or from his officials - did just this.[164] He told de Gaulle and Macmillan that he "wondered if the cooperation within the working groups" - the ad hoc tripartite meetings - "was a close enough relationship between us." He felt, he said, "that we needed in some way to be closer together at the top governmental level." While there should be "no derogation" of NATO, perhaps the leaders, or their foreign ministers, might communicate more frequently. De Gaulle agreed - this, he said, was precisely what had brought about his memorandum in 1958. Then, it had been crises in Syria and Iraq and Jordan; today Berlin.

Eisenhower was not, he said, "proposing that the three powers set up a directorate to run the world." But the three had special responsibilities as a result "of the last war," and there were "things to be done." He suggested the foreign ministers be required to meet every 60 days, or even more often; also, the Heads of Government should meet more frequently. This clearly

---

[161] "Annex A: History of the Proposals for 'Tripartite Consultations'," Undated, FO 371/152098, NAUK.

[162] Paris No. 187 to FO, May 19, 1960. PREM 11/3005, NAUK.

[163] "Extract from the Prime Minister's Conversation with President Eisenhower at 4 p.m. on Wednesday, May 18[, 1960]." Undated, FO 371/152098, NAUK. See also the entry for May 21, 1960, *MD:PM*, 301

[164] Washington No. 1064 to FO, May 25, 1960, FO 371/152098, NAUK.

struck de Gaulle as the way forward. The American translator wrote that de Gaulle said "the world truth was here in this room."[165] That same day, de Gaulle told Eisenhower that it was essential to establish "something permanent" that would exist after Eisenhower, Macmillan and de Gaulle were gone." After all, de Gaulle said, "With us it is easy; you and I are tied together by history."[166]

1.3.7 The Worst of Both Worlds

Macmillan wrote a memorandum suggesting that the foreign ministers, who already met four times a year, meet more frequently and prepare agendas and papers in advance of their meetings.[167] De Gaulle, however, thought this left military and strategic matters unaccounted for. Going back to his 1958 memorandum, he suggested using the NATO Standing Group.[168] His suggestion brought the issue back to square one. Because the Standing Group was a NATO institution, and existed in support of NATO as a whole, Eisenhower was adamantly against using it as a forum for tripartitism.[169]

Eisenhower was right to suspect the other NATO allies were worried. The Council's frustrations bubbled over in early June when the Americans told the NAC that the tripartite

---

[165] In the margins, an updated translation reads: "i.e. the power to decide the course of affairs." "Memorandum of Conversation," May 18, 1960, 5-6:20 pm. May 18, 1960. Whitman File, INTL, box 44, folder: "Paris Meetings May 1960 (1)," DDEL. The British record is "Record of Meeting at the Elysée Palace at 5 o'clock on Wednesday, May 18," May 19, 1960. PREM 11/3005, NAUK.

[166] Memorandum of Conversation, May 18, 1960. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 173.

[167] The foreign ministers met annually once at the UN, twice at NATO, and once at SEATO. "Tri-Partite Consultations," Minutes, May 21-23, 1960, FO 371/152097; Message from Prime Minister Macmillan to President Eisenhower, May 25, 1960. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 177.

[168] "Tripartite Consultations," by Peter Ramsbotham, June 14, 1960, FO 371/152100, NAUK.

[169] Department of State TODEL 7 to Amembassy, Manila (Calhoun), June 15, 1960. WHO, OSS, INTL, box 5, folder: France - Vol. III of III (3) [May-July 1960], DDEL.

foreign ministers had met at SEATO and would "continue and develop such consultations" in the future.[170] As the Canadians pointed out, the allies had been searching for agreement on how to give NATO an "outside look." Now that the three "senior partners" were discussing global issues privately, they undercut NATO's efforts. How could consultation in NATO have any real effect, asked the Belgians, if the tripartite powers reached agreement before hand? Merely informing the NAC afterward "would be the end of the NATO Council." Perhaps, it was "better to be a neutral than an unconsulted ally." The Council meeting ended without Spaak's regular summation - he stalked out with an "ill-tempered shrug of the shoulders."[171]

Spaak thought the British and Americans were making a mistake by seeking to placate de Gaulle on an issue for which there was no room for agreement. Did anyone really think, he asked, that the "facade" of tripartites could make up for American refusal to help France develop MRBMs, while the Americans continued to aid the British? The Anglo-Saxons were taking positions that would not satisfy de Gaulle but still irritate all of the allies.

What bothered Spaak so much was both the appearance of tripartitism and its lack of results.[172] If tripartitism resulted in "a very clear lead to the rest of the Alliance and to the West in general," Spaak said, he would welcome it.[173] But this is not what was happening. Now, with

---

[170] "Text of Statement to N.A.T.O. Council on Tripartite Talks," attached to Outward Telegram No. 50 Saving from CRO to various posts, June 15, 1960, FO 371/152099, NAUK.

[171] "Tripartite Talks" North Atlantic Council, June 8, 1960. Prepared by UKDel, June 9, 1960, FO 371/152099, NAUK.

[172] UKDel No. 269 to FO, October 1, 1958, FO 371/137820, NAUK.

[173] Roberts to Tompkins, July 1, 1960, FO 371/152100, NAUK. Spaak expressed the same thoughts earlier, too. UKDel No. 191 Saving to FO, June 11, 1960, FO 371/152099, NAUK; Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in France, June 17, 1960, 11:06 am. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 183.

the other allies suspicious but no effective tripartite coordination actually occurring, NATO was getting "the worst of both worlds."[174]

It seemed to the Americans that there was no means to satisfy the French "without a real explosion in NATO."[175] Eisenhower felt stuck; he had "always refused to get into the tripartite thing but what we have now is wrecking NATO."[176] He wrote to Macmillan that "we must find some way to cope with this aspect of General de Gaulle's thinking." Eisenhower suggested offering to hold military talks with France in Washington. While he would not use the Standing Group, he could appoint a U.S. general to meet with the French and British Standing Group representatives.[177] He drafted a letter to de Gaulle offering "wide ranging" military talks "on all subjects of interest to you" and included a section suggesting the three discuss NATO issues.[178]

This proposal threw the British into frenzy. The Ministry of Defence and the British Chiefs of Staff were especially worried such talks would disrupt "our own special standing with [the] Americans on general defence policy."[179] After an emergency intercession by Selwyn Lloyd, Eisenhower re-drafted his letter to limit military talks to subjects "primarily outside the N.A.T.O. Area" and the official letter to de Gaulle did not contain the section about NATO and

---

[174] Roberts to Tompkins, July 1, 1960.

[175] Memorandum of Conversation, June 20, 1960. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 184.

[176] Memorandum of Telephone Conversation Between President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Herter. July 1, 1960, 2 pm. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 188. See also Telegram from the Embassy in France to the Department of State. June 24, 1960, 7 pm. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 186.

[177] Message from the Prime Minister to President Eisenhower, undated, FO 371/152100, NAUK.

[178] Draft shown to Caccia in Washington No. 1411 to FO, July 18, 1960, FO 371/152101, NAUK.

[179] Minute by P. E. Ramsbotham, June 21, 1960, FO 371/152100, NAUK.

tripartitism.[180] Eisenhower, having grudgingly consented to open the door to discuss NATO in a tripartite setting, took London's advice to leave it locked.

1.3.8 Events, Dear Boy, Events

Harold Macmillan once told a reporter that the greatest challenge to governments was "events, dear boy, events." Macmillan's quote may well be apocryphal, but it holds true as the explanation for what made negotiating tripartitism so difficult. In 1958, Lebanon, Jordan, and China had spurred de Gaulle's call for a tripartite directorate. In August 1960, with Eisenhower prepared to offer tripartite military talks, events in the Congo sent this tentative agreement backwards.

In early August 1960 the Congolese security force, the *Force Publique*, mutinied against their Belgian officers. In response, Belgium rushed paratrooper units to the Congo. There were ominous suggestions from Brussels that the mutiny was inspired by the Soviet Union and might be followed by Soviet military intervention. Congolese calls for Soviet military intervention seemed to mark the Congo as the next battlefield of the Cold War.

Belgian diplomats sought support from their NATO allies, especially the Americans, at the UN. If the Americans did not support Belgium, than the United States was unwittingly "injuring NATO" by giving up what the Belgians claimed to be a "NATO base" in the Congo.[181] While conscious of the risk of a "serious split among NATO powers" - especially between the US and those allies that retained colonial possessions - the US voted to support a

[180] Washington No. 1435 to FO, July 20, 1960, FO 371/152101, NAUK.

[181] Telegram from the Mission at the United Nations to the Department of State, July 14, 1960, 3 a.m. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, XIV, 123.

United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) calling on Belgian troops to leave the Congo.[182]

At NATO headquarters, the Belgian Representative, Andre de Staercke, and Spaak - for the Secretary General was Belgian, too - called private meetings and the NAC held emergency sessions to discuss the situation. [183] The Belgians had accepted the UNSCR, but with a specific interpretation: They agreed to withdraw the paratroop forces they had deployed in response to the mutiny. Yet they planned to leave their regular garrison in the country "to ensure the security of the white population" from massacre.[184]

It was essential, Spaak told the Council, for NATO to agree on the interpretation of the resolution and prepare to take a public stand together. In case the "Russians threatened to declare war on Belgium," there must also be "full and secret prior consultation."[185] But such consultation did not occur. Disgruntled Belgian politicians questioned "the value to Belgium of the N.A.T.O. Alliance" if the allies would not support Belgium in the Congo, and some warned Belgian might go neutral.[186] But the suggestion that the Congo was important to NATO evaporated quickly as neither the United States nor NATO military commanders considered the bases to have strategic value, and even de Staercke admitted "there was no

---

[182] Circular Telegram from the Department of State to Certain Diplomatic Missions. July 21, 1960, 8:47 p.m. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, XIV, 143.

[183] UKDel No. 180 to FO, July 14, 1960, FO 371/146696, NAUK.

[184] UKDel No. 182 to FO, July 14, 1960, FO 371/146696, NAUK.

[185] UKDel No. 252 Saving to FO, July 20, 1960, FO 371/146696, NAUK.

[186]Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Belgium. August 2, 1960, 7:14 p.m. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, XIV, 160n2; See de Staercke's explicit but highly confidential warning to the British in UKDel No. 194 to FO, July 27, 1960, FO 371/146696, NAUK.

question of the bases being N.A.T.O. bases."[187] By August 1960, however, the United States was making such a significant contribution to a United Nations peacekeeping force in the Congo that its actions won plaudits and heartfelt thanks from Belgian officials.[188]

Privately, both the NATO and American response upset Spaak.[189] At NATO, he had hoped to develop common policies for the globe, but the Congo was proof this had not occurred. Spaak's concerns about NATO's future were directly linked to his worries about the future of the UN. Like Dulles and Macmillan, he was worried about majority voting by, in his phrase, "the non-white nations."[190] NATO, he had hoped, would be the counterweight to this UN majority, but his efforts to bang heads together in Paris had been for naught. Spaak began thinking about resigning his post during the Congo crisis, and would officially do so in April 1961.

De Gaulle was even more upset than Spaak. The Congo crisis was precisely the sort of incident that de Gaulle believed tripartite coordination could have prevented. He bemoaned that the Three Powers had not "clearly indicated" to the new Congolese government that, while Belgian troops would leave, the Belgian technicians and financial aid necessary for the new state would stay. Such pressure, he thought, would have headed off the crisis. Instead, the Americans

---

[187] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Belgium. August 2, 1960; UKDel No. 189 to FO, July 25, 1960, FO 371/146696, NAUK.

[188] UKDel No. 205 to FO, August 5, 1960; Joseph J. World to Permanent Representatives, August 9, 1960, both in FO 371/146696, NAUK.

[189] For Spaak's public defense of NATO's inaction on the Congo, see Brussels Airgram G-69 to Secretary of State, September 21, 1960. DDRS, CK3100216156.

[190] USRO Airgram POLTO-G-252 to Secretary of State, August 17, 1960. DDRS, CK3100195230.

had chosen to "hide behind Mr. Hammarskjold" - the Secretary General of the United Nation - and "shirked their responsibility."[191]

De Gaulle had not yet written back to Eisenhower's letter suggesting military tripartite talks when the Congo crisis erupted. He now wrote to say that such talks appeared "too restrictive to bring about joint action." He repeated his call for global coordination and his opposition to NATO's integrated military structure, and called for an emergency meeting of the three heads of government in September.[192] De Gaulle wrote similarly to Macmillan, asking the British Prime Minister to urge Eisenhower to attend a tripartite meeting of the three. Pointedly, de Gaulle asked: "would not Bermuda be the most convenient place to meet, if that would suit you?"[193]

De Gaulle's reaction to the events in the Congo took Eisenhower and Herter by surprise. They thought, initially, de Gaulle had erred in his letter. Perhaps, rather than the Congo, de Gaulle was upset over Algeria? Neither Eisenhower nor Herter knew how they could have prevented Congolese troops revolting against their Belgian officers.[194]

Eisenhower considered de Gaulle's letter. He wondered whether it might be practical to divide up the world among the allies, with the French focusing on their Community, the British the Commonwealth, the Germans the Middle East and the United States "elsewhere." But, he

---

[191] Paris No. 341 to FO, December 1, 1960. PREM 11/3780. Paris No. 563 to Secretary of State, August 11, 1960. WHO, OSS, INTL, box 5, folder: France - Vol. III of III (4) [August 1-22, 1960], DDEL.

[192] Letter from President de Gaulle to President Eisenhower, August 9, 1960. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 191.

[193] Paris No. 307 to FO, August 9, 1960, FO 371/152102, NAUK.

[194] Memorandum of Telephone Conversation Between President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Herter, August 10, 1960, 12:15 p.m. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 192; Memorandum for Files, by DE. August 10, 1960. Whitman File, Whitman Diary, box 11, folder: [ACW] Diary August 1960 (2), DDEL.

decided, this "geographical division of effort," was not "a feasible scheme."[195] It was also not what Eisenhower believed NATO was or should become. The President was deeply worried by de Gaulle's most recent letter, for it revealed to him for the first time just how hostile de Gaulle was to NATO's integrated commands.[196] Yet how to deal with de Gaulle was anything but clear; the only solution was to "go slow" and talk to Macmillan.[197]

Macmillan though de Gaulle's call for a tripartite meeting a bad idea. His new Foreign Secretary, Lord Alexander Douglas-Home, thought it a "really dangerous thing."[198] With Eisenhower about to leave office, the Americans were not about to make a serious commitment to de Gaulle. Even worse, a tripartite meeting might "stimulate" Khrushchev to take drastic action on Berlin, and the British were desperate to avoid tensions that might lead to war. Most important, Macmillan and Home wanted to avoid saying no to de Gaulle. Adenauer had promised to help resolve the issues of the Sixes and Sevens and an economic solution remained the British priority. The British hoped that the Americans would turn down the meeting. London would get its preference and not be blamed for it. Macmillan urged the Americans to "play it soft" and not reject de Gaulle outright.[199]

---

[195] Memorandum of Conference with President Eisenhower, August 16, 1960. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 1, 264.

[196] FO No. 3610 Saving to Washington, August 19, 1960, FO 371/152103, NAUK.

[197] Memorandum of Telephone Conversation Between President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Herter, August 10, 1960, 12:15 p.m. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 192.

[198] Shuckburgh to Rumbold (Paris), August 12, 1960, FO 371/152102, NAUK. Lord Home replaced Selwyn Lloyd in July 1960.

[199] Memorandum of Conversation, August 17, 1960. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 195. Macmillan expressed British sympathy for the De Gaulle's position and argued that rejecting a September meeting "would undoubtedly be a great blow" to de Gaulle. "Note of the Prime Minister's Suggestions to Mr. Merchant about President de Gaulle's Message of August 9 to President Eisenhower," August 19, 1960. DDRS, CK3100501674.

Eisenhower offered de Gaulle a meeting of the foreign ministers instead. For the first time, Eisenhower directly took on de Gaulle's arguments. Whereas de Gaulle intimated that NATO was a relic of the past and no longer useful, Eisenhower argued NATO was an entirely new and necessary concept. The "revolution in military strategy" meant that military integration was a must. De Gaulle's suggestions for tripartite cooperation and his rejection of integration in NATO seemed "mutually incompatible." Most important, NATO allowed for an American commitment to Europe that had been "unthinkable" only two decades earlier. But if the American people thought Europe did not want this commitment, he warned, "the historic shift in American policy could again reverse itself."[200]

At a press conference five days after Eisenhower's letter, de Gaulle spelled out his views on a new, confederal structure for Europe that would replace the postwar efforts to integrate the European economy.[201] The Americans were furious with de Gaulle for so blatantly rejecting the current system of European and Atlantic integration and planned to speak out against the idea in Council.[202] But the British, on Macmillan's explicit instructions, kept quiet.[203]

In September 1960, the tripartite foreign ministers met at the UN General Assembly with an agenda set ahead of time. The meeting was not a success. The three made plans to meet again at the December 1960 Ministerial but the tripartite machinery, never an effective organ, ground to a halt with the end of the Eisenhower administration.

---

[200] Letter from President Eisenhower to President de Gaulle, August 30, 1960. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2, 197.

[201] Jeffrey Glen Giauque, *Grand Designs and Visions of Unity: The Atlantic Powers and the Reorganization of Western Europe, 1955-1963* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 126-57.

[202] UKDel No. 217 to Washington, September 12, 1960, FO 371/154576, NAUK. I have found no record that Perkins did, in the end, speak in Council.

[203] "Revised draft telegram to Sir Frank Roberts," "Drafted by P.M.", no date. [Sent as FO No. 1003 to UKDel, September 13, 1960.] FO 371/154576, NAUK.

*****

Spaak described the era of his Secretary Generalship as one where the "great men" used state visits and personal relationships to push their own policy while not seeking to "evolve a common approach in the common interest."[204] There was no commonality of thinking between key allies on the very purpose or shape of NATO beyond the need for an American commitment to the security of Western Europe. De Gaulle stuck to his singular policy of a tripartite directorate based on agreement and coordination of both military and foreign policies between Britain, France and the United States at the highest level of government. This idea was nearly incomprehensible to Eisenhower, whose overriding goal was to keep the allies - large and small - united.[205] Eisenhower was willing to meet de Gaulle "quite far," as he put it, on matters of consultation. But Eisenhower's experience as Supreme Commander in the Second World War and the early Cold War had convinced him that an integrated command structure and the need for close coordination of naval, air and military sectors was essential to defense. He never showed any interest in plans to change NATO to meet the changing world situation. In his view, any ancillary role for NATO would only weaken the military cooperation at its core. For Macmillan, NATO's military structure was largely irrelevant as long as there remained some means of deterring the Soviet Union. He would have welcomed an opportunity to end Britain's continental commitment in his effort to

---

[204] USRO Airgram POLTO-G-252 to Secretary of State, August 17, 1960. DDRS, CK3100195230. For British and French examples supporting Spaak's complaint, see Feske, "The Road to Suez."

[205] Incomprehensible because it was not until August 1960 that Eisenhower thought he finally knew what de Gaulle wanted: "a triumvirate that makes decisions and agrees on action in political bodies like the U.N." Memorandum of Telephone Conversation Between President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Herter. August 10, 1960, 12:15 p.m. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 2 192.

keep money in the government coffers. Nonetheless, he was constrained by a need to keep the Anglo-American relationship strong while seeking not to alienate de Gaulle.

The close relationship and history between the great men did not serve as a Galilean lever for shifting NATO onto a new orbit. There were simply too many costs and no benefit for Washington in de Gaulle's plan, which would undermine American relations with both its NATO allies and the developed world. De Gaulle's offer, and Macmillan's response, are consistent with Macmillan's pattern of viewing NATO as an instrument for achieving other policies, in this case access to European markets. Still, Eisenhower's unfulfilled promises, Macmillan's hopes, and de Gaulle's plans were only the beginning of efforts to determine who, precisely, led the NATO alliance. The battle would be joined again in the 1960s. Only in an indirect manner did de Gaulle's tripartite plans provide the solution to the problem of NATO's relationship with the world at large.

CHAPTER 4: THE WORLD BY COMMITTEE

NATO is not popular in Africa, where it is normally regarded as an "imperialist" organization. The African countries are determined to avoid getting mixed up in the cold war; they do not at all want NATO to become involved in their affairs."

- British Brief for NATO Ministerial Meeting, 1960[1]

1.4.1 Countering Counter-Measures

Previous chapters have demonstrated the difficulty NATO allies had in coming to agreement on whether and how NATO should take responsibility for areas outside of the North Atlantic region. The range of interests, as viewed by different governments and different parts of the allied governments, prevented any common vision of NATO's purpose from coalescing. Efforts to coordinate NATO policy by establishing a bilateral or trilateral relationship had been met with spectacular resistance: first, de Gaulle's resistance to the Anglo-American relationship, and then outright antagonism to de Gaulle's suggestion for a tripartite directorate. Historians have argued that all of these efforts to involve NATO in issues outside the North Atlantic were so viscerally opposed by the smaller, non-imperial NATO states, that the issues was dropped. The Norwegian scholar Frode Liland has memorably termed this decision: "Keeping NATO out of trouble."[2] He argues that the allies kept out of Africa and the Middle East so as to avoid raising disputes at NATO and fracturing the alliance. In fact, as we have seen in the Suez Crisis, the opposite was true. The United States wished to keep NATO from making trouble. This position only grew more pronounced as Washington and London worried that de Gaulle was seeking to establish an organized NATO, or at least Western, primacy over the rest of the globe. But in this same period, during Eisenhower's second term, NATO's organization was adapted and used to consider NATO

---

[1] "NATO Ministerial Meeting. Paris, December 16 - 18, 1960. Brief No. 3. Communist Penetration in Africa." Undated, FO 371/146510, NAUK.

[2] Frode Liland, "Keeping NATO out of Trouble: NATO's Non-Policy on out-of-Area Issues During the Cold War," *Forsvarsstudier*, no. 4 (1999).

policy toward the rest of the world. The final results, however, were anything but an active policy. The solution was an exercise in bureaucratic wrangling and banality, far away from the summitry, parades, and pajama parties of the heads of state. It was through the formation of that workhorse of bureaucracy, the committee, that NATO incrementally arrived at a generally agreed policy towards the outside world. The NATO allies and international civil servants, as they developed this policy, had to ask themselves: What is NATO, and what is it for? That this policy was largely a negative policy, lacking in action, made it no less effective.

The speeches of Soviet leaders at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party in 1956 brought the challenge into focus for the NATO allies. At the Congress, Party officials had discussed the Soviet Union's growing relations with the "zone of peace" - that is the non-NATO countries of the world. A Working Group of allied diplomats that met in Paris to discuss the speeches concluded that Moscow had "launched a new offensive against Western influence in Asia, the Middle East, Africa and even South America." While the "weapons are economic," they reported, "the danger to the West is principally political."[3]

After Stalin's death, the Soviets had sent trade missions to Western Europe, Iceland, and Argentina. But what had changed in the late 1950s was the skill and success with which the Soviets were signing trade agreements and providing credit in areas where Western influence was threatened by decolonization, independence, or nationalist movements. To NATO officials, the USSR was practicing "a well-thought-out ideological and political campaign."[4]

---

[3] "Analysis of Trends of Soviet Policy," Report by the Chairman of the Working Group, March 8, 1956, C-M(56)26, NATO.

[4] "Soviet Economic Penetration," Note by the Secretary General and Vice-Chairman of the Council, April 24, 1956, C-M(56)52, NATO. For a broad examination of the Soviet motivations and practices, see Westad, *The Global Cold War*.

Soviet relations with Burma offer a good example of this Soviet policy in action: In 1956, the Soviet Union built a cultural center and sports stadium in Rangoon as a "gift" to the people of Burma. The Burmese government returned the favor with a "gift" of rice. This was a "brilliant idea," according to a British Foreign Office hand: The Russians needed the rice and the stadium was "merely the currency in which the Russians choose to pay for the rice." This style of exchange avoided stirring resentment in smaller countries that resulted from aid that seemed patronizing. It left a "most favourable impression" on the Burmese, who had the "flattering feeling of being on gift-offering terms."[5]

Similarly, in India the Soviets were achieving success providing advisers and support to a range of important sectors: steel, oil, mining, chemical manufacturing, engineering, and shipping. The Soviets could undercut Western exporters on items like locomotives, cement, and steel. The key to the Soviet success, reported the British High Commissioner in New Delhi, was that they were offering assistance while carefully avoiding the suggestion they were providing "aid" to India.[6] By 1956 the Soviets had provided such "stringless aid" to India, Burma, and Afghanistan and were making offers to Pakistan. The NATO allies worried that the Soviet experience in these countries would be "vigorously applied" to the Middle East and Africa.[7]

The NATO allies understood Soviet policy was motivated by a mix of domestic economic need and foreign design, but it was dangerous no matters its motivations.[8] Lord Ismay saw five

---

[5] Note by F. A. Warner, April 5, 1956, FO 371/120804, NAUK.

[6] W. A. W. Clark, Acting High Commissioner, New Delhi, to Sir Saville Garner (CRO), May 9, 1956, FO 371/120805, NAUK.

[7] "Trends of Soviet Policy," Trends of Soviet Policy Report by the Working Group, April 20, 1956, C-M(56)49, NATO.

[8] "The Economic Penetration of the Soviet Countries in the Middle East and South-East Asia," March 12, 1956, C-M(56)29, NATO; W. I. Combs to R. W. Bailey. British Embassy, Washington. September 4, 1956, FO 371/120808, NAUK.

problems inherent in the Soviet economic offensive: First, it might allow Communist penetration of left-wing political factions in underdeveloped countries. Second, it "jeopardized the effectiveness of the system of alliances" including NATO, SEATO, and the Baghdad Pact. While there was no true "system" between the pacts, Ismay feared the other alliances might be pulled apart by Soviet offers. Third, if Soviet military experts and advisers were to accompany the aid, they might develop Communist cells in the recipient countries' militaries. Fourth, Soviet-built engineering schools in such places as Bombay and Rangoon might elevate Soviet-trained engineers rising to prominent industrial posts in their home countries where they would pose a "future threat to the markets of the West" by placing orders for capital goods in the Soviet bloc. Fifth, and finally, the economies of the underdeveloped countries risked becoming "so dependent" on Soviets largesse and patterns of exchange so as to "endanger their sovereignty."[9]

British and American officials agreed that the Soviet economic offensive did not aim at "penetration in the old fashioned sense" of bringing Communist parties to power. But it was intended, as one Foreign Office official explained, "to shake and if possible destroy the positions of the Western powers in the Middle East, Asia, and Africa."[10] This was a long-term plan, and a long-term problem.

Soviet aid and trade with the "zone of peace" was in the aggregate but a fraction of the exchange between the West and the developing world. But the Soviet Union, not operating on market principles, made offers without expecting significant economic return and could target their investments for political gain. This differed from the opportunities for influence open to the NATO powers, whose economic interaction with the non-aligned states was generally undertaken

[9] "Soviet Economic Penetration," Note by the Secretary General and Vice-Chairman of the Council, April 24, 1956, C-M(56)52, NATO.

by private firms seeking to sell products or offer loans to make a profit. The problem was two-fold: the Soviets were playing by different rules, and they seemed to have enough resources to rapidly expand their "gift"-giving.[11]

What were the NATO allies to do about the Soviet economic offensive, let alone the tectonic shift in the states, politics, and emerging sovereignty of much of the world? Ideas were plentiful but solutions - and agreement - rare. Some former imperial powerhouses, like Britain and France, sought to absorb their former colonies into voluntary associations. The exemplars were the British Commonwealth and the French Community of Francophone States. Britain was trying to strategize for the long-term, and the Foreign Office was at work on a major policy document "Africa: The Next 10 Years."[12] The United States, too, was trying to determine how best it could use economic power both to assist new countries and fend off Soviet advances. Other states, like Belgium, and especially Portugal, were not eager to accept that the end of empire was approaching.

The dual but related issues of the Cold War rivalry and decolonization made for a conundrum. The Western powers wished to provide aid both to encourage stability and also to prevent Soviet influence in the developing countries. But officials worried that simply preventing a country from receiving Soviet aid, especially if the West could not provide similar aid, would

---

[10] "State Department's Paper on Soviet Economic Penetration," Minute by R. A. Hibbert, August 13, 1956, FO 371/120809, NAUK.

[11] "The Economic Penetration of the Soviet Countries in the Middle East and South-East Asia," Note by the French Delegation, March 12, 1956, C-M(56)29, NATO.

[12] "Africa: The Next Ten Years," Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, July 2, 1959, CAB/129/98, NAUK.

be counterproductive. “There is no point in shooting Santa Claus,” as one American official put it.[13] It was unclear where the Cold War began and decolonization ended.

International solutions rather than national development aid held some appeal to various NATO allies. The British schemed for a semi-formal international organization of “Blood Donor” states that would infuse developing states with aid. The French were “bursting with ideas on” how NATO might provide a solution. At the 1956 meeting of NATO foreign ministers, Christian Pineau presented a French plan to establish a joint NATO-UN organization to coordinate economic aid to under-developed countries.[14] The allies saw this Pineau Plan for what it was: a new means of distributing aid without a commensurate increase in the quantity of aid to be given. The other delegations wanted to know: “where was the money coming from?” The Council agreed to hold talks on the Pineau Plan in a specially formed “Committee of Technical Advisers.” But under a barrage of pointed questions from the Americans, Belgians, British, Canadians, Danes, Dutch, and Germans, the French delegate “sadly suggested” France would consider other ideas.[15]

Italy also pushed for NATO economic coordination to combat the Soviets.[16] When the Egyptian government put out a bid for contracts to build a dockyard, firms from several NATO countries expressed interest. But Western firms all found it difficult to compete with the Soviet proposal to build the dockyard in exchange for cotton. The Italians suggested that only a single Western firm should bid on the contract, and that firm would be backed by NATO and subsidized

---

[13] Washington No. 1018 to FO, April 23, 1956, FO 371/120804, NAUK.

[14] P. E. Ramsbotham to R. S. Swann, May 11, 1956, FO 371/120805, NAUK.

[15] UKDel No. 569 to FO, July 24, 1956, FO 371/120808, NAUK.

[16] Harold Caccia to J. E. Coulson, April 18, 1956, FO 371/120804, NAUK.

to make the project profitable.[17] When the Italian delegate hinted an Italian firm could complete the project, talk of NATO subsidies ended abruptly.[18]

Belgian plans for NATO and aid were remarkable for what they revealed about the obvious decline in concern about the Soviet military threat to Europe. The Belgians convinced NATO's Deputy Secretary General for Economic Affairs François-Didier Gregh to draft a plan requiring each NATO country to reduce their defense budgets by two percent and donate the saving to a "special fund" to invest in underdeveloped countries.[19] This was especially unwelcome to the Americans, who were expecting the European countries to increase their defense budgets and reduce the financial pressure from American deployments to NATO.

German officials, too, called for NATO to tackle the Soviet economic offensive. Ludwig Erhard, the Economics Minister in Konrad Adenauer's government, suggested that NATO serve as a "clearing house" or "intelligence bureau" to exchange information among allies about Soviet initiatives. Erhard thought this information could then be used to "work out joint plans for countering" the Soviet offensive. Adenauer himself called on the allies to develop "countermeasures" to the Soviet offensive, "preferably in NATO." [20]

---

[17] UKDel No. 458 Saving to FO, June 19, 1956, FO 371/120807, NAUK.

[18] FO No. 2878 Saving to Washington, June 27, 1956, FO 371/120807, NAUK; UKDel No. 573 to FO, July 25, 1956, FO 371/120808, NAUK.

[19] "Note on 'Belgian Plan' to create a NATO special fund to counter the Soviet Economic drive in under-developed countries," by the Economic Research Department, May 1, 1956, FO 371/120805, NAUK.

[20] "N.A.T.O.," Minute by Lord Hood, March 22, 1956, FO 371/124801, NAUK; "Assistance to Underdeveloped Areas and Plans for Countering the Soviet Economic Offensive," Annex 7 to "Visit of the Federal German Foreign minister. April 30 to May 3," undated, FO 371/120804, NAUK. Von Brentano, sensing some of the allies' unease with "countermeasures" focused on using NATO to "discuss problems and actions" rather than launch a counter offensive. FO Draft Telegram to UKDel, June 1, 1956, FO 371/120806, NAUK.

British and American officials did not like the idea of using NATO to coordinate economic aid. John Foster Dulles had, throughout his tenure as Secretary of State, fought off European efforts to use NATO to coordinate any economic activity whatsoever, always preferring that conversations about economic and financial matters occur in the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC).[21] The Three Wise Men, too, had decided that NATO should "not do much in the economic sphere."[22] The Americans wondered what the impecunious allies like Portugal, Italy and Greece contribute to NATO aid besides their "views?"[23]

British officials were moderately more receptive. They judged it desirable to discuss the Soviet offensive in NATO, but that should be the limit of the discussion. It would simply be too difficult to coordinate aid from such a large group. Worse, "such activities would certainly become known and would arouse intense suspicion and opposition in any of the under-developed countries."[24] NATO, the British argued, "remains primarily a military alliance," and this is how the "uncommitted countries" saw it. Thus NATO involvement in countering Soviet aid, or providing aid on its own terms, posed a "grave risk" and would "fatally prejudice" Western efforts to keep uncommitted states from committing to the Soviet bloc.[25]

The German suggestions contained two options for NATO: On one hand, there could be increased sharing of "intelligence and information about Soviet intentions." On the other, the Allies could attempt "cooperation and counter-measures by the West." London and Washington

---

[21] Milloy, *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, 35-66.

[22] Quoted in A. W. France to Sir Leslie Rowan, June 13, 1956, FO 371/120806, NAUK.

[23] J. E. Coulson to D. A. H. Wright, April 5, 1956, FO 371/120804, NAUK.

[24] Harold Caccia to J. E. Coulson, April 18, 1956, FO 371/120804, NAUK.

[25] FO No. 2333 to Washington, April 29, 1956, FO 371/120804, NAUK.

preferred the first option.[26] But in spring 1956 Dulles began to recommend publicly that NATO should develop its non-military side.[27] In May 1956, after some prodding by the United States, NATO's International Secretariat began to draft terms of reference for studies of the Soviet economic offensive.[28]

The decision to proceed with a NATO study of the Soviet economic offensive was a very small step. It involved a number of bureaucratic hurdles, including deciding on just how and what to survey. And with NATO's Economic Division understaffed, it fell to the NATO states themselves to send analyses to NATO where the Economic Division collated national reports.[29] Since the NATO studies would be distributed to all states, and might influence national policies, allies, especially Washington and London, saw an incentive to provide information "covering the sort of things we want to see in the regular survey."[30] The Americans and British, then, who had been lukewarm about NATO's involvement in any economic coordination or even analysis, thought it in their best interest to provide a good quantity of quality information to NATO and to ensure that the analysis prepared by the Economic Division was accurate.

Just as the decision to study the economic offensive was taken, the Suez Crisis erupted. The crisis interrupted deliberations over whether and how to add to NATO's responsibility for economic affairs. But the crisis, brought on by issues of both Western and Soviet aid, and

---

[26] Washington No. 1019 to FO, April 23, 1956, FO 371/120804, NAUK.

[27] See earlier section on Dulles's advocacy of non-military coordination. Also Washington No. 1055 to FO, April 26, 1956, FO 371/120804, NAUK.

[28] "Soviet Economic Penetration," J. Chadwick to J.C.W. Bushell, May 16, 1956, FO 371/120805, NAUK.

[29] UKDel No. 452 Saving to FO, June 19, 1956, FO 371/120807, NAUK. Different States used different parts of their governments. Britain, for example, decided to send reporting from its Economic Intelligence Group.

[30] G. Raymond Ball (UKDel) to J.G.P. Spicer (Treasury), June 15, 1956, FO 371/120805, NAUK.

followed by economic disruptions for the alliance, pointed to the need for improved coordination.[31]

1.4.2 Fruitful Strategies

Any specific plan for "coordination" was a remote possibility in late 1956 and early 1957. In August 1957, however, the Secretary General issued the first of what would become a semi-annual "Report by the Committee on Soviet Economic Policy." The first paper, like all the following ones, was an enormous document containing economic indices for the uncommitted countries, and trade and investment figures from both the Soviet bloc and NATO countries.

The report's introduction was shrill and reflected the worries of NATO allies: "The prime aim of communist foreign economic policy is undoubtedly the weakening of Western influence in strategic areas of the world, by attempting to gain sympathy for the communist cause from nations that are pro-Western or neutral in their foreign policies." Overall, the report showed that the total trade volume between the Soviet bloc and the developing world was small but carefully "designed so as to have the maximum political effect."[32]

Nonetheless, beyond the introduction, the document was almost entirely "factual" - in NATO parlance this meant it did not include any interpretation let alone recommendations for policy. NATO's economic responsibility was still one of informing members rather than coordinating policy.

But two crises in 1957 offer examples of how the NATO machine could be used to coordinate allied efforts and fend off Soviet advances. In September 1957, Egypt and Syria placed an embargo on imports of apples from Lebanon. The American Permanent Representative

---

[31] For example, see D. A. V. Allen to W. I. Combs, July 31, 1956, FO 371/120809, NAUK.

[32] "The Economic Offensive of the Sino-Soviet Bloc." Note by the Secretary General and Chairman of the Council, April 21, 1957, C-M(57)116, NATO.

brought the issue before his colleagues in the North Atlantic Council, arguing that support for Lebanon would be "the price of [Lebanese] support of the West."[33] While the export of apples represented a relatively small element in the Lebanese economy, the Americans told the allies that effected Lebanese farmers "consisted mainly of Christians who represented a pro-western element in the population of the country."[34]

The Council agreed that the Committee of Political Advisers should discuss the issue. The Committee, known as "POLADS," had been created after the Committee of Three's Report, along with a Committee of Economic Advisors (ECONADS). POLADS met biweekly, and the delegation's Deputy Permanent Representative usually represented each ally. During the Lebanese fruit crisis, the American deputy told POLADS that the United States would buy Lebanese apples for U.S. troops stationed in Europe as part of NATO. France, owing to its traditional ties to Lebanon, doubled its apple purchase.[35] The Americans urged their colleagues to do more, and Evelyn Shuckburgh, who as Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs chaired the Committee, formally requested the delegations to "draw the attention of their governments to the matter."[36]

The difficulty preventing other allies from contributing to a solution was the price of apples. The NATO allies, especially the Federal Republic, did not want to pay above-market price for apples, no matter the geostrategic implications. After some wrangling, the Germans agreed to

---

[33] September 16, 1957. "Summary record of a meeting of the Council held at the Palais de Chaillot, Paris, XVIe. On Thursday, 12th September, 1957 at 10.15 a.m." September 16, 1957, NATO.

[34] "Action Sheet," CPA, September 13, 1957, AC/119-R/23, NATO. In a corrigendum, the Christianity of the farmers was deleted.

[35] "Action Sheet," CPA, September 13, 1957.

import 30,000 tons of apples and 25,000 tons of pears at normal market price.[37] This enormous quantity consumed "virtually the whole surplus of fruit" in Lebanon and solved the problem outright.[38]

In late 1957 the NATO allies faced a similar predicament in in Sudan. Global cotton market suffered a "general weakness" that year, and a poor decision by Sudan's cotton marketing board to set auction reserve prices too high left Sudan with an enormous surplus.[39] Britain, with its long relationship to Sudan, brought the issue to Council seeking to coordinate an allied response.

Like Lebanese fruit, Sudanese cotton seems an odd candidate for shaping NATO policy. Nonetheless, 1957 had been the year of the Syrian crisis. The allies worried Sudan might turn to the Soviet Union or its allies to sell its surplus, creating an economic dependency and avenue for technicians and advisers - who, it was expected, would be agents of influence, propagandists, and spies - into Africa. In 1955, after all, Syrian trade with the Soviet bloc was only 3%; by 1956 it was 50%. The next year Syria was on the verge, or so some allies thought, of becoming a Soviet satellite.[40] The NATO allies believed this recipe could be repeated in Sudan and elsewhere.

POLADS discussed Sudan and agreed it presented "a case where NATO-wide action might produce very valuable results."[41] The NATO allies kept each other apprised of their policies: the

---

[36] "Summary Record of a meeting of the Council held at the Palais de Chaillot, Paris, XVIe, on Wednesday, 18th September, 1957, at 10.15 a.m.," September 20, 1957, C-R(57)60, NATO.

[37] "Action Sheet," CPA, September 25, 1957, AC/119-R/25, NATO.

[38] "Summary Record of a meeting of the Council held at the Palais de Chillot, Paris, XVIe. on Wednesday, 25th September, 1957," September 28, 1957, C-R(57)61, NATO.

[39] "The Sudan," Report by the Committee of Economic Advisers [hereafter CEA], December 17, 1958, C-M(58)168, NATO.

[40] "Summary Record of a meeting of the Council held at the Palais de Chaillot, Paris, XVIe, on Wednesday, 18th September, 1957, at 10.15 a.m.," September 20, 1957.

[41] "Action Sheet," CPA, November 5, 1957, AC/119-R/31, NATO.

British convinced the Sudanese to lower their cotton prices, while Germany and Italy bought large numbers of bales. France bought some cotton while also extending credit to Sudan.[42] These actions were taken, as the French said explicitly, because "of the appeal made in NATO."[43] The Americans did not buy any cotton, however, claiming that Sudanese marketing was so poor that it would take an unwanted amount of "forceful salesmanship" to convince American cotton importers to switch from Egyptian cotton. By December 1957 the Sudanese cotton surplus for the year had, for the most part, been sold.[44] Soviet efforts to establish a trade deal with Sudan, begun during the crisis, fell through.[45]

Bailing out cotton producers in 1957 did not prevent a similar situation occurring in 1958. In November the German delegation warned its allies that Sudanese internal and external policy "has now become insecure and lacks determination." Sudan was awash in Egyptian and Soviet propaganda, and the Germans warned that wage strikes had taken an ominous "pro-Communist flavour" when strikers in Omdurman marched wearing medallions emblazoned with images of Lenin.[46]

Again, much of the turmoil in Sudan revolved around the need to sell off cotton. This time, the surplus was caused by an Egyptian ban on Sudanese imports. The Sudanese government, explained the Germans, was under so much public pressure that it "can no longer continue its

---

[42] "Action Sheet," CPA, January 14, 1958, AC/119-R(58)2, NATO.

[43] "Action Sheet," CPA, January 8, 1958, AC/119-R(58)1, NATO.

[44] "Action Sheet," CPA, January 14, 1958.

[45] "Economic Offensive of the Sino-Soviet Bloc," Report by the CEA, June 16, 1958, C-M(58)97, NATO.

[46] "Aggravation of the Political Situation in the Sudan. Note by the German Delegation," CPA, November 13, 1958, AC/119-WP(58)84, NATO.

former policy of rejecting barter deals with countries of the Soviet bloc."[47] The Committee sent a report to the North Atlantic Council, arguing that "it would be contrary to Western interests" for the Sudan to be forced to seek assistance from the Soviet bloc.[48] The Council recommended that allied governments consider extending credit to Sudan and promoting the purchase of Sudanese cotton.[49] Again, NATO allies purchased large quantities of cotton. The Sudanese government, nevertheless, also sold cotton to China and Hungary and made trade deals with Czechoslovakia, Poland, and the USSR. [50] To the NATO allies' relief, the trade deal with the USSR was only for exchange of products, not the spare parts or services that might have allowed a flow of Soviet bloc technicians into Sudan.[51] The NATO allies congratulated themselves on preventing the "Communist bloc from increasing significantly its influence" in Sudan.[52]

Both the Lebanese and Sudanese purchases were minor successes. But they revealed deeper problems. First, NATO states could not quickly or easily align their economic interests each time an economic crisis developed abroad. It had been simple for the Americans to buy apples, but buying cotton was much more complicated. Shuckburgh, who had managed the whole affair in POLADS, thought the experience only "served to emphasis the severe limitation on any action which the Committee was able to take on such problems in the present circumstances." Spaak was disheartened, too. The crises revealed that despite the creation of the POLADS and ECONADS, there was "no body within NATO which was competent to examine such problems

---

[47] Ibid.

[48] "Action Sheet," CPA, November 27, 1958, AC/119-R(58)34, NATO.

[49] "Measures to Assist the Sudan," Second Report by the CEA, May 28, 1959, C-M(59)56, NATO.

[50] Annex A to "Measures to Assist the Sudan," Second Report by the CEA, May 28, 1959, C-M(59)56, NATO.

[51] "Measures to Assist the Sudan," May 28, 1959.

fully and to see whether a common policy could be adopted." The "ad hoc treatment" given Lebanon and Sudan did not, going forward, "provide any real solution."[53]

The Lebanese and Sudanese purchases were emblematic of the larger questions facing NATO. Should NATO states so organize themselves, down to the level of the economics and politics of imports, so they could work together seamlessly and quickly on any global issue? Were NATO states expected to be, or to become, more alike? The issue of economic coordination and the relationship between domestic economic organizations would arise again in the Berlin Crisis of 1961-1962, but there remained tension between the independence and sovereignty of the allies and the perceived need for seamless cooperation, even integration, of policy. Spaak and Shuckburgh's complaints are revealing, too, in that they rued NATO's purchasing efforts, while successful, as indicative of the difficulty and possible failure of future cooperation. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, the two men with high positions in the organization wished for NATO to develop a permanent capacity for cooperation, even though events had shown that ad hoc efforts worked when necessary. Indeed, they would set the precedent for NATO acting on global affairs in the post-Cold War world.

1.4.3 A Great List of Potential Mistakes

With the major crises of Suez in 1956, Syria in 1957, and Lebanon and Jordan in 1958, the Middle East attracted and held the attention of NATO. But for a number of reasons, most related to regional politics, the Soviet threat to the region tapered off by the end of the decade. Shuckburgh and his staff of Political Affairs officers at NATO could report in 1959 that the

---

[52] Ibid.

[53] "Summary Record of a meeting of the Council held at the Palais de Chaillot, Paris, XVIe, on Wednesday, 18th September, 1957, at 10.15 a.m.," September 20, 1957, C-R(57)60, NATO.

Soviet Union "had not succeeded in making new inroads in the Arab world; on the contrary, she seems to have suffered certain setbacks." Both Iraq and Egypt, states whose outlook had worried the allies, sought to better relations with the West in order to balance against Soviet encroachment.[54] The region remained vital to NATO countries. But the POLADS agreed that the best the West could hope for in the area was "little more than an attitude of balanced neutralism." Trying to draw Arab countries into the "western camp" would be "self-defeating."[55] In the 1960s, NATO established a Committee to study the Middle East, but the allies agreed in 1959 that rather than attempt to coordinate NATO policy toward the region, they should leave the Arab countries alone. By 1960, POLADS could describe "Western policy" as having "wisely refrained from any new attempts, which would be fruitless, to press unwilling Arab countries into alliance with the West but continues to support the independence of all countries in the area.[56]

This does not mean NATO was finished worrying about the wider world. The "immediate area of conflict between Soviet and Western interests," according to POLADS, was Africa.[57] But the Lebanese and Sudanese crises of 1957 had, for Shuckburgh and Spaak, revealed the limits of NATO coordination on economic issues. This sense of NATO's inability to coordinate policy was only amplified by the American and British decision not to inform the Council of the 1958 Lebanese and Jordanian interventions until after the fact. These incidents had spurred de Gaulle to issue his famous September 1958 memorandum.

---

[54] "Discussion of the Council on the Middle East," Note by the Chairman, CPA. July 3, 1959, AC/119-WP(59)82, NATO.

[55] "The Situation in the Middle East," Report by the CPA, November 23, 1959, C-M(59)95, NATO.

[56] "The Situation in the Middle East," Report by the CPA, December 5, 1960, C-M(60)113, NATO.

[57] Ibid.

The Germans did not like de Gaulle's idea, which would leave the Federal Republic on the outside of the tripartite directorate, but did want NATO to coordinate policy abroad. Partially in response to de Gaulle's memorandum, partly in response to their frustration over the Lebanese and Jordanian interventions, and partly because they worried about Africa's emergence as an important battle ground of the Cold War, Bonn drafted a plan for NATO states to coordinate their policies in Africa and passed it on to the British for comment.[58]

Africa's "natural Western orientation," the Germans argued, could not be taken for granted. With its rich natural resources, Africa was too important to European economies to be lost to the Soviet Union. Furthermore, its strategic location could not be ceded without requiring a change to Europe's defense.[59] While several Western powers retained influence in Africa, either by maintaining imperial territories or keeping close connections to former colonies, Western influence was a "wasting asset." Further, direct control of events, so long the prerogative of the metropole, was becoming impossible.[60] It was time, according to the Germans, for NATO to study Soviet infiltration of Africa and to decide what action to take.[61]

The first three quarters of the German paper described the situation in Africa. Other delegations widely considered the analysis to be an excellent summary of the state of affairs. But the fourth part of the document, entitled "Possibilities for Counter Measures" went much further.

---

[58] The informal note was passed to the British delegation, which in turn sent it to various Foreign Office posts. Initial reactions to the informal paper are in FO 371/131198, NAUK. The Germans distributed the document officially as "The Situation in Africa with Special Reference to Countermeasures against Communist Propaganda. Note by the German Delegation," Committee on Africa, January 23, 1959, AC/146-D(59)2, NATO.

[59] "The Situation in Africa with Special Reference to Countermeasures against Communist Propaganda. Note by the German Delegation," January 23, 1959.

[60] "Communist Penetration in Africa," Note by the Chairman, Committee on Africa, March 3, 1959, AC/146-WP(59)1, NATO.

It contained a catalogue of actions that NATO allies could take to keep Soviet influence out of Africa.

To officials in the British Foreign Office, the list of countermeasures was more like a "great list of potential mistakes." Western influence in Africa, they thought, could be lost in two ways: Undoubtedly, "positive Soviet successes" might undermine the Western powers and their position. But just as damaging would be Western policy guided by "clumsiness and failure to understand the African point of view." In essence, NATO could be its own worst enemy in the region.

The Germans, who argued that Africa was already "involved in the maelstrom of the East-West conflict," viewed Africa exclusively through the lens of the Cold War. [62] As a result, they ignored important political developments only tangentially related to the East-West conflict. The Foreign Office's Africa Department accused Bonn of failing to appreciate the power of Africanism, the importance of stamping out policies based on racial discrimination, and the potential of the Pan-African idea to serve as a "strong natural defence against Communism." Likewise, the Germans paid insufficient attention to the importance of making it clear that "the period of colonial tutelage is limited and emphasizing that "independence, when granted, would be fully respected." Perhaps the most salient German failure, according to the British indictment, was overlooking public opinion in Africa, which already suffered "from an anti-colonial complex" and was sensitive to any equation of Africanism with Communism. Indeed, Communism was a minor threat in many areas of Africa because it had never penetrated the local

---

[61] As explained by the German delegation to British diplomats. UKDel No. 11 to FO, January 7, 1959, FO 371/137954, NAUK.

[62] "The Situation in Africa with Special Reference to Countermeasures against Communist Propaganda. Note by the German Delegation," January 23, 1959.

political milieu. Why introduce Africans to anti-Communist propaganda, "which may draw their attention unnecessarily to the problem"?[63]

In essence, the Germans had proposed two main lines of policy to which the British were adamantly opposed: increasing anti-Soviet propaganda, and "urging spectacular measures of economic aid with political motives." This was little more than copying the Soviets and their granting of "economic assistance for blatantly propaganda purposes." Overall, the British reasoned, efforts by NATO to "adopt joint measures … would hinder rather than help the cause of the West."[64] The Foreign Office instructed the British delegation to congratulate the Germans on their paper while British officials got to work re-drafting the offending section.[65]

Inherent in the British thinking was a desire to separate Africa, and Western policy in Africa, from the Cold War. The problem in Africa was not a military problem, and it was "only to a small extent" an issue of "internal subversion in the classic Communist manner." The real issue was preventing the exploitation of "African nationalism," by political and economic means, "to the advantage of the Soviet bloc."[66] In fact, the British argued, coordination was required to prevent NATO from appearing to take too active a policy in Africa and its member nations from stepping on each other's toes. Any suspicion in Africa that NATO viewed the continent as "simply another theatre in the military struggle" would be grist for the Soviet propaganda mill.

---

[63] UKDel No. 1823 to FO, Note by the United States Delegation, Committee on Africa, February 5, 1959, AC/146-D(59)6, NATO.; U/CEA memo on 'the Soviet Bloc Challenge'," James Frederick Green to Mr. Dolgin, March 23, 1960, RG59, BAA, OIAA, RPM, 1951-1963, box 1, folder: "Communism in Africa – II," NARA.

[64] Minute by N. E. C. Bruce, November 20, 1958, FO 371/131198, NAUK.

[65] UKDel No. 1823 to FO, November 24, 1958, FO 371/131198, NAUK.

[66] "Alternative to Section IV of the Paper by the German Delegation," Note by the United Kingdom Delegation, Committee on Africa, January 28, 1959, AC/146-D(59)4, NATO.

The British distributed an "alternative" draft of the paper's section on countermeasures to the allies that flipped the German idea on its head. They suggested that NATO establish a Working Group or committee composed of officials with expertise in the region to discuss African affairs but with a proviso that NATO should not act in Africa.[67]

The Americans were wary of the British plan for much the same reason London had been worried about Bonn's paper. If allied experts met, State Department officials maintained, they might be tempted to "attempt to lay down NATO policies on Africa."[68] In London, NATO hands scoffed at the American worry of a common policy as "a little unreal." Surely, they thought, the "difficulty will be to get any useful measure of agreement between countries with such divergent policies as the UK/US/France on the one hand or Portugal and Belgium on the other."[69]

Allied opinion was even more fractured than the Foreign Office expected. But Shuckburgh, who was responsible for coordinating the contrasting views, found the issue produced strange bedfellows. Colonial powers, especially the French, Belgians, and Portuguese, worried the Committee "would result in an inquisition into their colonial policies." The Canadians, Norwegians, and Danes also did not like the idea of the Committee, fearing they might become embroiled in some "'colonial skull-duggery' of some sort."[70] But the British pushed the idea nonetheless. It had just enough attraction for the colonial powers, which saw a means of building support in NATO for votes at the United Nations. Conversely, the non-colonial powers hoped to exert some degree of moderation on those clinging to their imperial possessions. Spaak and the NATO secretariat were strongly in favor of the committee as it would

---

[67] UKDel No. 1823 to FO, November 24, 1958.

[68] UKDel No. 435 Saving to FO, November 26, 1958, FO 371/131198, NAUK.

[69] Minute, author unknown, November 27, 1958, FO 371/131198, NAUK.

[70] Shuckburgh Diary entry for April 15, 1959.

keep NATO relevant to the emerging international environment. And the greatest attraction was that it would put the African experts, usually isolated in their home capitals, in closer touch with colleagues from allied states.[71] The promise of information, compounded by the blatant Soviet efforts and the need to provide an alternative to de Gaulle's proposals, led to agreement to form the committee.

But who would comprise the committee? What would it do? A fifteen-member committee would be useless. The Council agreed that the committee would consist of seven states: the United States, United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Portugal, Germany and Italy. To accommodate the French, who refused to discuss North Africa, the "Africa" of the Committee began south of the Sahara.[72] The terms of reference were purposefully kept vague. Every six months the Committee member states would send a senior official with responsibilities for the region - an Expert - to a three or four day conference. Beforehand, each Expert would submit a paper analyzing the "nature and methods" of communist penetration.[73] Following the meeting Shuckburgh would write a new paper synthesizing the national papers and then distribute it to all of the allies.

The first meeting and round of papers, in 1959, was a challenging process. Officials from African Affairs at the U.S. Department of State were shocked when asked by their superiors to delete all references to "colonialism" in Africa. In the view of the Americans, "the prospects for Communist success in Africa are in almost every case related in one way or another to past and

---

[71] "Discussions of the Council on Africa," Note by the Chairman, CPA, May 28, 1959. NATO/AC/119-WP(59(65); "Procedural Questions," Note from the Chairman to the Committee on Africa, September 14, 1960, AC/146-N(60)3, NATO.

[72] Shuckburgh Diary entry for April 15, 1959.

[73] "Terms of Reference of the Committee," Note by the Secretary, Committee on Africa, January 23, 1959, AC/146-D(59)1, NATO.

present policies of the colonial powers." How could these policies not be discussed?[74] But states with territories in Africa, including even the British, were unwilling to discuss their own responsibilities. Diplomacy was at a premium in the early iteration of the committee, and rather than discuss all of Africa the Experts concentrated on a patchwork version of the continent, implicitly designating certain areas as off limits.[75]

Despite the rigmarole of setting up the ad hoc Committee, it had lasting effects on NATO. It would serve as the model for a permanent committee on Africa, and also as the model for a series of regional Committees of Experts on the Middle East, Asia, and Latin America. Discussion of global affairs was not limited to the Experts, for the committee papers were used to inform discussion in NATO's other organs. The committee allowed for sharing informal papers, intelligence reports, and economic analyses among allies. It also produced an official paper for the North Atlantic Council and each of the delegations received copies. Specific issues from the broad paper could then be referred to POLADS or ECONADS for follow-up.

But just where and how to discuss a particular issue - whether economic aid, voting at the United Nations, recognition of new states, or expansion of student visas or cultural exchanges - was a problem for the empire builders in NATO's secretariat. Gregh, who chaired ECONADS, and Shuckburgh, who chaired POLADS, were often at odds over whether an issue was economic or political in nature, and jockeyed to control and discuss topics.[76]

---

[74] McBride (WE) to Timmons, January 15, 1959; William J. Porter (AFW) to Timmons. January 16, 1959, both in RG59, NAA, OIAA, RPM, 1951-1963, box 1, folder: "NATO Africa Committee, 1959," NARA.

[75] Even by 1960, the Foreign Office was seeking "to avoid being drawn into an embarrassing discussion of events in South Africa and the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Similarly any assessment of how Ghana is "measuring up to its new status" is likely to be rather awkward for us." Shattock to Smith, April 12, 1960, FO 371/146509, NAUK.

[76] Shuckburgh diary entry for September 30, 1959, Shuckburgh Diary, MS 191-1-2-8, CRL.

There were also disagreements between the secretariat and the delegations themselves. Gregh, for example, asked the NATO countries to provide information on all the economic and financial assistance to African countries "which they were giving or contemplating."[77] His plan was to create "some sort of card-index of all African countries, showing for each country weak points which might be exploited by the communists for their policy of penetration." [78]

This information would have allowed the NATO staff to evaluate and analyze policy and suggest topics to be discussed in Committee. The NATO delegations rejected Gregh's request. Instead, delegations themselves, as opposed to the secretariat, took the responsibility of raising issues or ideas for discussion.[79] This was a significant decision: it ensured that discussion in NATO was controlled and undertaken by national delegations rather than the international organization. The secretariat remained just that, rather than becoming an executive agency.

1.4.4 More Than We Had Bargained For

The members of the Africa committee all made strong contributions to the Experts conference, and the information collected by the Economic Division was assembled into a valuable document every six months. Several NATO allies, because of their imperial pasts, had information about specific countries that was unavailable to any other nation. France could share information about West Africa and Djibouti, the Belgians on the Congo, the Italians on Somalia, and the British about Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda.[80]

---

[77] "NATO COMMITTEE OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS: Countering Communist Penetration in Africa," A. K. Potter to C. Ewart-Biggs, October 5, 1959, FO 371/137956, NAUK.

[78] The Dutch were particularly keen on this idea. "NATO Committee of Economic Advisers: Countering Communist Penetration in Africa," A. K. Potter to Ewart-Biggs, March 11, 1960, FO 371/146509, NAUK.

[79] Ibid.

[80] "Meeting of NATO Expert Working Group on Africa. November 9-12, 1964." Memorandum by John Wilson, November 17, 1964, FO 371/176535, NAUK.

But at the dawn of the committee's existence, it was the British and American delegations, according to Shuckburgh's rough figuring, which "provided 90% of the factual knowledge and ideas."[81] The Committee on Africa, although born out of the German delegation's paper, was largely a British creation, and it was British policy that would give it its lasting shape.

Almost immediately, around the time of the first Experts meeting in August 1959, the Foreign Office feared they had made a mistake in pressing for NATO to discuss Africa. The hunger for information on Africa, both from other states and the NATO secretariat, had "broadened more than we had bargained for."[82] The worry was not so much in the Foreign Office but with other parts of Whitehall: The Colonial Office (CO) and the Commonwealth Relations Office (CRO) both were "extremely reluctant" to allow the Foreign Office to discuss the affairs of countries that still had a relationship with Britain.[83] The CRO and CO thought that NATO discussion of Africa was "dynamite" and there "would certainly be an outcry" it NATO's reports on Africa became known there.[84]

This stricture made the discussion of Africa "almost impossible."[85] The United Kingdom Delegation in Paris complained that when NATO discussed Soviet penetration in Ghana or Nigeria, British diplomats were required to maintain silence. This, however, did not apply to the other delegations that - although they had less information about the countries in question -

---

[81] Shuckburgh Diary entry for April 15, 1959.

[82] Minute by R.S. Faber on Jacket J1071/57, August 19, 1959, FO 371/137956, NAUK.

[83] Ibid.

[84] John Chadwick to E. B. Boothby, December 23, 1960, FO 371/146510, NAUK.

[85] Minute by R.S. Faber on Jacket J1071/57.

discussed the matter freely.[86] The UK Delegation complained of the "absurd position" and finally received permission to at least correct inaccurate information provided by the allies about members of the British Commonwealth.[87] Since NATO would prepare the reports with or without British input, it was better to have the document reflect accurate information. After all that, the CRO provided perhaps the heartiest endorsement of NATO's studies when one of its officials asked his Foreign Office colleague if he "could find further copies of the Report … We should like to send them to our African posts."[88]

Despite these competing opinions in Whitehall of the wisdom of discussing Africa, the British encouraged the Committee in order to look like a team player, or as one diplomat put it, to "convince NATO circles of our zeal!" The Foreign Office thought it "unlikely" that NATO discussions on Africa "have influenced, or will influence, the African policies of any of the major African powers in the alliance." But the NATO secretariat took it very seriously. Consequently, "for the sake of the alliance (and perhaps also for the educative effect on some of the smaller powers)," the British, too, felt obliged to participate fully.[89] Like the British, the Americans doubted the ability to deeply influence their allies. But if deliberation in Committee led Belgium, France, or Portugal to better understand American policy on Africa, so much the better.[90]

---

[86] J. G. Taylor to K. W. Wilford. August 29, 1959, FO 371/137956, NAUK.

[87] Peter Murray to C. T. E. Ewart-Biggs. December 30, 1959; C. T. E. Ewart-Biggs to P. C. Petrie, December 31, 1959. Both in FO 371/137956, NAUK.

[88] John Chadwick to E. B. Boothby, December 23, 1960.

[89] "NATO and AFRICA," Minute by Boothby, September 6, 1960, FO 371/146510, NAUK.

[90] "U.S. Position on NATO Report on Communist Penetration in Africa," Memorandum from Fessenden to Green and Baum, September 9, 1960, NARA, BAA, OIAA, RPM, 1951-1963, box 1, folder: "Africa-NATO, 1960-1961," NARA.

The British decision to participate actively in the Committee was about not only African but also NATO interests. There would be "awful recriminations" if it looked like some allies were trying to stop others from even discussing Africa.[91] As Spaak repeatedly warned the allies, European security was only one of multiple vitally important issues to many of NATO's member states. These countries, he argued, would neglect NATO if NATO neglected them.[92] The Committee, Spaak hoped, would allow for the Belgians, Portuguese, and French to feel as if NATO was responsive to their needs. In weighing the balance between British policy in Africa and British policy in Europe, one official reasoned that "perhaps the danger of the report falling into (e.g.) Ghanaian hands … is not so great as to outweigh the importance of showing confidence in NATO."[93]

The most important motive influencing allied participation in the Committee, however, was to harness NATO to national policies. Portugal continued to call for a "firm co-ordination of Western policies" in Africa and at the United Nations.[94] The Italians, concerned about their economic relations with North Africa, wished to discuss Soviet economic policy there.[95] The Belgians pushed the hardest, seeking a common attitude at the UN, a joint effort to prevent some UN bodies from "interfering in internal affairs" in Africa, and allied agreement that "a power responsible for a territory should not be embarrassed by any outside influence." All too often,

---

[91] Minute by Faber on Jacket J1073/54/G. January 6, 1961, FO 371/146510, NAUK.

[92] Telegram from the Mission at the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Regional Organizations to the Department of State, November 10, 1959. *FRUS, 1958-1960*, VII, Pt. 1, 227.

[93] This was clearly the view of an FO official charged with a NATO rather than African portfolio. Boothby to Chadwick, January 12, 1961, FO 371/146510, NAUK.

[94] Minute by R. Faber on J1073/46, October 3, 1960, FO 371/146510, NAUK.

[95] A. K. Potter to Ewart-Biggs, January 23, 1960, FO 371/146509, NAUK. They reference AC/127-WP/42/1, NATO.

delegations that advocated NATO support for their African policies left meetings feeling like the Belgian representative: "a little sad and a little sore at our inability to go further along the road with him."[96]

There were some areas in which NATO states could agree. The Committee on Africa helped identify Soviet propaganda, especially radio broadcasts, as an area that needed further examination. A sub-committee was set-up and its excellent survey served as a "useful reminder of the horsepower" that NATO's secretariat, combined with the intelligence and analytic capacity of all NATO states, could bring to the study of any problem.[97] Shuckburgh also used POLADS to hold meetings in the months before the annual United Nations General Assembly in New York. This allowed the delegations to inform their allies of resolutions they thought particularly important and to discuss amendments without committing themselves to voting as bloc.[98]

The Committee on Africa, by studying Soviet policy, determined that the Soviet bloc had a specific and effective strategy of quickly sending diplomatic representation to newly independent states. The matter was referred to POLADS, where NATO states consulted each other on the timing of establishing diplomatic representation and opening embassies from NATO States in Guinea, French Cameroon, Togo, the Belgian Congo, and other states. By 1960 this type of consultation had become "quite normal practice" at NATO.[99]

---

[96] J. Shattock to H. Smith, March 26, 1959, FO 371/137955, NAUK. See also "Penetration Sovietique en Afrique," Note de la Delegation Belge, Comité Sur L'Afrique, February 13, 1959, AC/146-D(59)8, NATO [author]s translation].

[97] Minute on Jacket J1071/47, June 29, 1959, FO 371/137955, NAUK. Records of this Committee are in AC/201, Ad Hoc Study Group on broadcasts to Africa, NATO.

[98] Portuguese and French policy at the UN provided the largest hurdle to coordinated NATO policy in New York. K. M. Wilford to I. F. Porter, July 17, 1959, FO 371/137956, NAUK.

[99] Shattock to Smith, March 10, 1960, FO 371/146924, NAUK.

But for the British and the Americans, national policy dictated that NATO stay out of Africa. British officials had taken the initiative on the Committee of African in an effort to sink the German idea for countermeasures. Although, for a number of reasons explained above, it suited them to participate actively in the committee, Foreign Office officials reported that they "certainly do all we can to keep NATO African activities to a minimum." While they endorsed some NATO papers that called for coordination, they only did so if the wording was so vague that "nothing is like to be done to implement them."[100] The Americans were of the same mind; the Permanent Representative told his British counterpart that U.S. policy in 1959 was designed to "sabotage" Spaak's proposal for a common NATO policy on Africa.[101] This was not simply an issue of jealously guarding national prerogatives. Officials in both London and Washington believed that discernable NATO activity would hurt Western policy in Africa. American officials understood that United States policy toward Latin America - treating it "as an adjunct in the Cold War" - had created significant resentment. They wished to avoid repeating this in Africa.[102]

The British, with American assistance, used the NATO committees to make their point that no strategy was NATO's best strategy in Africa. This "non-strategy" had four parts: The first was based on the premise that "NATO is not popular in Africa, where it is normally regarded as an 'imperialist' organization." The African countries, according to this perspective, were "determined to avoid getting mixed up in the cold war," but any NATO involvement would give them no choice. Accordingly, NATO should continue to keep Western policy in Africa separate

---

[100] Boothby to Chadwick, January 12, 1961, FO 371/146510, NAUK.

[101] UKDel No. 40 Saving to FO, January 14, 1959, FO 371/137954, NAUK.

[102] "U/CEA memo on 'the Soviet Bloc Challenge'," James Frederick Green to Mr. Dolgin, March 23, 1960, RG59, BAA, OIAA, RPM, 1951-1963, box 1, folder: "Communism in Africa – II," NARA.

from the Cold War. The easiest way to achieve this aim was to keep the "NATO label" off national actions in Africa.[103]

The second part of NATO's "non-strategy" followed logically from the first. If NATO as an organization stayed out of Africa, it was equally important that "the West" - that is, a bloc of the NATO allies acting in concert - avoid seeming to take collective action on African affairs. While none of the NATO allies wanted an expansion of communist influence in Africa, the forecasts and analyses of communist success varied widely between member states. By far the greatest discrepancy was over African nationalism and independence movements. Some, like the British, thought these phenomena resulted largely from indigenous desires unrelated to the Cold War. Others - especially those seeking to cling to colonial holdings - saw Soviet agitators behind every independence movement. The Portuguese, one Foreign Official complained, "would like us to rally, at this next-to-last ditch, in a Holy Alliance to resist political advance - a counter-revolutionary movement in which settlers would be prepared to die to defend their holdings against the black/red hosts." London's view was diametrically opposed. It was far better, it advised, to avoid "present[ing] too monolithic a front and too straightforward a target."[104]

The third element of the non-strategy was to avoid the opportunity for blackmail or being played off against the Soviet Union. The allies agreed "it would be a mistake to enter into an auction with the Soviet bloc or try to counter Soviet offers, whenever made, with bigger and better Western ones." To counter the Soviets would require the coordination of Western funds, and this would violate the second, and possibly the first tenets of the non-strategy as well.

---

[103] "NATO Ministerial Meeting. Paris, December 16 - 18, 1960. Brief No. 3. Communist Penetration in Africa," Undated, FO 371/146510, NAUK.

[104] Minute by R. Faber on J1073/46, October 3, 1960, FO 371/146510, NAUK.

Instead, it was better for the allies to concentrate on the territories to which they had a previous connection or responsibility.[105]

At the beginning of the Soviet economic offensive, in 1955-1956, NATO allies feared a Sino-Soviet bloc policy exclusively coordinated from Moscow. By 1960, there was an understanding in NATO countries that different communist bloc members were operating in Africa on their own terms. The Soviets, on the one hand, were willing to aid "bourgeois" governments without hesitation. The Chinese, on the other, focused more on the "extreme proletariat."[106] The differences stemmed from differing ideological motivations, but also from the commercial needs of donors.[107] The Yugoslavs, too, were becoming active in Ethiopia and the Sudan, and they were good examples to Africans of the "dangers of the Russian hug." The fourth element of the strategy, therefore, was to allow - and hope - that the Communists would duke it out with each other in Africa.[108]

NATO, then, did not stay out of Africa to preserve the alliance; it stayed out of Africa because the Americans and British saw no good options for involvement in African affairs. The point, repeated *ad nauseam* by the British to their allies, was that any common NATO policy would backfire. This conundrum led to the fifth element of NATO's non-strategy for Africa: let the Soviets get into trouble on their own. The experience of most NATO allies who had connections in Africa had been recently unhappy. Even those, like the British, who had avoided the worst of the violence of decolonization, knew that becoming involved in the complex politics

---

[105] Ewart-Biggs to Barber, February 25, 1960, FO 371/146509, NAUK.

[106] Letter from J. E. Coulson to R. H. Mason. September 7, 1960, FO 371/146510, NAUK.

[107] Minute on Jacket J1073/42, September 23, 1960, FO 371/146510, NAUK.

[108] Minute by R. Faber on J1073/46, October 3, 1960.

of the region was no easy task. NATO's policy, then, lay not in an active effort, but in hope that the Soviets had a great "capacity for making enemies as well as friends."[109]

1.4.5 Conclusion

Different officials at different levels of government conducted discussions about consultation in NATO, De Gaulle's tripartite ideas, and the Committee of Africa. Much of the discussion about tripartitism was conducted at a very high level in London and Washington, and most officials were not privy to the details. Similarly, there is no indication that national leaders like Eisenhower, Macmillan or de Gaulle were even briefed on the existence of the Committee of Experts. NATO's committees were not a matter for heads of state but instead fueled official work at a much lower level.

Nonetheless, whatever the level of government, or place of discussion, the British and American response was the same: NATO should not coordinate its actions outside of Europe simply for the sake of coordination. When action had to be taken to counter Soviet subversion, it was better for this action to be taken by individual governments. For the most part, however, it was better not to take any action whatsoever. Either way, the assumption was always the same: NATO would hinder, not help. Washington and London believed that NATO's involvement would have transformed fluid situations into East-West showdowns and undermined national policy. During the Suez Crisis, Dulles had sought to keep NATO at bay out of fear that the alliance's involvement would freeze the conflict as a showdown between Cold War blocs and ruin chances for a diplomatic solution. In Syria, Americans and the British conducted their respective policies largely in the shadows, and covert operations could not be discussed in the leak-prone North Atlantic Council. The Lebanese and Jordanian interventions had been time sensitive, perhaps, but also would have been much more difficult to manage with French

[109] Ibid.

participation. In the Congo in 1960, Washington again preferred to seek a solution through the United Nations rather than mobilize NATO politically or militarily and risk a Soviet response.

Still, the Soviet efforts in Africa and the Middle East were understood by all the allies to have potential repercussions for NATO. The allies, by agreeing to participate in NATO's political and expert committees, created a forum for the exchange of information and opinion on security affairs around the globe. Even if this rarely led to concerted policy or action, it marked a realization that NATO had a role to play in defending the *Pax Atlantica* from threats that might emerge anywhere on the globe.

In early 1961, American officials continued to confine the Africa Committee's activities to "the collation and comparison of intelligence and its evaluation." While the Belgians, French or Portuguese would be "delighted" to use the Africa Committee to impose limits on American policy, the Americans wished to protect their freedom of action.[110] Cooperation with allies could, occasionally, help American policy, but more often than not "almost automatically insures the failure of another enterprise."[111]

Still, the committees continued to meet and exchange information. In the early 1960s, the Portuguese territories, Rhodesia, and the Congo were all important and frequent topics of discussion. The United States, under the Kennedy administration, also began a practice of sending the senior most official responsible for UN affairs from the State Department to brief the Council on American policy on a host of issues, and then to discuss with the allies. Discussions of the Portuguese territories, in particular, were difficult and sometimes, downright bitter; so, increasingly, were discussions on trade to Cuba that pitted British economic interests against

---

[110] "US Representation on NATO Africa Committee," Memorandum for the Record, BAA, OIAA, RPM, 1951-1963, box 1, folder: "Africa-NATO, 1960-1961," NARA.

American efforts to squeeze the island. Still, despite disagreement, the committee system was institutionalized and topic of discussion continued to expand.

In fact, the United States under Kennedy dramatically shifted their position, urging more and more consultation in NATO. In 1962, they pushed for the establishment of an Atlantic Policy Advisory Group (APAG), a regular meeting of policy planners that met on retreats to present papers, but more importantly, hold private and informal conversations about future policy ideas.[112] That the other NATO allies did not have "policy planning staffs" like the United States mattered not; many allies created such staffs as a result.[113]

American seemed to suffer from selective amnesia, ignoring that for years European allies had urged consultation and cooperation on out-of-area issues, and it was the Americans who were unenthusiastic. By the 1960s, according to Thomas Finletter, Kennedy's Permanent Representative to NATO, the Americans "were very anxious that Europe recover from its tendency to withdraw into itself and assume the role that was waiting for Europe in world affairs."[114] Kennedy himself, echoing what European ministers had said in the late 1950s, told an

---

[111] . "NATO and a U.S. Arms Policy for Africa," February 14, 1961, BAA, OIAA, RPM, 1951-1963, box 1, folder: "Africa-NATO, 1960-1961," NARA.

[112] Your Meeting with Secretary General Stikker at 10:00 Tomorrow," Memorandum for the President from Bundy, October 16, 1963, POF, folder: "NATO: General, April 1962-November 1963," JFKLDC.

[113] Memorandum of Conversation, "NATO Consultation, Franco-German Cooperation, Multilateral MRBM Force, Trade Negotiations, and Other Problems," memorandum of conversation, November 13, 1962, EUR, DAS, Schaetzel Files, box 1, folder: "Western Germany," NARA.

[114] Finletter, Oral History, 14-15

assembled group of NATO foreign and defense ministers that "the danger in Europe was smaller today than it was in peripheral regions, particularly in Latin America and Southeast Asia."[115]

The 1960s were the inverse of the 1950s, with the United States now the leading proponents of NATO consultation and most of the European allies uninterested in complicating their relations with the world by any association to NATO. Although a number of more extreme ideas for consultation, including plans for an "Executive Committee" of great powers were discarded, NATO continued to build up the importance of POLADs and ECONADs, maintained regional committees spanning the whole globe, and increasingly used regular and Ministerial NAC meetings to discuss global issues.

Still, the process was imperfect and there was much room for disagreement. NATO played almost no part in Vietnam, America's largest military conflict of the Cold War. Kennedy and his officials were hopeful they could gain support from the allies for their policies abroad, especially in Southeast Asia. Rusk, early in his tenure, believed the US would find support in the NAC.[116] The Americans made "a plea" to NATO members to assist the US in their "effort against the Viet Cong."[117] They sent special representatives, like Henry Cabot Lodge and Averell Harriman, to the North Atlantic Council to try to drum up support.[118] In the NATO committees and at

---

[115] Memorandum of Conversation, "Meeting of the President with NATO Foreign and Defense Ministers," memorandum of conversation, May 29, 1963, NSF, box 221, folder: NATO, General 7/62-11/63 [Folder 3 of 3], JFKL.

[116] Telegram from Secretary of State Rusk to the Department of State, May 11, 1961, *FRUS 1961*-1963, vol. XXIV.

[117] Summary Record of the 532d Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington, May 15, 1964, *FRUS, 1963-1968,* vol. 1.

[118] "Visit to Western European Capitals as your Special Representative, August 16, to September 2, 1964," memorandum for the President from Lodge, September 9, 1964, DDRS, CK3100082624.

APAG, the Americans sought to convince their allies that the future of Vietnam was critical to their own national interests rather than simply an issue of loyalty to the United States.[119]

Rusk appeared before the North Atlantic Council and gave them some "old-time religion" on Vietnam, but he grew increasingly pessimistic that the allies would help, especially given antiwar public opinion in Europe.[120] Support for the American war in Vietnam from the NATO allies was nearly non-existent, and the Americans received some criticism in Council.[121] Although Rusk tried to brand the Pacific as the "Western Flank" of the alliance, the idea did not catch on.[122] By 1967, the Americans realized they had "failed to obtain the consensus [of] the NATO allies."[123]

It is difficult to gauge Vietnam as either a success or failure for NATO, for it was both. Surely, American policy at NATO failed, for US officials did not convince their European allies to make a meaningful contribution or public support. Similarly, the Europeans failed to convince the Americans Vietnam was a bad idea. On the other hand, despite the tragedy of the war,

---

[119] The Hague to SecState [from Rusk], SECTO 39, May 14, 1964, CFPF, 1964-1966, box 3270, folder: "NATO 3 Meeting Sessions. 1/1/64," NARA.

[120] Telegram from Secretary of State Rusk to the Department of State, December 16, 1966, *FRUS 1963-1968,* vol. XIII, doc. 229.

[121] Kaplan closely explores the relationship between NATO and Vietnam, and finds only the most tepid support in non-binding and non-agreed reports by Expert Committees. The Portuguese and Greek delegations gave rhetorical support to the US efforts in Council. Only the Canadians broached direct criticism. Lawrence S. Kaplan, "The Vietnam War and Europe: The View from NATO," in *La Guerre Du Vietnam Et L'europe, 1963-1973*, ed. Christopher E. Gosha and Maurice Vaïsse (Bruxelles: Bruylant, 2003), 94-95; Paul Martin, *A Very Public Life*, vol. 2: So Many Worlds (Ottawa, Ont.: Deneau, 1983).

[122] Bohlen to Eugene Rostow. January 20, 1967. Bohlen Records, box 27, folder: Rostow, Eugene, NARA.

[123] Rostow, quoted by John Vernon in a memorandum to the Director of Information, JV(67)314, June 22, 1967, NATO/Harmel.

NATO as an alliance and organization avoided any direct participation in a terribly costly and unsuccessful adventure.

In the European resistance to providing "automatic support" to the US, many American officials heard "an overtone of memories of US failure to support other Allies on Indonesia, Indo China, Algeria, the Congo, Portuguese African Territories and Suez."[124] Rather than a tit-for-tat, however, European abstinence from Vietnam might be seen as the fruit of a long and difficult education about the dangers of foreign intervention, with some of the classes taught in the NATO committees of the late 1950s.

---

[124] The Hague to SecState [from Rusk], SECTO 39, May 14, 1964, CFPF, 1964-1966, box 3270, folder: "NATO 3 Meeting Sessions. 1/1/64," NARA. See also the Summary Record of the 532d Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington, May 15, 1964, Noon, *FRUS 1963-1968*, vol. I, 328.

SECTION 2: NATO AND THE UNITED STATES: THE MILITARY INSTRUMENT

[I]n the long, arduous and intense struggle ahead, the U.S. [is] handicapped by having no clear idea of what it wanted to do in the world. It ha[s] no positive policy or plan and attempts to think up one had so far eluded the [State] department.

- Charles Bohlen, in a speech to the Harvard Club, December 10, 1961[1]

2.0.1 Not an Atlanticist at Heart

On Independence Day, 1962, John F. Kennedy addressed Philadelphia's Independence Hall. His speech, with its mixed promises of Atlantic partnership, community, and commonwealth, has been held up as the cornerstone of his administration's European policy.[2] Kennedy pledged, in eloquent terms, continued and deeper cooperation with America's Atlantic allies. The United States, said Kennedy, was ready to form "a concrete Atlantic partnership, a mutually beneficial partnership between the new union now emerging in Europe and the old American Union founded here 175 years ago."[3] The speech was magnificent oratory, building on the rhetoric that Eisenhower and Macmillan had developed in the 1950s to encourage a spirit of unity between the NATO allies.[4] Many officials in both the Eisenhower and Kennedy administration took the

---

[1] December 22, 1961. Folder Minutes by Hankey. FO 371/156450 Foreign Policy. AU1023/30 Foreign Policy.

[2] Sebastian Reyn, *Atlantis Lost: The American Experience with De Gaulle, 1958-1969* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), 123-26; James Ellison, *The United States, Britain and the Transatlantic Crisis: Rising to the Gaullist Challenge, 1963-68* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 3. The speech is a complex one because it considers the Atlantic relationship at different points in the future. On its background, see Rostow, *The Diffusion of Power*, 235-38.

[3] "President Kennedy at Independence Hall, 4 July 1962," John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, http://www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/RrjaDhW5B0OYm2zaJbyPgg.aspx.

[4] For an excellent overview of the Kennedy era see Thomas Schwartz, "The United States and Western Europe," in *The Diplomacy of the Crucial Decade: American Foreign Relations During the 1960s*, ed. Diane B. Kunz (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994). A more recent overview with attention to NATO is Carolyne Davidson, "Dealing with De Gaulle: The

rhetoric to heart and planned for an Atlantic future. They floated ideas to buy "a symbolic piece of real estate" in which to create an "Atlantic District." When the time was right, might it not form "the nucleus for the eventual capital of an Atlantic Community?"[5] They wanted to draft "Articles of Partnership" and exchange parliamentarians, judges, and other professionals as observers across the Atlantic to breed closer connections.[6]

These ideas, like Kennedy's rhetoric, came to nothing.[7] "The truth is," recalled Theodore Sorensen, "that Kennedy himself did not look upon either the Alliance or Atlantic Harmony as an end in itself."[8] Indeed, the Kennedy years were another trying time for NATO. The Berlin Crisis, Kennedy's defense policy and nuclear strategy, and growing American fears about the true intentions of their allies led to difficult debates in the North Atlantic Council. These debates were ultimately valuable, nevertheless, for they laid bare the allies' true strategic thoughts. They

---

United States and France," in *Globalizing De Gaulle: International Perspectives on French Foreign Policies, 1958-1969*, ed. Anna Locher, Garret Martin, and Christian Nünlist (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010).The leading texts on Kennedy's relationship with the major Europeans powers are Nigel John Ashton, *Kennedy, Macmillan and the Cold War: The Irony of Interdependence* (New York, N.Y.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); Erin R. Mahan, *Kennedy, De Gaulle, and Western Europe* (New York, N.Y.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); Granieri, *The Ambivalent Alliance*, 150-90; Frank A. Mayer, *Adenauer and Kennedy: A Study in German-American Relations, 1961-1963* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996). On strategic issues, see Pagedas, *Anglo-American Strategic Relations and the French Problem, 1960-1963: A Troubled Partnership*; Marc Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement, 1945-1963* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999), 283-402. On the interplay between these relationships, strategy, and broader visions of Europe, see Giauque, *Grand Designs and Visions of Unity*, 98-238.

[5] Gerard C. Smith to Henry Owen, August 9, 1962, Gerard C. Smith papers, box 27, folder: MLF Correspondence 1962," Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, Abilene, Kansas [hereafter DDEL].

[6] Smith drafted these ideas at the request of Walt Rostow, Chairman of the Policy Planning Staff. Smith to Rostow, July 2, 1962, Gerard C. Smith papers, box 27, folder: MLF Correspondence 1962," DDEL.

[7] Jeffrey Giauque has put time of death in 1963; I argue for the date of Kennedy's inauguration. Giauque, *Grand Designs and Visions of Unity*, 123.

[8] Theodore C. Sorensen, *Kennedy* (New York: Perennial Library, 1988), 562.

also revealed a new method of transnational connections that could be achieved between allies by sharing information and ideas, rather than pooling sovereignty or living out a grand design.

These positives, however, could only be seen in retrospect.[9] The debates, at the time, were bitter. They rang the death knell for any hope of NATO transforming into a greater Atlantic partnership, let alone the other vogue phrases of the day, "Atlantic Commonwealth" or "Atlantic Community." As Carl Kaysen, the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, admitted a year to the day after Kennedy's speech, "I am not an Atlanticist at heart."[10]

But Kennedy's speech, and especially his use of the phrase "interdependence," reveals a connection between the Eisenhower and Kennedy years and hopes for something more on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean.[11] The Kennedy administration, because of the President's appeal in Europe, the goals of his advisors, and the predisposition of American officials toward their Atlantic partners, expected the allies to build NATO into something more than simply a military bulwark against the Soviet menace.

2.0.2 A Nuclear Emphasis

By the end of Eisenhower's presidency, debates over decolonization, lack of consultation by allies, the shock of the *Sputnik* launch, and de Gaulle's memorandum had collectively stymied various plans to develop NATO beyond its military function. The State Department's Policy Planning Staff (PPS) reported "a degree of malaise among the NATO European countries at the

---

[9] This is explored in Section 3.

[10] Kaysen to Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., July 4, 1963, Schlesinger Papers, box WH-41, folder: North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), 1961-1963, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, Boston, Massachusetts [hereafter JFKL]. Kaysen was referring to the organization of defense, specifically nuclear defense; he believed in economic Atlanticism. For more on the variations on Atlanticism in the Kennedy administration see Arthur M. Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), 844.

[11] Nigel Ashton has explored the concept of Anglo-American interdependence in the Kennedy years in close detail. Ashton, *Kennedy, Macmillan and the Cold War*.

state of the alliance that should deeply concern the US."[12] American officials, nevertheless, nurtured their belief that an "Atlantic Community" was possible and indeed necessary to guarantee Western unity in the face of the broader Communist challenge.[13] They convinced themselves it was Eisenhower's budget policies that prevented any grand moves, and so they hoped Kennedy's election meant "Open Sesame" for their grander plans for NATO and the Western world.[14]

But as the Macmillan-Eisenhower talks showed, "Atlantic Community" and other vague phrases could mean various things, ranging from a new federation of Atlantic states to better communication between NATO allies. The State Department hired an outside consultant to find out exactly what it should mean for American policy. Ben Moore, formerly a State Department hand, had published a 1958 book on the topic of Atlantic community, was the strong favorite to lead the study.[15] Ultimately, however, Robert Bowie, formerly of the State Department, now at Harvard, and a veteran of Lucius Clay's administration of Germany in the immediate aftermath of World War II, took the job.[16]

Bowie was a trained lawyer with an impressive analytic mind – and sharp elbows. He wrote incisively. The malaise in NATO and the Atlantic states, he determined, stemmed from the

---

[12] "Current Aspects of US-European Relationship," August 16, 1960, PPC, Subject Files, 1954-1962, box 152, folder: "Europe Aug. - Dec. 1960," NARA.

[13] "United States Policy Towards Non-Communist Europe," January 29, 1959, PPC, Subject Files, 1954-1962, box 151, folder: "Europe 1959," NARA.

[14] "Memorandum of Conversation with Seymour Weiss. Office of Political Military Affairs, Department of State," May 29, 1963, Neustadt Papers, box 20, folder: Government Consulting Skybolt/Atlantic Affairs. Atlantic Assignment, 1963, JFKL.

[15] Ben T. Moore, *NATO and the Future of Europe* (New York: Harper & Brothers for the Council on Foreign Relations, 1958).

[16] Correspondence regarding the establishment of the Bowie study is in PPC, Subject Files, 1954-1962, box 152, folder: "Europe Aug. - Dec. 1960," NARA.

overwhelming nature of change afoot in the world. In a version of Bowie's report distributed to the NATO allies as *NATO in the 1960s*, Bowie wrote that the

> …challenge of our era transcends the role of NATO as a security organ, or even the broad power conflict between the Atlantic nations and a hostile Communist Bloc. … It is the challenge of an age of revolution – political, social, industrial, and technological – a century of dynamic change, of which this power conflict is but a part.

Whichever Cold War bloc could best adjust to these changes, Bowie wrote, will "almost surely determine the shape of the future." The challenge for NATO would be to guide the process of change, and "determine the shape of the coming world order." The only recipe for success, Bowie argued, was for NATO to set common goals and work toward them efficiently, even if meant strong direction from some states and the sacrifice of unanimity. He provided a host of military, political and economic tasks for the Atlantic nations that all required greater integration, coordination, and consultation. [17]

The version of the paper given to the NATO allies left out some of the more concrete policies in the original Bowie Report. One idea was for a "NATO Steering Group" of five or six powers. Many of the planners in the State Department liked this idea, for it would "face up to the long felt need that the Alliance have some better directional mechanism."[18] The diplomats, however, thought this to be another unacceptable "inner circle," akin to de Gaulle's tripartite directorate.[19]

---

[17] "NATO in the 1960's: Non-Military Guidelines for the Future. U.S. Discussion Paper for NAC Consideration of NATO Long-Range Planning (Non-military Aspects)," October 26, 1960, Records of the NATO Advisor [hereafter NATO Advisor], box 1, "TS Master File," NARA.

[18] "Comments on EUR draft paper for NAC consideration of NATO long range planning (non-military aspects)," memorandum from Smith to Kohler, October 12, 1960, PPC, Subject Files, 1954-1962, box 152, folder: "Europe Aug. - Dec. 1960," NARA.

[19] "Proposed NATO Steering Group," October 13, 1960," memorandum from Kohler to Fessenden, PPC, Subject Files, 1954-1962, box 152, folder: "Europe Aug. - Dec. 1960," NARA

The second plan was for a NATO nuclear medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM) force that would operate under SACEUR's control and free from any US veto.[20] The purpose of such a force was to assure the Europeans of a nuclear defense regardless of Washington's whimsies; it also, Bowie hoped, would put an end to national programs in Europe, such as the French nuclear efforts, that he considered "very bad and … having a divisive effect."[21] Although the United States would suggest variations on this force, it never offered its allies a force beyond American control. The evolution of these ideas unfolds in Chapters 6 and 7.

One controversial idea that did appear in *NATO in the 1960s* was Bowie's recommendation that NATO enhance its non-nuclear, or conventional, forces in Europe so they might resist Soviet attack without having to rely on nuclear weapons. Christian Herter, John Foster Dulles's successor as Eisenhower's secretary of state, presented a watered-down version of Bowie's MRBM force plan to the December 1960 NATO ministerial meeting, and also urged the allies to build up their conventional forces.

Bowie's report, then, was not an ethereal excursion into a spiritual realm of unity but a hard-nosed assessment of policies that Bowie thought NATO needed to be effective in the coming decade. Of all the issues Bowie identified, these three in particular (providing NATO with

---

and "Comments on EUR Draft Paper for NAC Consideration of NATO Long-Range Planning (Non-Military Aspects)," Kohler to Smith, October 14, 1960, PPC, Subject Files, 1954-1962, box 152, folder: "Europe Aug. - Dec. 1960," NARA.

[20] See "The North Atlantic Nations: Tasks for the 1960's [sic]," report to the Secretary of State, August 1960, EUR, DAS, Schaetzel Files, box 3, folder: North Atlantic, NARA. See also "Document 3: Bowie report (extracts)," Marc Trachtenberg, UCLA, http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/polisci/faculty/trachtenberg/documents/bowie.html.

[21] "Memorandum of Conference with the President, August 16, 1960," August 19, 1960, WHO, OSS, State Subseries, box 4, folder: State Department – 1960 (August-September) (1), DDEL.

consistent direction, a NATO nuclear force, and changes in NATO's reliance on nuclear forces), came to dominate discussion in and of NATO for at least the first half of the 1960s.

2.0.3 A Forum for Consultation

Still, much of *NATO in the 1960s* paid lip service to the goal of a larger Atlantic Community. This was consistent with bipartisan and international thinking about NATO in 1959 and 1960. Dean Acheson, a Democrat who had served as Harry Truman's Secretary of State, was arguing in public and private that NATO should expand its focus more broadly to politics, economics, "the whole Atlantic Community." His ideas were popular in Germany, too, where the major political parties, the CDU and SPD, liked Acheson's ideas and hoped they signaled that a Democratic administration in 1961 would move toward closer political and economic association with Europe."[22]

After John F. Kennedy's election as President in 1960, Department of State officials prepared a broad think piece on the future of NATO. It showed just how deeply career officials at Foggy Bottom had internalized concepts of an Atlantic Community, however ambiguous. In the paper, meant to inform the new administration of policy possibilities, State officials argued that NATO's role could be used for three hierarchically ranked functions. NATO's "primary function," would be to "serve as the proponent of the values of Western Christian civilization, to stimulate in [Arnold] Toynbee's sense the response of this civilization to the challenges now posed, and to catalyze greater integration in all fields of countries (including the US) holding Western values." Second, NATO would be used to "consult on and coordinate Western global policies including economic, political and psychological aspects." Only as its "tertiary function" would NATO be

[22] "Acheson's Atlantic Community proposal," memorandum from Fuller to Smith, October 29, 1959, PPC, Subject Files, 1954-1962, box 151, folder: "Europe 1959," NARA. It is of course well known that Adenauer's personal preference was for Nixon over Kennedy.

concerned with the military defense of Western Europe.[23] Here was perhaps the clearest expression of what American officials in the late 1950s had hoped NATO would become as it expanded from its Anglo-American core. For a variety of practical reasons, as explained in Section 1, such an advance had been delayed by problems of decolonization, the primacy of national interests, de Gaulle's efforts to reshape NATO, and the practical problem of what a proponent of values looked like in concrete terms. Still, American officials spoke and wrote this way.

But few Europeans were as hopeful of NATO's future as the guidepost and guardian of Western civilization as were the Americans. In 1960, Evelyn Shuckburgh, the British diplomat seconded to NATO as deputy secretary general, eulogized these hopes. He wrote to the British cabinet secretary, Norman Brook, that "NATO has not succeeded in creating any real sense of an Atlantic 'community'." European states had turned "not to an Atlantic, but to a European alignment," despite their reliance upon American military assistance.[24] A year later, Italian officials worried that efforts to make NATO "a directive center of world affairs," while so attractive to Italian pride, "placed on NATO's shoulders a weight greater than it can support, a weight that is crushing it."[25]

Still, the United States pressed forward. Kennedy, after his election, asked Acheson to make a study of American policy toward NATO in early 1961; shortly after, he would also ask Acheson to undertake a related study to the Berlin Crisis that had serious implications for NATO. Acheson

---

[23] "Subject: Policies Affecting the Anglo-American Alliance," drafted by Burdett in EUR/BNA, January 9, 1961, EUR, ORPUN, box 1, folder: EUR IDEA PAPERS - January 1961, NARA.

[24] Evelyn Shuckburgh to Norman Brook, December 26, 1960, PREM 11/3325, NAUK.

[25] "View of Italian Ambassador [Sanitized] on NATO Strategy," CIA Information Report, June 26, 1961, NSF, box 220A, folder: NATO, General 7/61-5/62/61 [Folder 1 of 3], JFKL. The buckslip makes clear it was the Italian Ambassador to Bonn.

reflected on the Era of Great Men that had come to an end with Eisenhower. While he knew there were benefits to such close relationships among leaders, he rejected it as a basis for NATO's future. He, like Gladwyn Jebb, worried that Presidents and Prime Ministers were too anxious to please their colleagues and often went too far in their private commitments; this, he assumed "was the case with General De Gaulle and General Eisenhower." What was far "safer" was to rely on "full and candid discussion in NATO – even if informally conducted, at first," which would "help to bring mutual understanding among the allies on critical issues." of this sort. [26] The key to NATO's future, for Acheson, was for the Americans - and surely their allies would follow suit - to "take NATO much more seriously as a forum for consultation."[27]

Acheson argued that the "ultimate goal of the Atlantic nations should be to develop a genuine Atlantic commonwealth," ("commonwealth" was struck through and replaced by "community" on Kennedy's copy of the report). By consulting early and frankly, the NATO allies would be "willing to alter policies in light of discussion." The NATO allies, by consultation that was "genuine" if sometimes "abrasive," would come to understand each other and could work for common action in Europe and beyond.[28]

---

[26] SHAPE LN Washington DC DA992476 to USNMR Paris, March 24, 1961, DDRS, CK3100328745.

[27] "Second Session with Mr. Acheson on NATO," for the President from Komer, March 14, 1961, NSF, box 220, box 220, folder: NATO, General 2/16/61-3/15/61, JFKL. This was eagerly agreed to by key officials, like the new Chairman of the Policy Planning Staff Walt Rostow, who agreed the US "must learn automatically to take into account the Alliance's interests," especially "when we operate outside the North Atlantic Community." "NATO Paper," Acheson from Rostow, March 20, 1961, NSF, box 220, folder: NATO, General 3/17/61-3/31/61, JFKL.

[28] "A Review of North Atlantic Problems for the Future," March 1961, POF, folder: "NATO: General, 1961: January-April," available online in the John F. Kennedy Library Digital Collection, available at www.jfklibrary.org [hereafter JFKLDC].

2.0.4 New Management

Kennedy approved Acheson's report, with minor modifications, as National Security Action Memorandum 40, "NATO and the Atlantic Nations."[29] Still, putting the policy into practice presented serious difficulty. One problem was that the Kennedy administration rarely played by the same playbook, even if that playbook was approved as a National Security Action Memorandum (NSAM). Frank Costigliola places heavy blame on Kennedy for having "talked community but practiced hegemony," and for seeking to centralize the alliance's decision making in Washington.[30] This criticism is more than fair. Still, it must be noted that "community" and "consultation" with allies was doomed from the start. Even in Washington, a sense of "community" and commitment to "consultation" was elusive. The White House, Office of the Secretary of Defense, Joint Chiefs of Staff, State Department, outside consultants, and the American officer dual-hatted as NATO's supreme commander (SACEUR) frequently disagreed on policy toward NATO. State Department senior official Gerard Smith had, during the Eisenhower administration, worried about the "monolithic nature of opinion" of the government, but did not think the "deep differences" in the Kennedy administration were any better for making good policy.[31] This incoherence contributed to NATO's severe difficulties, for the allies could never be sure what policy the United States preferred. When one part of the administration was strong enough to overcome its competitors - especially Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara's ascendancy over the Joint Chiefs - that view was imposed on the alliance with little grace.

---

[29] "NATO and the Atlantic Nations," April 20, 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963 XIII*, doc. 100.

[30] Costigliola, "The Pursuit of Atlantic Community: Nuclear Arms, Dollars, and Berlin," 24-25

[31] Gerald Smith, by Dictaphone in Paris, to Henry Owen. October 23, 1962 (dictated October 18, 1962), Executive Secretariat, Records of Robert W. Komer [hereafter Komer Records], box 2, folder: "NATO Defense Data Program (NDDP) 10/25/62," NARA.

A further problem was that American officials ranked consultation and community as a lower priority than trying to shape NATO to reflect the ideas of Kennedy, McNamara, and Acheson on defense policy. Like Bowie, Acheson called for NATO to develop its conventional military capacity and prepare for "more likely contingencies" than an all-out nuclear war. While this reflected the broader change in American strategic thinking that had accelerated in the final years of the Eisenhower administration, it was contrary to recorded American policy (i.e. NSC 5906/1) and also NATO's strategic concept, which "accorded first priority to preparing for general nuclear war."[32]

This approach to defense policy was a serious change in the way NATO had done things before. Col. Charles Murphy, one of Lauris Norstad, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander (SACEUR) former officers, wrote to warn Norstad that the "new management at the Pentagon … and most conspicuously among them the new technicians from Harvard and Rand who are advising the new magnates … miss completely the political and military essence of the Alliance."[33] Norstad, who had worked closely with SACEUR Eisenhower, firmly believed that ensuring a spirit of unity in NATO was more important than any technical plan for limited war. For military reasons, but also because of the effect such a plan would have on the allies, Norstad directly rejected the notion that planning for contingencies "short of nuclear or massive non-nuclear attack" was an "acceptable basis for planning."[34]

---

[32] "Comparison of 'A Review of North Atlantic Problems for the Future,' with Existing National Security Council Policy," March 28, 1961, NSF, box 220, folder: NATO, General 3/17/61-3/31/61, JFKL.

[33] Murphy to Norstad, March 31, 1961, NP, box 75, folder: MURPHY, Col. Charles J. V. (2), DDEL.

[34] "NATO Policies and Procedures," UNSNMR SHAPE to SECDEF, NP, box 96, folder: Assistant Secretary of Defense/ISA (3), DDEL.

Acheson's call for consultations and his argument that NATO should plan for non-nuclear war were fundamentally inconsistent. The Americans believed that in a nuclear world, conventional war would require a careful and deliberate choice not to escalate a conflict beyond the nuclear threshold, and this required centralized control. This control must be singular, and it must rest in the president's hand alone. The Americans were convinced that the Soviet Union would not plan to fight a nuclear war. The real problem was a Soviet conventional probe or incursion into Europe. To deter against this possibility of limited war, the US pushed its allies to spend more on better quality, if not necessarily more, conventional forces that could meet a limited Soviet offensive. McNamara turned this strategy into a complex science. Once war had become a science, rather than an art, there was little left to consult upon with allies.

During his study, Acheson assured the Dutch Permanent Representative to NATO that his study was "an effort by an Administration whose members have been excluded from both knowledge and understanding of what has gone on in NATO for eight years to find out, and to make some judgments about, priorities for the future."[35] This is a revealing admission. Americans built their hopes without learning – or listening – to what the Europeans thought about American defense policy.

Acheson and the Americans misunderstood or ignored the European willingness to accept the additional costs of a conventional force build up.[36] Part of the Europeans' reason for reticence was no doubt war weariness, and another was the blow to European "prestige" by their being

---

[35] Acheson to Dirk Stikker, March 22, 1961, AP, Gen. Corr., box 29, folder: 375.

[36] Remarkably, in 1959, future secretary of state Dean Rusk complained that friends in Europe told him "public opinion would not accept the additional costs. I find this infuriating when responsible leaders have not even bothered to ask their peoples the relevant question." Rusk to Acheson, December 8, 1959, AP, Gen. Corr., box 27, folder: 341.

assigned the "infantry function."[37] But just as important were the logical deductions of Europeans themselves. As early as June 1957, even before *Sputnik*, an American diplomat had warned Acheson of "schizophrenia" in European strategic thinking. On the one hand, the Europeans were worried that, in the event of a Soviet attack, the US might choose "not to run the risk of nuclear destruction by responding with force." On the other hand, there were Europeans "obsessed by the fear that the United States might reply to local aggression carried out with conventional arms, by utilizing nuclear weapons which would inevitably lead to all out nuclear war." The Europeans were, like the character in the Broadway musical *Old Man River*, "tired of living and afraid of dying." Underlying European fears was the belief that the "actual military defense of European territory is incompatible with the physical survival of Europe."[38] This analysis was remarkably prescient. Five years later, a German defense policy document would proclaim for this very reason that "War is not to be any longer a means of policy."[39] But the diagnosis of "schizophrenia" was too extreme. Chapter 5, on the Berlin Crisis, and Chapter 6, on NATO's nuclear strategy, reveals precisely how the Europeans could, and should, have been afraid of the United States being both war-prone and war-averse.

The German problem loomed in the background of NATO's consideration of its future, purpose, and military strategy. In the 1960s, for reasons explained below, other allies, to various degrees, began to believe that the emphasis of dual containment should shift almost exclusively to containing the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) or a future unified Germany. In 1961,

---

[37] "View of Italian Ambassador [Sanitized (but should read "to Germany"] on NATO Strategy," CIA Information Report, June 26, 1961, NSF, box 220A, folder: NATO, General 7/61-5/62/61 [Folder 1 of 3], JFKL.

[38] William Tyler to Acheson, June 16, 1957, AP, Gen. Corr., box 32, folder: 404.

[39] Untitled [NMR Germany re steps and decisions by FRG]. November 12, 1962, NP, box 49, folder: Germany 1961-1962 (1), DDEL.

David Bruce, who had served as ambassador in Bonn until 1959 and was now ambassador in London, warned Washington how "catastrophic" a new Soviet-German condominium would be for the West. How "ironical" it was, wrote Bruce, that the European balance of power, and indeed the future of the Western world as a whole, was "now at the disposition of our lately formidable, and ruthless war enemy, Germany."[40] This irony lay at the heart of American policy toward NATO in all of the chapters below. For Germany's position in the alliance ended the possibility of using NATO to coordinate diplomacy over Berlin, complicated defense strategy, and sent American officials on one of the wildest goose chases in the history of NATO policy.

[40] London no. 1454 to SecState, October 9, 1961, POF, folder: United Kingdom: Security, 1961: October-December," JFKLDC.

CHAPTER 5: A PROFOUND BITTERNESS:

THE BERLIN CRISIS AND THE SEARCH FOR A GRAND STRATEGY

"NATO is at present a machine without a purpose because we have no intelligible German policy."

- Dean Acheson, February 1963.[1]

In 1955, a US briefing paper for the May ministerial meeting proclaimed that NATO was the "organizational heart of the Atlantic Community." The paper explicitly delineated all of the elements of grand strategy, arguing that the "Atlantic Community is capable of making the most effective contribution to the defense of the Free World by wielding political, economic, psychological, and military weapons in the cold war."[2] Nonetheless, in the 1950s NATO had not successfully formulated a grand strategy to deal with the crises of decolonization or diplomatic at the United Nations. The Berlin Crisis of 1958-1962 seemed to offer an ideal opportunity for coordination on the grand strategic plane.[3]

John Foster Dulles told his NATO Ministerial colleagues in December 1958 that the Berlin crisis was the first "threat in Europe of a grave character" in almost a decade.[4] But as Gregory

---

[1] Quoted in Charles Ritchie, *Storm Signals: More Undiplomatic Diaries, 1962-1971* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1987), 41.

[2] "Western European Area," May 5, 1955, DDRS, CK3100440746.

[3] Grand Strategy, according to Basil Liddell-Hart, is the plane of strategic thinking that applies military, but also "financial, diplomatic, commercial and ethical pressure to weaken an opponent's will." Basil Henry Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 2d rev. ed. (Toronto: Meridian, 1991).

[4] Telegram from the Delegation to the North Atlantic Council Ministerial Meeting to the Department of State, December 17, 1958, *FRUS 1958-1960 VIII*, 210-212. Historians now acknowledge, as policymakers secretly knew at the time, that the Berlin Crisis was one of the most serious of the Cold War. The crucial text is Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*. See also John P. S. Gearson and Kori N. Schake, *The Berlin Wall Crisis: Perspectives on Cold War Alliances*, Cold War History Series (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); Nitze, Rearden, and Smith, *From Hiroshima to Glasnost*, 196-208. For the most comprehensive and up-to-date literature on the Berlin Crisis, and a nuanced account of the crisis, particularly the erection of the Berlin Wall, see Fabian Rueger, "Kennedy, Adenauer and the Making of the Berlin Wall, 1958-

Pedlow, the long-time chief historian of NATO's Supreme Headquarters Allied Planning Europe (SHAPE), points out, NATO was "not actively involved" in the 1958-1962 Berlin crisis before the summer of 1961.[5] One reason was that NATO's obligations to Berlin were unclear in theory and negligible in practice. Britain, France, and the United States had specific responsibilities for Berlin deriving from the postwar occupation of the city. The North Atlantic Council (NAC) had associated NATO with the tripartite power's "Berlin Guarantee" of 1954, thus obliging NATO to recognize any military attack on tripartite forces in Berlin as a trigger for collective defense under Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty.[6] Nonetheless the allies were happy to leave Berlin to the tripartite powers. Beginning with the crisis in 1958, however, the other allies wished for NATO to take an active role. They hoped to restrain the United States from escalating the crisis, but also thought NATO could be the forum for coordinating diplomacy. From 1958 to 1961, the Americans, British, and French resisted attempts by the other NATO allies and NATO's Secretariat to shape a broader allied policy on Berlin.

In the summer of 1961, the United States changed course. Kennedy administration officials understood that the United States needed their allies' military strength and economic clout to implement any of their contingency plans in case the crisis escalated. Under heavy American

---

1961" (Stanford University, May 2011). The Berlin Crisis has now reached the popular press. See Frederick Kempe, *Berlin 1961 : Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Most Dangerous Place on Earth* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2011).

[5] Gregory W. Pedlow, "NATO and the Berlin Crisis of 1961: Facing the Soviets While Maintaining Unity," 1. Earlier accounts were unclear whether an "overall Allied contingency plan" was adopted at all. Francis A. Beer, *Integration and Disintegration in NATO: Processes of Alliance Cohesion and Prospects for Atlantic Community* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1969), 21 and note 21. Richard Betts argues that NATO was "not fully involved" in the Crisis and that "Allies governments were apprised of relevant plans, but they did not have to approve them." Richard K. Betts, *Surprise Attack : Lessons for Defense Planning* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1982), 171.

[6] FO to UKDel, "NATO versus Tripartite Responsibility," October 2, 1961, FO 371/160492, NAUK.

pressure, the allies agreed to a series of military and non-military contingency plans for economic countermeasures, all recorded in official NATO documents that look very much like a grand strategy.[7] But what looked like a grand strategy on paper was not much more than a series of plans, cobbled together by grudging allies. Moreover, the plans themselves had only a slim chance of being executed if the crisis had developed further.

The bruising battles in Council to approve these plans were fought over the relationship of NATO to American policy. Was there to be a NATO grand strategy for Berlin, of which the United States might very well play the lead role? Or was there to be an American grand strategy for solving the crisis, in which NATO was a mere appendage to American military might? Officials in the Kennedy administration did not consider the former perspective and assumed the latter. And deliberate efforts by the Americans, especially Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, to use the Berlin Crisis to shape NATO's force structure in the image of the new American defense policy only compounded other allies' resentments and suspicions. Gone entirely was the Eisenhower administration's lip service to a spirit of unity, the lubricating effect of which was more notable in its absence. Still, the difference between the Eisenhower and Kennedy administration was a matter of emphasis and style, for as explained below, the Eisenhower administration made little use of NATO in the early stages of the crisis.

That the United States had a difficult time charting its own grand strategy because of divisions in Washington only further confused the issue at NATO. The White House, Department of State, Office of the Secretary of Defense, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff all had different

[7] Indeed, some historians have argued that NATO did provide the forum for coordinating a Western response to Nikita Khrushchev's repeated challenges. This is the major theme of Mark Jonathan Rice, "The Alliance City: NATO and Berlin, 1958-1963" (The Ohio State University, 2010). Rice argues that the Western allies "had to come together under NATO to coordinate their policies," and NATO "had established itself as a vital part of Western policy and strategy in the Cold War, including situation like the Berlin Crisis." Ibid., 25-26. I disagree, as explained below.

perspectives on the crisis. As a result, the United States pursued, or at least appeared to pursue, a number of different policies on Berlin. It also led to an ambiguous chain of military command in Berlin that worried allies. David Nunnerley has suggested that Kennedy preferred to have his allies shoot down the particularly bad ideas of his advisors, rather than do it himself. As demonstrated below, this strategy is ineffective when allies would rather mouth the affirmative while crossing their fingers behind their back.[8]

Military contingency plans took up the most time of officials during the crisis, for these were the plans most likely to make the Cold War white-hot. Nonetheless, as Pedlow has pointed out, Berlin was "essentially a political and diplomatic crisis."[9] Even those who pushed for military action to be considered as a legitimate and early response to Soviet provocations argued that the military plans fulfilled a political function of demonstrating resolve and signaling intentions. But suspicions lingered as to whom - the Americans, the tripartite powers, or NATO - would implement the countermeasures and contingency plans. NATO, then, developed the policies for a grand strategy, but the allies disagreed over who had the authority to implement such a strategy, and how, why, and when it would be executed. Berlin, more than any other crisis, revealed NATO's limited use as a tool or site of coordinating military and economic power in a crisis short of war.

2.5.1 Eisenhower's Berlin Crisis

The seeds of the Berlin crisis were planted in the closing days of the Second World War, when Dwight Eisenhower, then Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force

---

[8] Nunnerley, *President Kennedy and Britain*, 13. On Kennedy's refusal to set policy by "Presidential fiat" see Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, 363.

[9] Gregory W. Pedlow, "Three Hats for Berlin: Lauris Norstad and the Second Berlin Crisis, 1958-1962," in *The Berlin Wall Crisis: Perspectives on Cold War Alliances*, ed. John P. S. Gearson and Kori N. Schake (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 191-92.

(SHAEF), led armies into Germany from the West while Soviet troops poured into Germany from the East. The Red Army conquered Berlin and the victors subdivided the city into zones of occupation. Tensions between the occupiers helped create the Cold War frictions and the shape of the conflict.[10] Indeed, NATO's very founding was tied inextricably with Berlin, for it was the Berlin Blockade and subsequent airlift of 1948-1949 that helped convince reticent American policymakers to break the United States' long tradition of avoiding foreign entanglements in peacetime and agree to a defense pact with Europe.[11]

The airlift was a success for the West. Stalin reopened the city without gaining any concessions. But the United States had only stumbled into the policy of an airlift, and many American officials had wished instead to send a convoy of armed vehicles to "probe" the Soviet blockade.[12] Even half a decade after the successful resolution of the blockade, American officials held a nagging belief that failure to test the Soviets with armed force had emboldened Moscow and led to the Korean War.[13]

West Berlin, by virtue of its geography, remained vulnerable after the blockade was lifted. The tripartite powers felt compelled, from time to time, to reiterate publicly their commitment to the city. They were especially insistent that the Soviet Union maintained its occupation responsibilities for East Berlin. If these responsibilities were passed to East German guards, it

---

[10] Daniel F. Harrington, *Berlin on the Brink: The Blockade, the Airlift, and the Early Cold War* (Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky, 2012).

[11] Kaplan, *NATO 1948*.

[12] Harrington, *Berlin on the Brink*.

[13] "U.K. Reaction to U.S. Policy (NSC (5404/1)," Memorandum of Conversation, May 16, 1955, DNSA, BC000011; "Berlin," Memorandum of Conversation, November 24, 1958, DNSA, BC00385.

might provide a *de facto* recognition of East German sovereignty.[14] Because the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) maintained that Germany would and must be reunified, it was essential to good allied relations and German domestic politics that there be no recognition of Germany's bifurcation as permanent.

Officials in Washington, however, were not content with statements. They wished to develop tripartite military contingency plans to defend Berlin in case of another blockade. But Paris and London were unwilling and uneager to make any commitment to such military plans. They were content to rely on planning for an airlift in case of a renewed blockade.[15] It had, after all, worked before.

Military planning took on no real urgency in Washington, because the Americans were relatively content with the situation in Berlin and Germany itself.[16] The status quo was acceptable as long as the Soviets did not again try to use Berlin as a lever. But in early 1958, Dulles grew increasingly concerned about Berlin's vulnerability and called for a review of military contingency planning.[17] Dulles, along with others like David Bruce, the ambassador in Bonn, and officials of the Operations Coordinating Board, the administration's organ charged with monitoring policy implementation, concluded that any new Berlin crisis would not be military in nature. Instead, Moscow would "try to effect a gradual erosion of the Western

---

[14] "Progress Report on NSC 5404/1," attached to "NSC 5401/1/ (Berlin), Approved by the President on January 25, 1954," Memorandum for the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council from the Executive Officer, June 8, 1954. DNSA, BC00005.

[15] "U.K. Reaction to U.S. Policy (NSC (5404/1)," May 16, 1955.

[16] "Discussion at the 354th Meeting of the National Security Council, Thursday, February 6, 1958," Memorandum, February 7, 1958, DNSA, BC00089. See also "Memorandum of Discussion at the 369th Meeting of the National Security Council, Thursday, June 19, 1958," Memorandum, June 20, 1958. DNSA, BC00140.

[17] Airgram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Germany, February 10, 1958, *FRUS 1958-1960 VIII*, doc. 6.

position and Berlin's resistance."[18] There was nothing to be done in Berlin, Bruce warned, to improve America's position in Berlin from a "military standpoint."[19]

On November 10, 1958, Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev demonstrated just how easy it was for Moscow to challenge the West's positions in Berlin by using words, not arms. Khrushchev declared an ultimatum: The tripartite powers must withdraw their troops from Berlin in six months. Khrushchev had many motivations for his Berlin ultimatum, though on balance his challenge reflected an effort to achieve domestic political and economic goals. Still, allied officials assumed Khrushchev's announcement was designed to take advantage of the disarray in NATO caused by de Gaulle's proposals to reorganize the Alliance.[20]

Khrushchev's ultimatum touched off a debate in Washington about military planning. Some officials called for a "firm policy" if Berlin was again blockaded. This time, the United States should send a military convoy into West Berlin prepared to fight its way through any military obstacles. But who would participate in this convoy? Would it be American forces or tripartite

---

[18] Operations Coordinating Board Report on Germany (Berlin) (NSC 5803 – Supplement I), September 3, 1958, *FRUS 1958-1960 VIII*, doc. 19 Dulles never expected another physical blockade, as in the 1948, but instead "there would be a slow process of strangulation." Memorandum of Conversation, December 13, 1958, *FRUS 1958-1960 VIII*, doc. 105.

[19] Telegram from the Embassy in Germany to the Department of State, September 22, 1958, *FRUS 1958-1960 VIII*, doc. 18.

[20] Pro-NATO French officials worried Khrushchev was trying to take advantage of disarray caused by de Gaulle. Paris No. 1787 to SecState, November 14, 1958, DNSA, BC00272. On Khrushchev's domestic and economic goals, see V. M. Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009); Robert M. Slusser, *The Berlin Crisis of 1961: Soviet-American Relations and the Struggle for Power in the Kremlin, June-November 1961* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973); Hope Millard Harrison, *Driving the Soviets up the Wall: Soviet-East German Relations, 1953-1961* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003). On the 1958-1959 stages of the crisis see Vladislav M. Zubok, "Khrushchev and the Berlin Crisis (1958-62)," *CWIHP Working Paper*, no. 6 (May 1993); Marc Trachtenberg, *History and Strategy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991); Jack M. Schick, *The Berlin Crisis, 1958-1962* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971).

forces? And what role would NATO play? Neil McElroy, the Secretary of Defense, asked what "what degree of support we would secure from NATO … and what pressure we would apply on them to secure their support? … Would be willing to act without them?" McElroy and Robert Murphy favored presenting an agreed American plan to the allies, though Dulles preferred not to "take a line which might lead to shooting" until there had been an exchange of views with the British and French.[21] Dulles and Eisenhower insisted that the United States needed to remain firm, but it could not act alone.[22]

Dulles was ambivalent, however, as to whether NATO should be involved in developing a Berlin policy. If Quemoy and Matsu, the islands contested by Taiwan and the Peoples Republic of China, were "proper subjects" for the North Atlantic Council's consideration, Dulles mused, Berlin surely was too.[23] But the United States was loath, as it had been in the Lebanese and Jordanian crises, to discuss any plans in the NAC because of security concerns.[24] Dulles decided to let others raise the issue in NATO if they wished. The Americans would only bring up Berlin in Council if the military contingency plans were to be put into effect.[25] Neither Dulles nor

---

[21] Memorandum of the Substance of Discussion at a Department of State-Joint Chiefs of Staff Meeting, November 21, 1958, *FRUS 1958-1960 VIII*, doc. 57. "Notes from the State-JCS Meeting at 11:30 Hours on 21 November 1958," Memorandum for the Record, November 25, 1958, DNSA, BC00395 is the same meeting as above but verbatim. For Dulles quote about "a line which might lead to shooting" see Memorandum of Telephone Conversation Between Secretary of State Dulles and Secretary of Defense McElroy. November 17, 1958, *FRUS 1958-1960 VIII*, doc. 44.

[22]Notes of the Secretary's Staff Meeting, November 18, 1958, *FRUS 1958-1960 VIII*, doc. 46. Memorandum of Conversation between President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles, November 18, 1958, *FRUS 1958-1960 VIII*, doc. 47.

[23] "Berlin Situation," Memorandum of Conversation, November 17, 1958, *FRUS 1958-1960 VIII*, doc. 42.

[24] Department of State no. 1002 to Bonn, November 14, 1958, DNSA, BC00265.

[25] "Berlin Situation," November 17, 1958; Department of State no. 1002 to Bonn, November 14, 1958.

anyone else in Washington expected NATO to be involved in the development of plans for the use of military force in the heart of Europe, and it was a secret kept by the three that some planning on tripartite contingency planning was underway.

The other allies certainly wished to discuss Berlin in the NAC. The American delegation reported "strong pressure from all members for [the] fullest use of [the] consultative process" in the Council, including on "all matters connected with Berlin situation and the broader context."[26] This pressure stemmed largely from worries that tripartite planning would validate de Gaulle's concept of a directorate.[27]

But many of the NATO allies also wanted to use the NATO forum to agree on a solution to the Berlin problem, perhaps by recognizing East Germany. Some of the smaller allies, like Norway, called for this radical policy in Council. Others, like the British, only said so privately.[28] The repeated allusions to a recognition - even *de facto* recognition - of East Germany convinced the Americans that the "ground beneath the principal members of the Alliance is in varying degrees of hardness," with the British "definitely soft."[29] At the root of what the American's called "softness" was a conviction among European statesmen that their publics would never

---

[26] Telegram from the Mission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and European Regional Organizations to the Department of State, November 17, 1958, *FRUS 1958-1960 VIII*, doc. 43.

[27] "The French Government Position on the Berlin Situation," INR paper No. 7994, April 7, 1959, *FRUS 1958-1960 VIII*, doc. 256; Paris POLTO 1333 to SecState, November 17, 1958, DNSA, BC00299; see also Notes of the Secretary's Staff Meeting, November 18, 1958, *FRUS 1958-1960 VIII*, doc. 46.

[28] The Norwegians, for instance, told the Council it was time for a "drastic and dramatic change of approach" including recognition of GDR. Now, anyway "all cards are in Russian hands." "Germany and Berlin," memorandum of conversation, November 18, 1958, DNSA, BC00312. The British told the Americans privately that "dealing with and, if necessary, ultimately recognizing GDR" would be "greatly preferred to … resorting to force." Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Germany, November 17, 1958, *FRUS 1958-1960 VIII*, doc. 41.

[29] Bonn no. 1160 to SecState, December 2, 1958, DNSA, BC00443.

support military action over Berlin.[30] The West's legal rights in Berlin were, at best, too complex to effectively sway public opinion, and at worst, a "demonstrable sham."[31] In Council and in private, Spaak outlined the contradiction between tripartite insistence the Soviets "should stay in Berlin" while the rhetoric of NATO and the Cold War was all for Soviet departure from central and eastern Europe.[32]

Spaak wanted to make NATO the locus for discussions of the tripartite powers' response to Khrushchev's ultimatum, and he gave the Americans a draft paper on the subject. The Americans thought Spaak's paper – again – was "potentially dangerous," fearing the effects on the FRG if the allies pressed to abandon the prospect of reunification. Spaak agreed to let the paper lie, but stuck his fundamental point: Western public opinion would not support the United States "in a conflict the sole purpose of which would be to determine who controls the routes of access to Berlin."[33]

Dulles thought it unrealistic that the allies - whether Belgians, Canadians, Italians, or Norwegians, depending on the day - could truly expect the tripartite powers to pass their positions, still under development, for negotiation "around a big table." Yet, he acknowledged, the "NATO countries have a right to be consulted, since they are involved in the NATO guarantees as they relate to Berlin."[34] Some feathers were smoothed by regular briefings to the

---

[30] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Germany, November 17.

[31] Philip de Zulueta to Prime Minister, June 18, 1959, PREM 11/2718, NAUK.

[32] Telegram from the Mission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and European Regional Organizations to the Department of State, November 26, 1958, *FRUS 1958-1960 VIII,* doc. 70. See also London no. 2842 to SecState, November 23, 1958, DNSA, BC00373.

[33] Bonn no. 1597 to SecState, January 23, 1959, DNSA, BC00657; Paris no. 2073 to SecState, January 24, 1959, DNSA, BC00666.

[34] Memorandum of Conversation, November 10, 1959, *FRUS 1958-1960 IX,* doc. 39. See also Memorandum on the Substance of Discussion at the Department of State-Joint Chiefs of Staff Meeting, January 15, 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960 IX,* doc. 66; Memorandum of Conversation,

Council by the tripartite powers, especially during the Geneva conference.[35] For the most part, however, the tripartite powers developed their negotiating position apart from NATO.[36] Dulles, every bit as much as George Kennan, believed that trying to centralize diplomacy in NATO would be an intolerable burden on negotiations.[37]

A full discussion of the allies' views on Berlin also would have revealed just how far apart the allies were – and would remain – on Berlin.[38] Spaak's warning echoed reports from American diplomats that the NATO allies were "not prepared at this time to risk hostilities possibly leading to major war over present issue."[39] But willingness to risk war over Berlin was at the heart of American policy, and Eisenhower relied on the "ultimate threat" of nuclear war in case Khrushchev acted on his ultimatum.[40]

"Canadian Views on Arrangements for Preparation for Summit Meetings, January 15, 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960 IX,* doc. 67*;* Memorandum of Conversation, "Organization of Summit Preparations, January 18, 1960, *FRUS 1958-1960 IX,* doc. 68.

[35] UKDel No. 212 to FO, June 18, 1959, PREM 11/2718, NAUK.

[36] With great acrimony among themselves. For the diplomacy of the Berlin Crisis see Schick, *The Berlin Crisis, 1958-1962*; Kitty Newman, *Macmillan, Khrushchev and the Berlin Crisis 1958-1960*, Cold War History Series (London ; New York: Routledge, 2007); Toshihiko Aono, ""It Is Not Easy for the United States to Carry the Whole Load": Anglo-American Relations During the Berlin Crisis, 1961-1962," *Diplomatic History* 34, no. 2 (2010); William Burr, "Avoiding the Slippery Slope: The Eisenhower Administration and the Berlin Crisis, November 1958 - January 1959," ibid. (April 1994); John P. S. Gearson, *Harold Macmillan and the Berlin Wall Crisis, 1958-62: The Limits of Interests and Force* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998).

[37] Kennan, *Russia, the Atom, and the West*, 26.

[38] Christian Nuenlist is right to argue that Eisenhower's – and in this case, Dulles's – choices inhibited political cooperation at NATO. Christian Nuenlist, "Into the 1960s: NATO's Role in East-West Relations, 1958-1963," in *Transforming NATO in the Cold War: Challenges Beyond Deterrence in the 1960s*, ed. Andreas Wenger, Christian Nuenlist, and Anna Locher (London: Routledge, 2007), 68. But surely the alternative would have had disastrous consequences.

[39] Paris POLTO 1415 to SecState, November 24, 1958, DNSA, BC00387.

[40] The phrase is Herter's; see Burr, "Avoiding the Slippery Slope," 178 and passim. Kori N. Schake, "A Broader Range of Choice? US Policy in the 1958 and 1861 Berlin Crises," in *The*

Reports of allied softness worried Dulles. He wondered whether, "if opinion is as represented, Western Europe is really defensible at all." The United States had the will to defend against the Soviets, but did the Europeans? If their "will is lacking, then I fear our entire NATO concept and US participation in it will require drastic review."[41] Since the collapse of the EDC, Dulles had worried the United States might be forced to take an "agonizing reappraisal" of NATO, and the fear haunted Dulles throughout the rest of his life. Just a few months before his death in spring 1959, he worried that a serious split over the use of force in Berlin would pose a "serious question of the value of NATO."[42]

During the crisis the Americans told their allies that NATO "is and will remain [the] primary organism for political consultation among Western powers."[43] But practice belied this claim. Although the NATO allies kept their disagreements secret - or at least muted - NATO had not contributed, nor been asked to contribute, anything to the resolution of the crisis. Discussions of the tripartite powers' negotiating positions were kept limited to briefings and updates, and as far as the North Atlantic Council was concerned, there were no military contingency plans in case of a new blockade.

Berlin Wall Crisis: Perspectives on Cold War Alliances, ed. John P. S. Gearson and Kori N. Schake (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002). See also Diary Entry by the Ambassador to Germany (Bruce), December 19, 1958, *FRUS 1958-1960 VIII,* doc. 115.

[41] "Thinking out Loud by John Foster Dulles," undated, *FRUS 1958-1960 VIII,* doc. 146. The Americans were worried not only about NATO's at large but the other tripartite powers, too; Bruce feared the United States might have to "act unilaterally." Diary Entry by the Ambassador to Germany (Bruce), December 27, 1958, *FRUS 1958-1960 VIII, doc.* 117. Eisenhower himself grew disappointed in NATO and frustrated with the British position. Eisenhower, *Strictly Personal*, 212-13, 16-17.

[42] Memorandum for Mr. Herter. From J.N. Greene Jr., March 6, 1959, *FRUS 1958-1960 VIII,* doc. 204.

[43] Paris POLTO 2476 to SecState, March 3, 1959, DNSA, BC00864.

In fact, the United States was pushing military contingency planning into a higher gear. Dulles, at the 1958 NATO Ministerial, met with Lauris Norstad in private and recommended that the SACEUR "draw up a series of graduated steps which might be taken on the military side, in response to further pressures from the Soviets, for the purpose of demonstrating that we intend at all costs to stand firm."[44] Two months after Dulles's suggestion to Norstad, the American general established a small "concealed" group of American officers to study military problems related to access Berlin, with the expectation this might form the kernel of a tripartite staff.[45] Norstad expanded this "nucleus" a few weeks later to include French and British officers in a tripartite organization called Live Oak. Around the same time, the French and British ambassadors in Washington and senior State Department officials established a "Tripartite Planning Group" in serve as an overall coordinating body for the three powers on Berlin policy.[46]

The relationship between Live Oak and SHAPE, and thus NATO, was blurry. Technically, Norstad led Live Oak wearing his hat as a US military officer, rather than as NATO's Supreme Commander.[47] But Live Oak was staffed by officers from Norstad's SHAPE staff, and if put into

---

[44] Norstad to the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, December 23, 1958, DNSA, BC00551.

[45] USCINCEUR Paris France EC 9-10240 to JCS, February 23, 1959, DNSA, BC00810.

[46] "Berlin Contingency Planning," May 18, 1960, PREM 11/3005, NAUK. For background on the command structure and working groups, see Pedlow, "Three Hats for Berlin."; "Allied Crisis Management for Berlin: The Live Oak Organization, 1959-1963," in *International Cold War Military Records and History: Proceedings of the International Conference on Cold War Military Records and History Held in Washington, D.C., 21-26 March 1994*, ed. William W. Epley (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1996); Robert S. Jordan, *Norstad: Cold War NATO Supreme Commander: Airman, Strategist, Diplomat* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan, 2000), 148-55; Norman Gelb, *The Berlin Wall* (London: M. Joseph, 1986), 117-19.

[47] Though Live Oak grew to become, in essence, a "third hat" for the traditionally dual hatted officer. Pedlow, "Three Hats for Berlin."

action, Live Oak plans would rely on NATO communications facilities.[48] Nonetheless, it was kept secret and physically separate from NATO.

Throughout 1959 and 1960, Norstad and his staff drew up a series of military plans to challenge any blockade of Berlin. Norstad understood his operations were "political signals, not purely military operations."[49] As a result, he incorporated "a significant amount of bluff" in his owns plans in an effort call any Soviet bluff.[50] These plans were based on a tripartite military force and neglected a connection to NATO as a whole.[51] Still, if the military operations went wrong and a battle erupted in Berlin, Article 5 might be invoked because of Council's association with the Berlin Guarantee. "Much would depend," observed one British official, "on who was first to shoot."[52]

That Live Oak had a tripartite staff did not mean it represented agreement among the tripartite powers. The Live Oak plans troubled Harold Macmillan and his advisors at 10 Downing Street. Macmillan's advisers thought the plans "unsatisfactory" and "aggressive," and "should only be envisaged if N.A.T.O. is ready to undertake global war." They were eager to know when NATO would be "brought in."[53] The Joint Chiefs of Staff, however, would not take NATO into their confidence, and preferred to keep the planning in Live Oak. Thus, as the British

---

[48] Lawrence S. Kaplan, "The Berlin Crisis of 1958-1962: Views from the Pentagon," in *International Cold War Military Records and History: Proceedings of the International Conference on Cold War Military Records and History Held in Washington, D.C., 21-26 March 1994*, ed. William W. Epley (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1996), 72.

[49] Pedlow, "Three Hats for Berlin," 174.

[50] Rice, "The Alliance City," 100.

[51] Ibid., 107-09.

[52] FO to UKDel, "NATO versus Tripartite Responsibility," October 2, 1961, FO 371/160492, NAUK.

[53] Note to the Prime Minister from T. J. Bligh, September 16, 1959, PREM 11/3005, NAUK.

Chiefs of Staff pointed out, "many of the measures could not be undertaken unless N.A.T.O. were prepared for global warfare - and yet N.A.T.O. has not been made aware of the planning, let alone accepted it!" Nonetheless, the British, in the interest of "maintaining military co-operation," continued to participate with the proviso that the plans were made "without political commitment."[54] By the end of the Eisenhower years "a number of plans have been drawn up which the U.K. Chiefs of Staff regard as dangerous military nonsense."[55]

*****

In mid-1959, the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) reported that "despite the public appearance of unity and cohesion" in NATO, too "many divisive forces exist in the Western Alliance which profoundly affect its efficiency as the basic political and military organization of the Atlantic states."[56] NATO was not the place to formulate a grand strategy for Berlin. For security reasons, to keep their options open, and especially to avoid a showdown between Bonn and the other allies, Eisenhower and Dulles avoided making NATO the forum for their Berlin policy. While this frustrated some allies, their decision also wisely avoided the greater frustrations and disagreement that would have come from forcing allies to agree to plans they did not believe in. Luckily, as the British foreign secretary Selwyn Lloyd wrote in late 1959 "the heat" had "gone out of the Berlin situation."[57]

---

[54] "Berlin Contingency Planning (D.(59)35 and D.(59)38.)," Note to the Prime Minister from Bligh, December 8, 1959, PREM 11/3005, NAUK.

[55] "[I]n face of H.M.G.'s desire to avoid a showdown with the Americans, these plans remain on the books although there is no commitment to carry them out." Undated letter [late February 1961, in CG1016/4G "Berlin Contingency Planning," FO 371/160485, NAUK.

[56] "A Critical Appraisal of Western Unity," INR Intelligence Report, August 7, 1959, DDRS, CK3100423207.

[57] "Berlin Contingency Planning (D.(59)35 and D.(59)38.),", December 8, 1959.

2.5.2 Berlin "Heats Up" Again

The heat was not going to stay out of Berlin. Within a week of John F. Kennedy's inauguration, Secretary of State, Dean Rusk warned of "indications" that Khrushchev "will be returning to the Berlin question in due course, perhaps soon."[58] A month later, as staff from the National Security Council set out a list of "key national security problems," they identified Berlin as a subject needing study: Khrushchev was going to "heat up" the crisis in the coming months.[59]

NSC staffers determined early in the Kennedy administration that Berlin was militarily "indefensible except by a decreasingly credible threat of general war." As a result, they called for a study to find "imaginative policy planning toward real solutions to Berlin, and possibly the broader situation of Germany itself."[60] Similarly, the Director of the Policy Planning Staff, Walt Rostow, wrote to the President: "we must try to think ahead not merely in terms of a military plan, but in terms of a political plan."[61] "No one believes" in German unification, argued Rostow, though he understood how this argument "may be disruptive of NATO in general and Western Germany's orientation towards the West in particular." Still, he urged that maybe a NATO sub-

---

[58] Rusk to the President, January 28, 1961, POF, folder: Germany-Security JAN-JUNE 1961, JFKLDC. Rusk was no doubt alerted to the January 1961 speech by Khrushchev to Communist party organizations in Moscow that he would sign a separate peace treaty with East Germany. See also "The Berlin Problem in 1961," POF, folder: Germany: Security, 1961: January-June, JFKLDC.

[59] "Key National Security Problems," February 10, 1961. NSF, Subject Files, box 303, folder: Policy Planning, 1/61-2/10/61, JFKL.

[60] Ibid. Some ideas included dropping the "impossible terms" for German unification, thinking about accommodations that could be made with the Soviets in regards to access agreements on Berlin, recognition of the East German regime, and perhaps even a confederal Germany.

[61] "Notes for the President. Subject: Planning Item, NSC Agenda," February 23, 1961, NSF, Subject Files, box 303, folder: Policy Planning, 2/11/61-5/61, JFKL.

committee should discuss this point.[62] This private American thinking was not significantly different from previous calls in the North Atlantic Council for a diplomatic solution to the crisis.

But instead of establishing a study of the German problem writ large, Kennedy invited Dean Acheson to undertake a study of possible American responses to a renewed Berlin Crisis.[63] It was natural to focus on these plans, since the Kennedy staffers recognized they "come as close as any national security policy to contemplating general war."[64]

Acheson's advice to the President was stark. He was convinced there was no "solution" to the Berlin problem other than total unification of Germany, and unification could never be attained without weakening the Western position . Acheson ruled out any negotiations with the Soviets and called instead for a "bold and dangerous course."[65]

In Acheson's thinking, any of the other instruments of grand strategy, whether diplomatic, economic, or moral, would be ineffective or misunderstood by the Soviets. Only military force

---

[62] "NATO Paper, memorandum for Acheson from Rostow, March 20, 1961, NSF, box 220, folder: NATO, General 3/17/61-3/31/61, JFKL.

[63] This despite repeated calls for consideration of "alternative approaches to the Berlin and German problems" and worry that only one part-time consultant - Henry Kissinger - was thinking about the German issue writ large. "An Illustrative List of National Security Planning Problems Which May Justify Urgent Attention," February 17, 1961, NSF, Subject Files, box 303, folder: Policy Planning, 2/11/61-5/61, JFKL; "Revised List of National Security Planning Problems," from Komer to Bundy and Rostow, May 15, 1961, NSF, Subject Files, box 303 folder: "Policy Planning, 2/11/61-5/61," JFKL. Acheson did not hold an official position in the Kennedy administration, and Schlesinger says Kennedy specifically wanted a hard line before making his decision. *A Thousand Days*, 380. For various interpretations of Acheson's appointment, Lawrence Freedman, *Kennedy's Wars: Berlin, Cuba, Laos, and Vietnam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 45-49, 62-63; Frank Costigliola, "The Pursuit of Atlantic Community: Nuclear Arms, Dollars, and Berlin," in *Kennedy's Quest for Victory American Foreign Policy, 1961-1963*, ed. Thomas G. Paterson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 29; Schwartz, "The United States and Western Europe," 121; Rice, "The Alliance City," 107-09.

[64] "Key National Security Problems," February 10, 1961.

[65] "Berlin," Memorandum for the President from Dean Acheson, April 3, 1961. POF, folder: United Kingdom: Security, 1961: 27 March – April, JFKLDC.

was the answer. Where the Live Oak plans had been designed to give policymakers options to call a Soviet bluff, Acheson wanted to take them further. If the Soviets put up "persistent physical interference" on the route to Berlin, they must be challenged by no less than a full "armored division, with another division in reserve."[66] Acheson knew that the British wanted to send at most one battalion, in a probe, and that this small unit would serve only as a test of Soviet determination. But the purpose of Acheson's divisions was not to probe or test the Soviets, but to engage in "a fight over Berlin."[67]

The "purpose of a fight," Acheson argued, would be to force the Soviets to choose between reopening access or to keep on fighting with the risk of escalation. And Acheson expected two more benefits would accrue from the battle: First, he expected that such a fight would "rally our European allies to a unified and determined rearmament program," and have the effect, like the 1948 Czechoslovakia coup and the Korean War of turning "a liability into an asset, by rallying the alliance into a greater unity and military power." Here was early thinking about how the United States could use the Berlin Crisis to build-up American and NATO conventional forces to support an emerging American defense strategy that emphasized non-nuclear force. Second, paradoxically, Acheson thought such a "grave conflict in the heart of Europe" might lead to a diplomatic negotiation to solve the outstanding issues of German unification and arms control in Europe.[68] Europeans who knew of Acheson's thinking worried he was out of touch with thinking

---

[66] "Berlin," Memorandum for the President from Dean Acheson, April 3, 1961. POF, folder: United Kingdom: Security, 1961: 27 March – April, JFKLDC.

[67] See also his letter to Lucius Clay, in which he wrote that troops should be built up with "evident and real intent to use them, if necessary, with SAC in support." Acheson to Clay, January 4, 1962, AP, Gen. Corr., box 6, folder 77. My reading of Acheson's report makes me think Acheson thought nuclear weapons could be avoided; this diverges slightly from Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, 291.

[68] "Berlin," April 3, 1961.

in the rest of the alliance; nowhere is this more obvious than Acheson's contention that engaging in a either a local or a grave conflict in Europe, unwanted by all of America's NATO allies, would bind the alliance together.[69]

In March Macmillan visited Washington and received a preview of Acheson's thinking. There is little wonder why he found it "bloodcurdling." First, Acheson believed a battle between American divisions and Soviet troops could remain a "local conflict." This concept of a "sustained fight," absent quick escalation to a nuclear exchange, was a significant contradiction to previous American strategic calculation, and was at odds with what Norstad believed likely.[70]

When Macmillan and Lord Home, and later British military officials like Chief of the Defence Staff Louis Lord Mountbatten, considered Acheson's plans to use a division-sized force, they were still thinking of a probe. They did not understand how Acheson thought a division of armor could move down the autobahn without either stretching into a long, vulnerable column, or - if they were to keep a safer formation in which they would be dispersed on either side of the highway - not complicate the situation by entering East Germany.[71] The simple answer is that Acheson did not conceive of the division as a probe but as a fighting force, and so its transgressions past the shoulders of the autobahn mattered not at all.

---

[69] See next chapter.

[70] On Norstad's reaction to the Kennedy administration's views on war, see especially Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, 289-91.

[71] "East-West Issues: Berlin," memorandum of conversation, April 5, 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963 XIV,* doc. 14. "Extract from record of conversation between the CDS + President Kennedy – Washington, April 12, 1961," undated, FO 371/160486. See also Mountbatten's quote in Pedlow, "Allied Crisis Management for Berlin: The Live Oak Organization, 1959-1963," 103; Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, 289-90.

Macmillan had come to Washington determined not to let Anglo-American disagreements on Berlin ruin hopes of his establishing a "Special Relationship" with Kennedy.[72] For fear of appearing "soft," Macmillan did not tell the Americans that the British had been working on solutions to the German problem. Nor did he wish to debate the relative merits of military versus non-military countermeasures to any Soviet action. British officials had begun a list of non-military measures that could be taken to inflict pressure on the Soviet Union, only to find that these measures, like economic sanctions, would probably hurt the UK more than they would hurt the USSR.[73]

Here was the rub for Macmillan: The military contingency plans were considered in London to be simply no good, but if the UK somehow managed to convince the Americans to drop the military planning, the emphasis would turn to non-military plans, which would be just as bad.[74] If the British were to argue against both, they would give the Americans the impression that "in a Berlin crisis, we should prefer to do nothing whatever."[75] Although Macmillan and Home raised some concerns over Acheson's plans, they said little during this formative stage of American planning. [76]

---

[72] Minutes on jacket CG1016/4G "Berlin Contingency Planning," by J.E. Killick, February 20, 1961, FO 371/160485, NAUK.

[73] "Confidential Annex to C.O.S.(61)21st Meeting Held on Thursday, 23rd March, 1961," March 23, 1961, FO 371/160485, NAUK.

[74] Ibid.

[75] "Vice Chiefs of Staff March 23: Berlin Contingency Planning," undated [late March 1961], FO 371/160485, NAUK.

[76] Kennedy appeared to heartily approve Acheson's thinking the next day on the *Honey Fitz.* "The President's Meeting with Prime Minister Macmillan, Washington, April 1961, East-West Issues: Berlin," Memorandum of Conversation, April 6, 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963 XIV,* Doc. 15.

Acheson's plans would go on to hold an awkward place in Kennedy's grand strategy over Berlin. Although Kennedy had supported them in discussions with the British, he ultimately decided that Acheson's plans were "too militant." As explained below, he preferred a peaceful resolution to the crisis. Macmillan later understood Kennedy's preference and it comforted him; Adenauer guessed it, and it worried him greatly.[77] In the meantime, Acheson's thinking was the only sustained and organized thought given to Berlin before the Vienna Summit that renewed the crisis in 1961. It also reflected the Kennedy administration's - especially McNamara's - thinking that NATO needed to increase its conventional forces. As a result, Acheson's thinking became the blueprint for the military component of Kennedy's Berlin strategy.[78]

2.5.3 A Cold Winter

Shortly after Macmillan left Washington, a band of US-trained Cuban exiles launched an unsuccessful attack against Cuba at the Bay of Pigs. The ill-planned attack was a foreign policy disaster for Kennedy. Just like the British at Suez, the French in Algeria, or the Dutch in Indonesia, the United States appeared to be guilty of unilateral violence brought on by emotion and "obsessive reaction."[79] Eisenhower warned Kennedy the Soviets would be "emboldened" to take action they otherwise might not risk; he was particularly worried they would probe the Americans for weakness in Berlin.[80]

---

[77] American diplomats believed that Adenauer became "anti-American" since he visited Kennedy in 1961. "Proceedings of the Atlantic Affairs Conference, American Embassy, Luxembourg, November 29-30, 1964," RG59, EUR, DAS, Schaetzel Files, box 1, folder: "Atlantic Affairs Conference, Luxembourg 11/29-30/64," NARA.

[78] Costigliola, "The Pursuit of Atlantic Community," 62; Freedman, *Kennedy's Wars*, 62; Kaplan, "The Berlin Crisis of 1958-1962," 70.

[79] "The Problem We Face," Memorandum to the President from Rostow, April 21, 1961, NSF, Subject Files, box 303, folder: Policy Planning, 2/11/61-5/61, JFKL.

[80] Michael Beschloss, *The Crisis Years: Kennedy and Khrushchev, 1960-1963* (New York: Edward Burlingame Books, 1991), 145-46.

Khrushchev chose to test Kennedy when the two men met for the first time, in June 1961, at Vienna. He harangued Kennedy and blustered about signing a peace treaty with the DDR. Such a treaty would make East Germany sovereign and thus end the right of the United States to keep forces in Berlin, Khrushchev said, and the new nations' borders "would be defended." Any attempt to violate these borders with force "would be met by force," and Khrushchev warned Kennedy that the "US should prepare itself for war and the Soviet Union will do the same." If the USSR and US could not reach an interim agreement by December, Khrushchev vowed to sign a treaty unilaterally.[81] Kennedy had little to say in the face of Khrushchev's tirade, ending the meeting only with warnings of "a cold winter" ahead.

Kennedy launched a major policy review to decide on a course of action. Department of State officials recalled that Kennedy essentially appointed himself "Berlin Desk Officer," and Berlin received the full attention of his White House staff.[82] In May, before Vienna but after Acheson's report, McNamara passed to Kennedy advice from the Joint Chiefs of Staff: If the Soviets were to deny access to Berlin, any solution "must include U.S. and Free World military, diplomatic, and economic countermeasures, on a worldwide basis, in addition to local military action." The JCS urged improving tripartite plans to help execute such a global grand strategy if required.[83]

---

[81] "Memorandum of Conversation," June 4, 1961, 3:15 p.m., *FRUS 1961-1963 XIV,* Doc. 33.

[82] The President's involvement concerned State officials. Kennedy worried European experts with some "surprising gaps in his knowledge" and obviously knew "very little about German history." See Hillenbrand's remarks in Honoré Marc Catudal, *Kennedy and the Berlin Wall Crisis: A Case Study in U.S. Decision Making* (Berlin: Berlin-Verlag, 1980), 151-52; Beschloss, *The Crisis Years*, 145-46. Kennedy, however, was clearly determined to get a sense of his options and capabilities on Berlin. "Suggested Remarks Before the Meeting on Berlin 4:00 P.M. 17 July 1961," POF, folder: Germany: Security, July 1961, JFKLDC.

[83] "Military Planning for a Possible Crisis," Memorandum to the President from McNamara, May 5, 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963 XIV,* doc. 22.

This thinking - that any response to Berlin would require a range of coordinated instruments - permeated American planning during the crisis.[84] In July, Kennedy's special assistant for national security affairs, McGeorge Bundy, issued a memorandum to Rusk, McNamara, and Douglas Dillon, the Secretary of the Treasury - representing the arms of the American diplomatic, military, and economic levers of power. The President, Bundy wrote, wished to develop a plan for Berlin that would not simply meet Khrushchev's challenge, but exploit the Berlin crisis "to advance our constructive long-term purposes." He specifically wanted to ensure a military build-up to meet the Berlin crisis had a "maximum lasting effect on NATO's military posture."[85]

Kennedy also wanted to use the Berlin crisis to develop a sense of "Greater Atlantic Cohesion." Berlin, it seemed, offered an opportunity to "exploit the felt need for greater inter-dependence which is likely to characterize a period of Berlin tensions and preparation." The renewed challenge over Berlin, the Americans hoped, would lead to increased military and economic cooperation and allow "new steps toward the long-term goal of a wider community" of cooperation in the political field.[86]

This list of goals matched closely what Acheson expected could be achieved by a fight over Berlin. Now, however, the White House hoped to obtain these benefits without going to war. Walt Rostow took the concept and ran with it. Although an economist by training, Rostow was also good at putting political slogans in a nutshell (he had, in fact, designed a bumper sticker for Kennedy's campaign). He urged the President to recast the scenario not as another "Berlin

---

[84] An Interdepartmental Coordinating Group, or Berlin Task Force, was established in the summer of 1961. For details, see Gelb, *The Berlin Wall*, 117-19.

[85] "Berlin," Memorandum from Bundy to Rusk, McNamara, and Dillon, July 7, 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963 XIV,* doc. 58.

[86] Ibid.

crisis" but instead a "test of the unity, the will, and the creativity of the North Atlantic Community."[87]

The advice of the JCS, Bundy's memo, and Rostow's formulation all point to a heady notion that the Berlin Crisis would be good for NATO. The allies would build up their conventional forces while at the same time cooperating to coordinate the other instruments of grand strategy. What no one in Washington made explicit was what authority would sit at the top of NATO's grand strategy for Berlin. Would the actions and contingency plans, whether diplomatic, economic, or military, be carried out after joint agreement by all the allies, and after they had reached a common understanding of goals and objectives? Or was NATO simply a means of executing American policy? It seems, at first, not to have occurred to officials in Washington that these were two separate options. Almost immediately, the United States approached the Berlin crisis as if it were a crisis for Washington alone, with NATO serving as an adjunct to back-up some elements of an American grand strategy.[88]

2.5.4 The Instruments of Grand Strategy

2.5.4a The Diplomatic Instrument

As early as July 1961, the United States had decided to negotiate with the USSR that October, after the German elections. But should they tell the NATO allies? While many of the allies would like this idea, France and the FRG would not. If disagreement broke out in NATO, the Soviets might see this "as an indication of weakness on the Western side."[89] Just how to

---

[87] Memorandum to the President from W[alt] W[hitman] R[ostow], July 20, 1961, POF, folder: Germany: Security, July 1961, JFKLDC.

[88] Trachtenberg contrasts Kennedy's efforts to "set policy for the West as a whole" with Eisenhower's efforts to act as a broker, especially between British and German allies. Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, 304; Beschloss, *The Crisis Years*.

[89] "Posing the Issues of Negotiations and Our Attitudes to the GDR," Memorandum from Kohler to the Secretary of State, July 17, 1961, POF, folder: "Germany: Security, July 1961," JFKLDC.

negotiate over Berlin was hardly agreed upon in Washington, as different elements of the administration battled for leadership.[90] Because of these disagreements between allies and between offices in Washington, the United States did not discuss negotiating positions or timing in the North Atlantic Council.

But other allies, who since the Eisenhower presidency had wished for NATO to act as a diplomatic clearinghouse on Berlin, tried to fill the vacuum. Spaak, now the Belgian foreign minister, continued to advocate a "Western political strategy." He told the Americans that "virtually all the NATO countries," excluding France and Germany, think that the West should make a counter proposal to Khrushchev's challenge. With no counter proposition, the "West was headed for humiliation." Spaak maintained his "grave doubt whether Europe would fight to hold Berlin under present circumstances."[91] The Germans were "very, very anxious not to fight for West Berlin" and the British Minister of Defense did not think the "status quo is a very satisfactory basis on which to threaten a major war."[92]

In July, the United States finally agreed to consult the NAC on a diplomatic note to the Soviets, but both sides squabbled over how long the Council would consider the issue. Permanent representatives were "incensed and discouraged," and it seemed the Kennedy

---

[90] Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., for instance, urged Kennedy not to leave Berlin to the "State Department deadheads," instead recommending centralizing policy around the White House. Memorandum for the President from Arthur Schlesinger, jr., July 30, 1961, POF, folder: "Schlesinger, Arthur M., 1961," JFKLDC.

[91] "Mr. Spaak's Views on the German Problem," Memorandum of Conversation, June 9, 1961, POF, folder: Germany: Security, 1961: January-June, JFKLDC.

[92] The German statement is from Blankenhorn as retold by Spaak; "Mr. Spaak's Views on the German Problem," June 9, 1961. The German Ambassador had insinuated Bonn's worry about war for Berlin to Norstad in July 1961. See Jordan, *Norstad*, 171. "Berlin," Memorandum from Harold Watkinson to the Prime Minister, June 23, 1961, FO 371/160487, NAUK.

administration's behavior belied its earlier claims to wish to discuss major issues in NATO.[93] The Americans relented on the timing. But Kennedy, exasperated by the inability of parts of his administration to allow him to respond quickly to Khrushchev, was also upset with the delay at NATO.[94] He did not, he told the NSC, "intend to make himself dependent on America's European allies."[95]

Going forward, the Americans assumed the NAC would demand "an exhaustive attempt at negotiations." If tensions increased, "some of the members would be unwilling, in the final analysis, to resort to military action."[96] A frustrated Kennedy asked Acheson, "How do we get it over to our allies to do something?" The former secretary of state assured Kennedy he was "worrying about much needlessly." "Allies," said Acheson, "will try almost anything to avoid doing anything. We must not appear too eager to negotiate."[97]

Despite recognizing that most allies wanted "immediate steps looking forward to negotiations on the substance" of the problem, the Kennedy administration did not explain to the Council that the president, too, favored negotiations.[98] Instead, the Americans focused on how they might use NATO to apply economic and military pressure on the Soviets.

---

[93] UKDel No. 84 to FO, July 10, 1961, PREM 11/3348, NAUK. See also UKDel No. 83 to FO, July 10, 1961, PREM 11/3348, NAUK.

[94] Catudal, *Kennedy and the Berlin Wall Crisis*, 152.

[95] Ibid., 161. Washington TOPOL 38 to USRO, July 9, 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963 XIV,* doc. 60; UKDel No. 88 to FO, July 12, 1961. PREM 11/3348, NAUK, See also Editorial Note, *FRUS 1961-1963 XIV,* Doc. 73.

[96] "Documents Prepared in Response to NSC Action Memorandum No. 59 of July 14, 1961," July 18, 1961, POF, folder: Germany: Security: Interdepartmental Coordinating Group papers, July 1961, JFKLDC.

[97] Notes on Meeting of the Berlin Steering Group, September 7, 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963 XIV,* doc 143.

[98] Paris POLTO 240 to SecState, August 30, 1961, POF, folder: France: Security, 1961: General, JFKLDC. In fact, France was "isolated" as the only NATO ally opposed to responding

2.5.4b The Economic Instrument

The tripartite foreign ministers had previously agreed amongst themselves that if access to West Berlin was blocked, the tripartite powers and the FRG would implement "a total economic embargo" against the Soviet bloc. The Americans were eager to develop this plan and hoped a NATO committee would coordinate an allied plan.[99] The British preferred more limited maneuvers, like suspending travel documents, and complained that the Americans "always tend to reach for the sledge-hammer."[100] Still, the British did not oppose discussing economic countermeasures in NATO, for fear of finding themselves in "bad odour" with not only the Americans but also the Germans, who were desperate for non-military solutions.[101]

When the Americans raised the issue in the North Atlantic Council, there was confusion whether the threat of an embargo, or an embargo itself, would deter the Soviets.[102] Most allies believed the threat itself would not deter the Soviets. Analysts - such as those in the British Joint Intelligence Bureau - worried an embargo would "weld" the already "relatively self-sufficient"

---

in some way to Khrushchev. "Berlin," Memorandum of Conversation, August 24, 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963 XIV,* doc. 126.

[99] Washington DC to FO, "Berlin: Economic Counter-Measures," August 24, 1961, FO 371/160496, NAUK.

[100] P.W. Marten [Bonn] to John Killick, May 25, 1961, FO 371/160495, NAUK.

[101] Killick to Peter Murray [NATO], May 9, 1961, FO 371/160495, NAUK; P.W. Marten [Bonn] to John Killick, May 25, 1961, FO 371/160495, NAUK**.** See also Christopher Steele to Evelyn Shuckburgh, May 29, 1961, FO 371/160486, NAUK. May 29, 1961. Christopher Steele to Evelyn Shuckburgh, FO 371/160486. The Germans raised the possibility of economic countermeasures in NATO's CPA as early as 1960. See "Possible Economic Counter-Measures," AC/119-WP(60)95, November 11, 1960, NATO and "Action Sheet," AC/119-R(60)44, December 8, 1960, NATO. No agreement was reached.

[102] The Americans told the North Atlantic Council an economic embargo was one "last desperate measure to avoid war." Summary Record of a Meeting of the Council, Paris, October 4, 1961," C-R(61)50, October 12, 1961, NATO. But debate on October 23 showed understanding of the embargoes' purposes was anything but clear.

Soviet Bloc more firmly together.[103] And it was not clear just how an embargo would work in practice. The British lacked a formal legal instrument to implement an embargo. Canada only had authority to impose an embargo in wartime. And even if the NATO allies all officially agreed to a boycott, NATO's Committee of Political Advisers warned that even "a fully watertight embargo, partial or total in scope, would in practice be most difficult to achieve."[104]

The other problem was the tremendous variation in NATO member's trade with the Soviet Union. The Americans and Canadians traded little with the USSR, with Canada's imports from, and exports to the Soviet Union, totaling less than 1% of the country's trade. At the other extreme was Iceland, which exchanged nearly a quarter of both its exports and imports with the Soviet Union. Iceland would clearly suffer from an embargo, and so would Greece, Italy, Turkey and the United Kingdom.[105] For this reason, Thomas Finletter, the American Permanent Representative, warned Kennedy he had "run into a good deal of trouble" on economic countermeasures. Still, the US was "digging in our heels on this and are going to insist on it."[106] That the United States would push so hard for a policy that cost them so little, but their allies so

---

[103] "Summary Record of a Meeting of the Council, Paris, October 23, 1961," C-R(61)54, October 23, 1961, NATO; see also the minutes on "The Use of Economic Counter-Measures in the Berlin Crisis, K.W.D. Strong, FO 371/160490, NAUK.

[104] "Possible Economic Counter-Measures," Report by the Committee of Political Advisers," May 29, 1961, C-M(61)45, NATO; "Possible Economic Countermeasures to be taken in the Face of the Berlin Crisis," C-M(61)82, September 29, 1961, NATO.

[105] "Possible Economic Countermeasures to be taken in the Face of the Berlin Crisis. September 29, 1961; FO to Washington, "Economic Counter Measures," August 25, 1961, FO 371/160946, August 25, 1961; "The Use of Economic Counter-Measures in the Berlin Crisis, K.W.D. Strong, FO 371/160490, NAUK.

[106] Paris POLTO 240 to SecState, August 30, 1961, POF, folder: France: Security, 1961: General, JFKLDC.

much, engendered bitterness from many allies.[107] Ultimately the Council agreed an embargo would be an appropriate response if access to West Berlin blocked, but not before.[108] This made economic countermeasures a moot point, for if physical access to Berlin was denied, all of the focus would be on military options.

2.5.4c The Military Instrument

Up until mid-summer 1961, military contingency plans were still exclusively the domain of Live Oak. The British and most Americans believed the Live Oak plans would be used as probes and political devices for signaling the West's firm intentions to defend their rights in Berlin. As Foy Kohler, Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, told the British outright that the US was knowingly "taking risks which do not make military sense."[109] Still, British officials closer to the planning in Washington, like the chairman of the British Defence Staff, Air Marshal Mills, and Harold Caccia, the British ambassador, believed there to be "clearly another purpose behind these plans." The Kennedy administration, even the "American people," were not "in a mood to take a bad reverse over Berlin." Mills warned London that the Americans would first try

---

[107] As one Brit put it, for the Americans, "getting others to take drastic economic countermeasures … presents [Washington] with no political or economic difficulty." P.W. Marten [Bonn] to John Killick, May 25, 1961, FO 371/160495, NAUK.

[108] "Summary Record of a Meeting of the Council, Paris, October 31, 1961," C-R(61)56, November 13, 1961, NATO; "Summary Record of a Meeting of the Council, Paris, December 7, 1961," C-R(61)62, December 19, 1961, NATO.

[109] "Draft Minute from the Secretary of State to the Prime Minister," June 29, 1961, FO 371/160487, NAUK. Shuckburgh was convinced the JCS were "quite aware that operations in question were in themselves militarily unsound." "Politico-Military Discussions," Evelyn Shuckburgh, July 11, 1961. PREM 11/3348, NAUK. Note that Rusk was concerned enough to "make his position clear" to the President that he thought "shooting" must be "an act of last resort." Non-military measures, such as an airlift, or sanctions, should be "exhausted" before any military means. "Even a small probe," Rusk said, "could quickly get out of control." "Record of a Meeting, 4:30 p.m., August 3, 1961," POF, folder: State, 1961: August-September, JFKLDC.

"everything possible short of large nuclear war" to avoid losing face over Berlin. "Personally," he continued, "I feel that in the last resort they will fight even at the risk of general war."[110]

This worry lingered throughout the Berlin Crisis. Lawrence Freedman has captured the American predicament: "Inasmuch as the allies had to be reassured that the United States would not be rash, the Soviet Union had to be persuaded that it just might be."[111] This did not work out in perfect balance. Kennedy's tough talk on communism, the failure at the Bay of Pigs, Khrushchev's diatribe at Vienna, and worries about Kennedy's youthfulness, inexperience, and perhaps inability to control the American military weighed heavily on the minds of his allies.[112] Political opinion polls indicated Kennedy would have significant public support at home if he chose war in response to a new Berlin blockade.[113] Diplomats from both Britain and Canada, two countries that enjoyed relatively intimate relations with officials in the US, privately reported to their capitals that Kennedy was more likely to fight than back down on Berlin.[114]

---

[110] BDS Washington GM 199 to Ministry of Defence London, September 7, 1961, DEFE 7/2254, NAUK.

[111] Freedman, *Kennedy's Wars*, 93.

[112] For Kennedy's political incentive to take a hard line on communism see Beschloss, *The Crisis Years*, 23-25.

[113] Edward R. Murrow and the United States Information Agency had whipped American public opinion into a frenzy. Gallup Polls in July 1961 asked what the United States should do if "Communist East Germany closes all roads to Berlin and does not permit plans to land in Berlin." 67% of respondents argued the US and it allies "Should Fight" for Berlin, and a measly 16% said they "Should Not Fight." 85% responded that they were "willing to risk war to keep U.S. Troops in the divided city." "Key Questions and Answers in the Gallup Poll of July 1961," POF, folder: Germany: Berlin Crisis polls, July 1961, JFKLDC; Catudal, *Kennedy and the Berlin Wall Crisis*, 169-70. See other poll figures in Costigliola, "The Pursuit of Atlantic Community," 40; Beschloss, *The Crisis Years*, 23-25. American diplomats reported from Europe that the allies thought Washington was "working itself up into a lather somewhat prematurely, and generating its own crisis atmosphere in the process." "Documents Prepared in Response to NSC Action Memorandum No. 59 of July 14, 1961," July 18, 1961, POF, folder: Germany: Security: Interdepartmental Coordinating Group papers, July 1961, JFKLDC.

[114] For the Canadian warnings, see Moscow to External Affairs, ''Germany and Berlin,'' September 15, 1962, and Washington to External Affairs, ''Berlin Krolls interview with

The British preference in case of blockade had always been for a small, battalion-sized probe up the autobahn. If it were turned back, the West should move to an airlift. Now, as Minister of Defence Harold Watkinson explained to Macmillan, the British had dug themselves into a hole by participating in Live Oak planning. They had helped develop plans for ground forces larger than a battalion that they "regard as being unrealistic," but now the Americans believed that "all military plans were agreed and feasible."[115] When General Lyman Lemnitzer, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, told British officers that the United States was "prepared to go the lengths of a real test of strength, up to the point of 'losing a division or two'," the British grew more worried.[116] Lemnitzer continued to talk tough, arguing that the time had come "for a show down with the Russians."[117] Combined with the premonitions of Mills and Caccia, the situation looked critical. Even the officials of the Foreign Office who usually prioritized agreement with the US above all other priorities thought it time to take the "bull by the horns" and "face up to the Americans even at the risk of a row."[118]

Significantly, Macmillan and his Foreign Secretary, Lord Home, disagreed on the need for a showdown with the Americans. If, on one hand, the British were critical of the American planning, it would look like the British were dragging their feet, again playing the "weak sister."

Khrushchev,'' September 21, 1962, both in RG 25, A-3-b, vol. 6080, file 50341-A-2-40 ''S'', LAC.

[115] "Berlin," Memorandum to the Prime Minister from Harold Watkinson, June 23, 1961, FO 371/160487, NAUK.

[116] Draft Telegram, FO to Washington, undated [July 1961], FO 371/160487, NAUK.

[117] "Berlin Contingency Planning and Military Staff Talks," July 6, 1961, FO 371/160487, NAUK. See also July 3, 1961. "Points Arising From Discussion with General Lemnitzer," note by Chief if the Air Staff [Mills], July 3, 1961, FO 371/160487, NAUK.

[118] Draft Telegram, FO to Washington, [July 1961]; "Berlin Contingency Planning," minute by E.E. Tomkins, July 5, 1961, FO 371/160487, NAUK; Memorandum from Sir F. Hoyer Miller to Evelyn Shuckburgh, July 13, 1961, FO 371/160487, NAUK.

On the other hand, if some sort of agreement was reached to take overt military measures, Britain would have to call up troops, move others, and might very well ruin the pound.[119] Macmillan decided it was better to wait. In the coming months, he hoped, the "fiction of the strong man at the White House" - that is, the error of always taking a hard line - would be exploded "when the world sees the dangerous drift to war." Then, perhaps, the British could take initiative. But now was not the right moment.[120] In the meantime, the British hoped some of the more dangerous American plans, especially a two-division or corps-sized probe, would be "shot down" in quadripartite discussions by the French and Germans.[121] The British were counseled by Acheson not to "do anything which might be interpreted as interjecting advice or needling the President in private."[122]

Macmillan's patience paid off. Kennedy came to his own conclusion that military action - likely a probe - "would take place only if West Berlin itself were directly threatened."[123] Kennedy thus rejected hardline thinking in Washington that even a Soviet peace treaty with East

---

[119] "Draft Minute from the Prime Minister to the Foreign Secretary," undated [June 24, 1961), PREM 11/3348, NAUK; "weak sister" line from Marten to Killick, May 25, 1961, FO 371/160495.

[120] "Draft Minute from the Prime Minister to the Foreign Secretary," [June 24, 1961).

[121] Macmillan's agreement is scribbled in the margins of "Message to Mr. Rusk on Berlin," Home to the Prime Minister, June 30, 1961, PREM 11/3348, NAUK.

[122] "Politico-Military Discussions," Evelyn Shuckburgh, July 11, 1961, PREM 11/3348, NAUK.

[123] Catudal, *Kennedy and the Berlin Wall Crisis*, 175. See also Memorandum of a Meeting on Berlin, July 18, 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963 XIV,* doc. 75; Memorandum from Bundy to Kennedy, July 19, 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963 XIV,* doc. 76; Memorandum of minutes of the National Security Council Meeting, July 19, 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963 XIV,* doc. 77. The British Embassy in Washington reported that Kennedy was increasingly leaning toward a "sort of negotiation and away from the more extreme positions taken by the American Chiefs of Staff." "Politico-Military Discussions," July 11, 1961.

Germany would require American action, and make "general war … more probable than not."[124] Now, the Foreign Office could happily report that Kennedy "has accepted the general approach to the Berlin problem which we are on the record as having always favoured." In return, the British felt "a certain obligation to support him in putting the policy into effect."[125] British troops had been banned by ministerial direction from training for operations larger than a battalion. Now, believing that Kennedy had abandoned any real intentions to engage in large limited military operations, Watkinson allowed British troops to begin training and complying with related orders.[126] In addition to the change in thinking about the threshold for war, the Americans made another critical decision: Mountbatten reported that on military contingency planning, Washington believed "the whole of NATO should be brought in."[127]

Kennedy, in July, decided on a "double-barreled" policy for Berlin. He explained in a nationally televised speech that he was willing to negotiate with the Soviets on Berlin. But any negotiations must be accompanied by a build-up of military strength so as to "give such diplomacy a maximum of flexibility" and to ensure that if the Soviets pushed things to the point

---

[124] "NATO Policies and Procedures," June 22, 1961, NP, box 96, folder: Assistant Secretary of Defense/ISA (3), DDEL. It was now explicit that a Soviet-DDR peace treaty, or any move to replace Soviet guards on the Autobahn with East German substitutes was not a "fighting matter." Memorandum from Bundy to Kennedy, July 19, 1961.

[125] "Berlin," July 27, 1961, FO 371/160487, NAUK. See also Confidential Annex to C.O.S.(61)47th Meeting Held on Tuesday 25th July, 1961, FO 371/160488, NAUK and L.J. Sabatini [MoD] to Killick [FO], July 28, 1961, FO 371/160487, NAUK.

[126] "Berlin. Record of a Meeting Held in the Minister's Room, Ministry of Defence, on Wednesday, 16th August, 1961 at 3:30 p.m.," FO 371/160490; "Training for Trade Wind," memorandum by E.E. Tomkins, September 19, 1961, FO 371/160492, NAUK. See also "Confidential Annex to C.O.S.(61)47th Meeting Held on Tuesday 25th July, 1961," and Sabatini to Killick, July 28, 1961.

[127] "Confidential Annex to C.O.S.(61)47th Meeting Held on Tuesday 25th July, 1961."

of war, the West would be prepared.[128] Kennedy, on McNamara's advice, decided on an increase in the defense budget and a gradual expansion of United States troop strength.[129] This was ultimately a more practical policy than Acheson's preference for declaring a national emergency. It was also attractive to Kennedy because it prevented him from appearing too "impetuous" to the NATO allies. But NATO would need to play a part in the buildup. During the National Security Council meeting where Kennedy took this decision, Edward Murrow warned that the "problem of morale and purpose in Western Europe" remained serious, and that the people of Europe "do not want to fight for Berlin." No one knew if the NATO allies would respond to American exhortations to build up their forces.[130]

2.5.5 Very Much in the Dark

On August 8, 1961, Dean Rusk appeared before the North Atlantic Council to present the president's policy to the allies and urge the allies to increase their troop strength and call up reserves.[131] But it was something Rusk did not say that rankled America's partners. Before he left Washington, Rusk told the President he was going to Paris to get three things: agreement on a military build-up, to clinch preparations for sanctions, and to bolster the propaganda efforts of NATO concerning Berlin.

---

[128] The message to de Gaulle was similar to those to Macmillan and Adenauer. Washington 422 to Paris, July 20, 1961. DNSA, BC02200. See editorial note, *FRUS 1961-1963 XIV,* doc. 79. Despite these pronouncements, White House advisers were still worried by the "dearth of political planning" for alternative negotiating positions presented by the Department of State, who were curiously focused on the military side of things. Record of Meeting of the Berlin Steering Group, July 20, 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963 XIV,* doc. 78.

[129] Memorandum of minutes of the National Security Council Meeting, July 19, 1961. See also Catudal, *Kennedy and the Berlin Wall Crisis*, 176.

[130] Murrow quoted in Memorandum of minutes of the National Security Council Meeting, July 19, 1961. In fact, the Americans were doubtful NATO would increase their forces at all.

[131] UKDel to Foreign Office, "Berlin: Mr. Rusk's Statement to the North Atlantic Council," August 8, 1961, FO 371/160488, NAUK.

Missing from Rusk's list was any intention to discuss the American diplomatic strategy - though this is what most members of the NAC had wanted to discuss since the Eisenhower years. But Rusk and Kennedy agreed it was best not to discuss the American negotiation position, primarily because of the Germans. In the upcoming autumn, the FRG would go to the polls, and German leaders simply could not be seen as too willing to negotiate on Berlin. Kennedy still wanted negotiations, however, and he hoped that by forcing the Germans to "undertake costly military preparations," it might cause their negotiating mood to "mellow" and help him achieve his goal of achieving a peaceful settlement in Europe, perhaps along the lines George Kennan's calls for disengagement the previous decade.[132]

Rusk left this all aside. Instead, he told the Council that NATO's lack of conventional strength had led to the Berlin Crisis and that only a "calm, sober, deliberate military build-up" could end it. These greatly increased forces would help Khrushchev "to see the trail of powder leading toward general war" so that "he might not strike the match."[133]

The American decision to leave NATO out of one barrel of the double-barrel approach - the negotiation side - while paying such close attention to a force build-up raised eyebrows. Evelyn Shuckburgh detected "longer-term American aims involved" and warned London that "whatever

---

[132] Although Kennedy referred to "our allies'" regarding "costly military preparations," it is clear he means the Germans. "Record of a Meeting, 4:30 p.m., August 3, 1961," POF, folder: State, 1961: August-September, JFKLDC. By the end of August, Bundy told the President that "the main line of thought among those who are now at work on the substance of our negotiating position is that we can and should shift substantially toward acceptance of the GDR, the Oder-Neisse Line, a non-aggression pact, and even the idea of two peace treaties." "Issues to be Settled with General Clay," Memorandum to the President from Bundy, August 28, 1961, POF, folder: Clay, General Lucius D., August 1961-June 1963," JFKLDC. See also Kennan, *Russia, the Atom, and the West*.

[133] "Memorandum on Statement to the North Atlantic Council in Private Session on Military Build-up, Soviet Motives and Intentions", by the United States Delegation, August 8, 1961, NATO/MPBE.

may be arranged in relation to the Berlin crisis will at least constitute a precedent."[134] In Paris, the new secretary general Dirk Stikker and the International Staff became suspicious of American goals in calling for a military build-up. They believed the proposed increase in forces was an effort to implement the American's new strategic concept, rather than special action directly related to Berlin. In a remarkable sign of distrust and suspicion between the NATO secretariat and the United States, an IS official wrote to Stikker that "It may be that the Berlin crisis, skillfully orchestrated, has not been at all unwelcome to the new military thinkers in the White House, anxious to establish their ideas."[135]

Rusk, in his speech, also revealed the existence of Live Oak and plans to "make a probe of Soviet intentions to determine whether the Soviets are prepared to use force." Although he said the military planning had to be "rigorously restricted to [the tripartite powers] who have to implement these plans, he promised that Live Oak was "being brought into the SHAPE area, and we can expect close coordination of that planning with NATO as a whole."[136] These imprecise and contradictory statements were variously interpreted and led to later problems. They also left the non-tripartite allies, many of whom had answered Rusk's calls for more troops, "very much in the dark" on contingency plans. [137]

---

[134] FO to Washington DC [Shuckburgh personal to Caccia], August 17, 1961, FO 371/160490, NAUK. For more on the assumed "implication for the long-term future of NATO quite apart from Berlin," see Killick to Tomlinson, August 14, 1961, FO 371/160491, NAUK.

[135] "United States of America," attached to Memorandum from J. Sagne to Secretary General, JS.104/61, August 19, 1961. NATO/MPBE.

[136] "Memorandum on Statement to the North Atlantic Council in Private Session on Military Build-up, Soviet Motives and Intentions", by the United States Delegation, August 8, 1961, NATO/MPBE.

[137] UKDel no. 111 to FO, August 21, 1961, DEFE 7/2253, NAUK.

2.5.6 The Berlin Wall

On August 13, 1961, three divisions of Soviet troops, their movements undetected by NATO intelligence, formed a ring around Berlin. Under their protection, East German forces erected a barrier around the perimeter effectively fencing off West Berlin. When the job was done, the Soviet troops retired, indicating to NATO analysts that the new barrier was the responsibility of the East Germans.[138] Even if the wall came as a surprise, Soviet action to seal off Berlin had always loomed as a possibility. But what did it portend? While some, like Kennedy and Bundy, were blasé about the wall, others worried it signaled an escalation of the crisis.[139]

Macmillan, Eisenhower, Kennedy, and de Gaulle would have preferred not to be responsible for Berlin; the Western position there was "untenable," as Eisenhower had remarked.[140] Nonetheless, the Americans were determined to maintain their rights to Berlin to allay German fears of abandonment. Kennedy felt obliged to respond to the new barrier around Berlin and so ostentatiously reinforced the Berlin garrison, and thus German morale, by sending a Battle Group into the city from West Germany.

The Germans appreciated the troop movement and a high profile visit from Vice President Lyndon Johnson. But most of the other NATO allies questioned why the Battle Group was

---

[138] "North Atlantic Council. Berlin," memorandum of meeting by UKDel, August 23, 1961, FO 371/160490, NAUK.

[139] "(1) Berlin Negotiations and (2) Possible Reprisals," Memorandum for the President from Bundy, August 14, 1961, POF, folder: Bundy, McGeorge, 1961, JFKLDC. Kennedy himself thought the Wall was Khrushchev's "way out of the predicament" of a Berlin Crisis. Quoted in Rueger, "Kennedy, Adenauer and the Making of the Berlin Wall, 1958-1961," 241. In a few short years, the Berlin Wall would be viewed as "a tacit admission by the communists that they had been defeated in Western Europe." "France and NATO," note to the Prime Minister, April 4, 1966, PREM 13/1043, NAUK.

[140] See Memorandum of Conversation between President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles, November 18, 1958, *FRUS 1958-1960 VIII*, doc. 47; on de Gaulle, see Cyril Buffet, "De Gaulle, the Bomb and Berlin: How to Use a Political Weapon," in *The Berlin Wall Crisis: Perspectives on Cold War Alliances*, ed. John P. S. Gearson and Kori N. Schake (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

dispatched with such fanfare, down the autobahn, in daylight. Like the public display of arms deliveries to the Middle East during the Syrian crisis, the bravado performance seemed to offer little benefit. Why not quietly reinforce Berlin, at night, by train?[141] Kennedy had deeply internalized the lessons of the outbreak of the First World War as portrayed in Barbara Tuchman's *The Guns of August;* he worried throughout his political life about Soviet miscalculation leading to accidental war.[142] The other NATO allies feared American miscalculation.

The British, who by virtue of their close connection to American diplomats and military officers in Berlin, Bonn, and the tripartite groups, knew more than the other allies and were the most worried. The British Embassy in Bonn was troubled by their American counterpart's insistence that tripartite troops moving into Berlin should be "more forceful and should not hesitate to force their way through against [East German] opposition, even including shooting if necessary."[143] The British learned the American troops were authorized to provide defensive and covering fire for their movements, and the British thought "these instructions seemed likely to turn a dangerous incident into a most grave one."[144]

---

[141] FO to Washington DC [Shuckburgh personal to Caccia], August 17, 1961.

[142] Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 513.Kennedy even recommended Tuchman to Macmillan, though the British questioned "whether it is such a sound textbook as he imagines." David Ormsby-Gore to the Prime Minister, May 9, 1962, Macmillan Papers, MS. Macmillan, c.311, Prime Minister's Personal Correspondence, BL. On Kennedy's overuse of the phrase "miscalculation," to Khrushchev's frustration, see Freedman, *Kennedy's Wars*, 56. Kennedy had asked SACEUR Eisenhower about war by accident with the Soviets on a trip to Europe in 1951. By the start of his own administration, he worried about Khrushchev's "miscalculation." Beschloss, *The Crisis Years*, 19, 87.

[143] Bonn to FO, "Allied access to East Berlin," August 30, 1961, FO 371/160491, NAUK.

[144] Berlin to FO, "Allies access to East Berlin," September 1, 1961, FO 371/160491, NAUK.

The British grew more worried when Kennedy appointed Lucius Clay, one of the celebrated figures of the Berlin Blockade, to a special position in Berlin.[145] Rusk assured the British that the hardliner's appointment was "purely a morale-building exercise" and outside the military chain of command.[146] The morale Rusk was alluding to was certainly German, not British. When Clay arrived in Berlin in September 1961, he directed military units to build and practice knocking down walls in the German forest. [147] In October 1961, Clay took advantage of a confusing situation to precipitate the infamous Checkpoint Charlie showdown between American and Soviet tanks. The showdown led to "deep disquiet" in the North Atlantic Council and in allied capitals.[148]

In November 1961, when tensions at the border rose once again, the American commandant in Berlin told the British that if the Soviets closed the Friedrichstrasse crossing, Americans troops would "at once react by tearing down the physical barriers." The "disturbing feature" of all this was that the Americans could "all too easily provoke the closing of F[reidrichstrasse] … and so create the situation to which their plan is tailored."[149] British officials grew even more worried the Americans might purposefully trigger a battle when US officials suggested a plan for "seizing" Soviet or East German personnel from a checkpoint in a "'Commando' type raid." This

---

[145] See Memorandum for the President from McNamara, August 24, 1961, POF, folder: Clay, General Lucius D., August 1961-June 1963, JFKLDC and "Issues to be Settled with General Clay," August 28, 1961.

[146] Washington DC to FO, "Berlin: General Clay," August 31, 1961, FO 371/160491, NAUK.

[147] Catudal, *Kennedy and the Berlin Wall Crisis*, 133.

[148] Ann Tusa, *The Last Division: A History of Berlin, 1945-1989* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1997), 335-36.

[149] Berlin to FO, "Single Command and Friedrichstrasse Crossing," November 7, 1961, FO 371/160573, NAUK.

would put the "onus of taking offensive action" - that is, either by efforts to "recapture" the personnel or by reprisals - on the Soviets.[150]

Rusk and State Department officials assured the British that no Americans tanks would break down barriers without British "concurrence."[151] The British believed the assurances were given in good faith. But in Berlin, Germany, and Europe, the "American chain of command is so mixed up" that one of the many generals might think he had the authority to undertake a unilateral initiative.[152] Indeed, the British started to fret that even Norstad, long their beacon of sense and sensibility among American military officers, "has not properly absorbed his Government's assurances to us that no such action would be taken without allied consultation." He might even use his own authority to "initiate local counter action" if Friedrichstrasse was blocked.[153]

While the British were privy to some of the scrambled nature of American command and control, Norstad would later say it was a good thing the NATO allies did not know the full extent of the confusion. On one day alone, he claimed, he received a number of conflicting instructions from government officials - including three separate cabinet officers - "demanding" he take action he "considered wrong and provocative."[154] Lines of command, control, and

---

[150] Hood to Tomkins, October 20, 1961, FO 371/160574, NAUK; Ashe to Hood, FO 371/160574, NAUK.

[151] Washington to FO, "Friedrichstrasse Crossing, November 28, 1961, FO 371/160574, NAUK.

[152] Bonn to FO, "Possible American Action in the Friedrichstrasse," November 2, 1961, FO 371/160574, NAUK. On this confusion see Jordan, *Norstad*, 175-78. While Clay might not technically have been a commander, he was willing to go beyond his authority. Raymond L. Garthoff, "Berlin 1961: The Record Corrected," *Foreign Policy*, no. 84 (Autumn 1991).

[153] Quote is from a note by E.E. Tomkins, November 23, 1961, FO 371/160574, NAUK. See also Steele to Shuckburgh, November 7, 1961, FO 371/160574, NAUK; Record of a Conversation with the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Norstad, and General Stockwell at SHAPE, by Evelyn Shuckburgh, August 9, 1961, FO 371/160488, NAUK.

[154] Lauris Norstad Oral History, OH-558, DDEL, 171.

communication, especially over the authority of NATO and other ground commanders to use nuclear forces, were blurry.[155] No one knew or agreed on what type of incident would provoke violence, whether that violence would lead to war, what kind of war would be fought, and who - the Americans, the tripartite powers, or NATO - would fight.

2.5.7 What is a NATO Policy?

Norstad briefed the North Atlantic Council after the Berlin Wall incident and made explicit the connection between Live Oak plans and NATO. A NATO military build-up was required so that NATO forces could defend themselves in case a probe touched off a larger conflagration. For the first time, Norstad provided detail to the allies of the Live Oak plans. But while Rusk had suggested in early August that Live Oak would be brought within the "SHAPE area," Norstad indicated that Live Oak was physically, but not organizationally, being brought closer to SHAPE, and that there was "no change in [Live Oak's] tripartite status."[156]

But just as the NAC was finally learning of these plans, they were being reviewed in Washington. McNamara wished to develop further plans in case the Soviets closed off Berlin. He met with the Ambassadorial Working Group – the Tripartite Group's new iteration that included the FRG - and said "he could not overemphasize the urgency of the situation." In fact, he was "so concerned at the lack of plans that they had begun to plan on their own for N.A.T.O. as a whole." While this might be "inappropriate and in some ways dangerous," they were going ahead with this effort.[157]

---

[155] See Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, 298-99. See also the next chapter.

[156] "Summary Record of a Meeting of the Council, Paris, August 23, 1961," C-R(61)39, August 29, 1961; "North Atlantic Council. Berlin," memorandum of meeting by UKDel, August 23, 1961, FO 371/160490, NAUK.

[157] Washington No. 2086 to FO, August 26, 1961, DEFE 7/2253, NAUK. See also Telegram from the Department of State to London, August 26, 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963 XIV,* doc. 129.

Norstad considered McNamara's planning inappropriate and dangerous. From his point of view, the conflict would invariably escalate to nuclear war if the Soviets were determined to resist any probe and fighting broke out. In fact, NATO's military planning was such that Norstad would require all of the NATO allies to build-up their forces as the Americans had requested, *and* prepare to use nuclear weapons, to have a chance of defending Western Europe. McNamara, however, wanted Norstad to expand his plans to allow for corps-sized operations in East Germany on the assumption these could engage in fighting short of a nuclear exchange. Norstad resisted, and the disagreement between Norstad and the Kennedy administration led ultimately to Norstad's forced retirement as SACEUR in 1962.[158]

The differences between Norstad and the Kennedy administration, especially McNamara, were fundamental. First was disagreement over strategy and whether large military operations in Europe could remain non-nuclear. For Norstad, McNamara's belief that war could be controlled and shaped so carefully confused "the wish with the fact."[159]

Second, and just as important, was Norstad's perception of his role. Norstad claimed to have learned from SACEUR Eisenhower that there was no difference between the military and political aspects of NATO. Even though he was the Supreme Commander, any "NATO business . . . was my business."[160] Norstad believed NATO's military plans had to be formed with an eye to what was politically acceptable to the allies, and he warned McNamara to think about how the allies would react to his plans to try to fight a conventional war in Europe.[161] In a testy meeting between McNamara, Rusk, and Norstad that ended with Norstad walking out and slamming the

---

[158] Pedlow, "Three Hats for Berlin," 184-85; Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, 302; Jordan, *Norstad*, 187-89.

[159] Pedlow, "Three Hats for Berlin," 184-85.

[160] Norstad, OH-558, DDEL, 142.

[161] Pedlow, "Three Hats for Berlin," 184-85.

door, the General had attempted to explain to the secretaries "what the Supreme commander meant in that whole cloth, whole picture," of NATO.[162] The idea of SACEUR playing a special role in NATO - which Eisenhower had originated and Norstad perfected - was not understood by the Kennedy administration whatsoever. Rusk was left to wonder: "How could Norstad have a policy that was a NATO policy? What is a NATO policy? In the end, he has to speak as an American. There is only one American policy."[163]

McNamara was determined to see the Acheson-ian plans formalized by SHAPE.[164] His avenue was the Ambassadorial Working Group, expanded to include the FRG in the summer of 1961. The Americans in the group set it to drafting "instructions" for SACEUR to develop contingency plans for an "integrated … general overall strategy applicable on a worldwide scale and perhaps to comprise political, diplomatic, economic, psychological, military and para-military measures."[165] The idea was to present these ideas to Stikker, and for Stikker to have the NAC approve the instructions so they could be forward to NATO's military commanders. The British noted with some concern that the French and Americans saw "no impropriety" in the group writing a directive to Norstad that would require NATO for implementation.[166] No doubt "the odours of political Tripartitism would inevitably arise."[167] Still, the ASG prepared their draft directive.

---

[162] Quotes from the Norstad oral history in Pedlow, Three Hats, 188

[163] Quoted in Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, 302.

[164] Freedman, *Kennedy's Wars*, 104.

[165] UKDel to FO, "Instructions to SACEUR," September 12, 1961, FO 371/160492, NAUK.

[166] Washington No. 2072 to FO, DEFE 7/2253, NAUK.

[167] Ramsbotham to Sabatini, October 18, 1961, FO 371/160492, NAUK.

2.5.8 A Profound Bitterness

It fell upon the British to deliver the "Draft Instructions to General Norstad, SACEUR," to Stikker.[168] Stikker was deeply disturbed by the document and what it meant for NATO. There already existed, after the economic and political debates, "*une amertume profonde*" in Council over Berlin and the lack of consultation. He warned that if the draft instructions were presented to the Council in their original form "the results would be disastrous."[169]

The directive instructed Norstad to create a graduated series of military plans for applying increasing pressure to compel the Soviets to re-open access to Berlin. At the same time, because any military action risked "rapid escalation," the plans also had to take account of NATO's overall strategy for any war that might break out.

The graduated plans, laid out in limited detail in the document, ranged from the tripartite powers' Live Oak plans, to "additional military plans" for "broader land, air or naval measures," up to the "selective use of nuclear weapons to demonstrate the will and ability of the Alliance to use them." The document presented to Stikker left out the final graduation in the original draft: general war. The "broader … measures" which stood between Live Oak and general war were the plans McNamara wished Norstad to develop, and it is clear from the draft instruction these were to be NATO plans.[170]

Within the year the North Atlantic Council would agree to issue these instructions to Norstad and he would develop plans to meet them. But it was a bruising process. The draft instructions touched Stikker and the Council's sensitivities in two key areas: First, they diverged from Rusk's

---

[168] "Memorandum to NAC on Draft Instructions to General Norstad SACEUR," from the United Kingdom Delegation, September 1, 1961, NATO/MPBE.

[169] "Memorandum and Comments on Draft Instructions to SACEUR," by the Secretary General, September 2, 1961, NATO/MPBE.

[170] "Memorandum to NAC on Draft Instructions to General Norstad SACEUR," September 1, 1961.

statement of August 8 about Live Oak and NATO. The International Staff and many allies had interpreted Rusk's statement about bringing Live Oak into the "SHAPE area" as meaning NATO would take over Live Oak planning; this had been Stikker's "bible" on the issue. It was clear from the memorandum that Live Oak would continue in its exclusive form.[171]

Worse, the draft instructions had been explicitly addressed to Norstad as SACEUR. Stikker and his staff did not think it "proper for four governments to give instructions to SACEUR, who is an international Supreme Commander empowered by the 15 nations of the Alliance."[172] According to Alberico Casardi, the Deputy Secretary General, neither the tripartite or quadripartite powers had any "right to take upon themselves the initiative of asking directly the NATO military authorities to draw up any such military plans." They might have "suggested," or even "recommended" that the NAC ask SACEUR to draw up such plans, or from a "legalistic and narrow" perspective, they could have solved the problem by addressing these instructions to Norstad's American position, Commander in Chief, Europe (CINCEUR).[173] None of these efforts

---

[171] "Memorandum on the relationship between Live Oak and NATO Planning" by the International Staff, September 2, 1961; "Summary of meeting between Secretary General and General Heusinger Chairman of the Military Committee on 31st August at 3 pm," August 31, 1961, NATO/MPBE.

[172] "Memorandum on Draft Instructions to General Norstad SACEUR" by the International Staff, September 2, 1961, NATO/MPBE.

[173] "Considerations on ambassadorial steering group's draft instructions to SACEUR," memorandum by Mr. Casardi to the Secretary General, September 19, 1961, NATO/MPBE. "Memorandum on Draft Instructions to General Norstad SACEUR" by the International Staff, September 2, 1961, NATO/MPBE. What the IS could not know was that, later in the fall, Norstad would actually ignore U.S. National Security Action Memorandum 109 which, as SACEUR, he was entitled to do, but which, as CINCEUR, he most certainly was not. Pedlow, "Three Hats for Berlin," 188; Freedman, *Kennedy's Wars*, 104.

to lubricate the passage of the instructions had been taken. Instead, the quadripartite powers "seem to speak openly as if they could speak on behalf of all the other members."[174]

Stikker, in an effort to find an acceptable solution, met with the quadripartite powers and helped redraft the instructions. The new draft made reference to the North Atlantic Treaty and clarified that Live Oak operations would be planned by CINCEUR, while the broader operations were to be SACEUR's responsibility.

The draft instructions improved upon the fuzziness about command relationships, but they touched off a battle royal when unveiled in Council. Finletter reported that the allies were in a "sarcastic fury;" their complaints represented "a great strain on the Alliance which could have disastrous results in an emergency."[175] The Canadians, with support from other European allies, were shocked that the quadripartite powers felt they could "act as a kind of NATO Steering Group."[176] NATO, it seemed, had a directorate after all.

There were other pressing concerns about the draft instructions. Although the British had taken the lead in presenting the paper to Stikker, they had their own interpretation of the guidance. They had ensured the instructions maintained the proviso that military plans would be enacted only after decisions by governments at the time. It was only this clause that made Macmillan comfortable enough with the planning to continue participating. Indeed, a full two

---

[174] "Memorandum on Draft Instructions to General Norstad SACEUR," September 2, 1961.

[175] UKDel to FO, September 22, 1961, FO 371/160492, NAUK.

[176] Quote is from Hood to Shuckburgh, September 27, 1961, FO 371/160494, NAUK. See also "Memorandum. North Atlantic Council. The Ambassadorial Steering Group. Council Meeting: Friday, September 22, 1961," September 22, 1961, FO 371/160493, NAUK; "Summary Record of a meeting of the Council, Paris, September 22, 1961," C-R(61)46, September 22, 1961, NATO; "Note for Sir Evelyn Shuckburgh," from Tomlinson, undated [late September 1961], FO 371/160493, NAUK.

months after the instructions were debated in Council, a Foreign Office official noted that "we should probably never be willing to agree to these operations under any circumstances."[177]

The Germans had participated in the group in Washington since the summer. Yet even they knew the instructions were "dynamite" when given to Stikker.[178] The FRG wanted the West to remain firm in their defense of Berlin, but not at the cost of a ground war that would consume Germany - East or West. The Germans had been willing to go along with the Live Oak planning, even up to the largest plan, a divisional probe code-named JUNE BALL. But they were deeply worried by the "broader plans" for conventional operations in Germany that would include a six-division assault into East Germany. Any such action, the Germans expected, would generate a counterattack resulting in the Soviets occupying much of Germany.[179] The Germans were essentially brought around to agreeing to the plans by Americans warnings that it appeared the Germans wished others to fight for them.[180]

The Germans pushed to develop other plans in case of a blockade of Berlin. A strategy of naval harassment and blockade had been considered during the Eisenhower years, but rejected by

---

[177] "Although we have not said so specifically to our Allies," wrote D. R. Ashe, "Berlin Counter Measures," November 23, 1961, FO 160575, NAUK. On the acceptability of the proviso to the Chief of Staff Committee, see "Comments on the Draft Instructions to NATO Supreme Allied Commanders," Annex to Chiefs of Staff Committee, "Instructions to NATO Supreme Allied Commanders: Note by the Secretary," September 27, 1961, FO 371/160492, NAUK.

[178] "Meeting of the Secretary General with the Permanent Representatives of France, the United States and Germany and the Acting Perm. Rep. of the UK, on 2 Sept. 1961," by G. Vest, September 4, 1961, NATO/MPBE.

[179] Bonn to FO, "Berlin Contingency Planning," September 8, 1961, FO 371/160491, NAUK. The particular problems of such a Soviet advance, and its ejection, are dealt with in the next chapter.

[180] See Kissinger's conversation with Adenauer in Telegram from Bonn to SecState, February 17, 1962, *FRUS 1961-1963 XIV,* doc. 298.

the President himself as ineffective.[181] In 1961 American officers renewed planning for harassment of Soviet merchant and military ships. The Germans knew these would be ineffective but pressed for them as "entail[ing] the least danger of escalation."[182] The maritime plans of 1961 went far beyond blockade and included graduated plans for harassment and hostile actions against Soviet ships. In the NAC, they only raised more doubts and frustrations as allies questioned whether they violated maritime law.

The greatest debate in Council was sparked by a part of the instructions calling on Norstad to develop plans for the "selective use of nuclear weapons to demonstrate the will of the Alliance to use them." This plan had grown out of the theories of Thomas Schelling, an economist whose writing about bargaining and strategic behavior in *Strategy and Conflict* made a "deep impression" on Kennedy.[183] Various plans existed for the demonstrative use of a nuclear weapon against Soviet targets to signal that the United States, or NATO, was prepared to use the weapons.[184] The Germans did not wish for the demonstration to take place on German soil. And

---

[181] The Soviets could withstand an economic embargo, Eisenhower noted, for 12 months. In the meantime, however, West Berlin "could be choked in 2 weeks." Memorandum of Discussion at a Special Meeting of the National Security Council, March 5, 1959, *FRUS 1958-1960 VIII,* doc. 201. See also Burke to Twining, April 10, 1959, DNSA, BC01131; "Military and Non-Military Counter-measures in the Berlin Crisis, May 21, 1959, DNSA, BC01292.

[182] Bonn to FO, "Berlin Contingency Planning," September 8, 1961, FO 371/160491, NAUK.

[183] Freedman, *Kennedy's Wars*, 101.

[184] This thinking was ensconced in NSAM 109 and Kennedy specifically directed Norstad to incorporate into his plans. Letter from Kennedy to Norstad, October 20, 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963 XIV,* doc. 185. For more on this thinking see Memorandum of Conversation, May 4, 1962, EUR, RPM, Records Relating to NATO Affairs [hereafter NATO Affairs], box 1, folder: NATO 1. Policy. Plans. 1962, NARA. See also "Berlin Contingency Planning: The Preferred Sequence of Military Action in a Berlin Conflict," Secretary General to Permanent Representatives, PO(62)593, September 17, 1962, NATO; "Notes on the President's Meeting with General Norstad, January 25, 1962, 2:30-3:45 pm," January 27, 1962, NSF Files, box 220A, folder: NATO, General Meetings Between the President and General Norstad, 7/61-1/62, JFKL;

several of the allies, led by the Canadians, were anxious the Soviets would not understand that the use of nuclear weapons was only a signal, and that they would touch off a nuclear holocaust.[185]

2.5.9 Do They Want the Alliance to Continue?

The complaints, questions, and requests for more information from the NAC troubled Rusk and McNamara. It looked like the Council had "a lack of any real sense of urgency." Rusk thought that the NAC's "ability to handle this subject, which is so central to our entire Berlin program, is a real test of its effectiveness."[186] Kohler, similarly, told the Washington group that the Council was "proceeding in an academic away" and "unaware that all of us were living in the shadow of a collision."[187] By attempting to use NATO as a component of American strategy, however, the United States had opened up the one question NATO had studiously sought to avoid. How - and why - would NATO go to war?

NATO military plans, since their earliest incarnation, rested on the premise of defense against a Soviet attack.[188] Now, however, the Americans' plans considered using military force not just

---

"Memorandum: North Atlantic Council. Berlin Military Planning. Private Session: February 23, 1962. Briefing by General Norstad," February 2, 1962, DEFE 7/2255, NAUK.

[185] "Summary Record of a Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, Paris, September 29, 1961," C-R(61)49, September 29, 1961, NATO. The Council's debate over the "selective use clause" is recounted in Timothy Andrews Sayle, "Canada, NATO, and the Berlin Crisis, 1961-1962: "Slow-Boil" or "Pressure Cooker?"," *International Journal* 62, no. 2 (2013). Schelling ultimately concluded that there was no support for his theory that "any nuclear use, even for signaling purposes, provided realistic options for NATO in the event that the Berlin crisis worsened." Freedman, *Kennedy's Wars*, 101.

[186] Telegram from the Department of State to the United States Delegation to NATO, October 12, 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963 XIV,* doc. 175.

[187] Washington to FO, October 12, 1961, FO 371/160494, NAUK.

[188] Although the connection between plans and reality was expected to be tenuous. The British calculated that "in the event of really serious attack the Americans and ourselves would react on our own initiative and the Allies would string along. This may sound cynical, but I think it is realistic." See "N.A.T.O. approval of planning by General Norstad," minute by L. Fielding, September 14, 1961, FO 371/160573, NAUK.

in defense but as "gambits in a psychological contest against the enemy."[189] Military force, though couched in the language of last resort by the Americans, did not mean a last resort before Western Europe was overrun by Soviet armor, but the last resort to keep open access to Berlin.

In this context, how should the allies interpret Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty and the definition of an "armed attack" on an ally that would invoke collective defense? "When," Stikker asked, "does it cease to be an attack and instead the consequence of a miscalculation on the part of some individual country, a miscalculation for which the other members cannot be held responsible?"[190] The decision could not be left only to one country, or "a junta," but "new rules have to be developed" for how NATO functioned "in a period of crisis or in time of war."[191]

The draft instructions referred only to "political authorities" as responsible for the decision to execute the military plans, but the Council wanted clarification.[192] The Americans in the quadripartite group had hoped NATO members might be "induced to delegate their authority" to the tripartite or quadripartite powers.[193] But the British argued that NATO would have to make

---

[189] The words of Air Marshal Mills in September 7, 1961. BDS Washington GM 199 to Ministry of Defence, September 7, 1971, DEFE 7/2254, NAUK; Hood to Tomkins, October 17, 1961, FO 371/160575, NAUK

[190] "Memorandum with Remarks on Draft Instructions to SACEUR," September 2, 1961, NATO/MPBE.

[191] "Memorandum with Remarks on Draft Instructions to SACEUR;" "Junta" remark is in "Meeting of the Secretary General with the Permanent Representatives of France, the United States and Germany and the Acting Perm. Rep. of the UK, on 2 Sept. 1961," by G. Vest, September 4, 1961, NATO/MPBE.

[192] UKDel to FO, "Directive to General Norstad," September 29, 1961, FO 371/160492, NAUK; Mason to Ramsbotham, October 5, 1961, FO 371/160494, NAUK.

[193] "Governmental Decisions to Execute NATO Military Counter-Measures," memorandum by T.A.K. Elliot, October 2, 1961, FO 371/160494, NAUK.

any decisions as a whole. Still, they noted, here "we are getting into the deep water of political control of NATO and the impracticability of having 15-nation decisions on everything."[194]

Rusk, for his part, wanted control delegated "to a small group."[195] Stikker developed the idea of "restricted regional groups" to make decisions, and Foy Kohler expanded this idea to be a "small NATO group composed of the three Standing Group Powers" as the permanent members and additional rotating members.[196] Stikker's restricted group, which he would develop further in discussion over NATO's nuclear guidelines, seemed a non-starter to the British because no ally would delegate the decisions regarding the "selective use of nuclear weapons" or anything leading to "all-out war."[197] This, ultimately, was the strongest argument of excluded allies against the various plans – de Gaulle's, Spaak's, Bowie's, or Stikker's – for a directorate or steering group.

The issue of political authority was papered over. Stikker, properly, told the Council that "political authorities" in the planning documents meant the North Atlantic Council, and so the allies were assured, like the British had been, that governmental decisions would be required to execute the plans.[198] But this did not, at least to the Americans, mean that a unanimous Council

---

[194] "Tripartite/NATO Relationship. Lord Hood's letter of September 4," undated [mid-to-late August, 1961], FO 371/160491, NAUK.

[195] Memorandum of Conversation [Kennedy with Quadripartite Foreign Ministers], September 15, 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963 XIV,* doc. 152**.** Kennedy and Lord Home both floated an idea for strengthening NAC representation at this meeting.

[196] Hood to Shuckburgh, September 27, 1971, FO 371/160494, NAUK.

[197] The point of the restricted groups was partially to make decision-making more efficient, but also specifically designed to exclude allies, such as Portugal and Greece, due to their "presumably inefficient communication links," and the Italians, whose inclusion would "almost certainly" compromise security. "N.A.T.O. approval of planning by General Norstad," September 14, 1961..

[198] "NATO Planning for Berlin Emergency – the question of Political Authorities," PO/61/809, October 17, 1961, NATO.

agreement was required to take action. According to the Americans, the NAC had "never, to our knowledge, formally adopted a rule of unanimity" and Washington did not now want "a rule of unanimity to govern decision on N.A.T.O. plans and their execution with respect to Berlin." This analysis was problematic to the British, and it failed to take into account the perceptions of the other allies, Stikker's views, or the standard interpretation of the Council's responsibilities under Article 9 of the Treaty.[199] These issues would come to a head in debates over NATO's nuclear strategy, discussed in the next chapter.

The British delegation was shocked by the American approach and the consequent bitterness in Council. They wrote to the Foreign Office: "I suggest the questions the Americans should be asking themselves are: (a) do they want the alliance to continue? And (b) if so, what is the best means of holding the alliance together?[200]

2.5.10 We Need To Tell Them

Dean Acheson had his own answer to the British delegation's point (b). He told Kennedy that the United States had "been spending too much time seeking theoretical agreement with our allies." All that really matters is "momentum of American decision and action." Furthermore, the United States does not "need to coordinate with our allies. We need to tell them." So much "conferring with Ambassadors" was "a waste of time."[201]

---

[199] Washington to FO, "Text [of State Dept. instructions]," November 8, 1961, FO 371/160574, NAUK; FO to Washington, "Berlin and N.A.T.O.: Political Authority," November 8, 1961, FO 371/160574, NAUK. See also Finletter's warning to Washington not to "worry about unanimity rule" since "execution" was a "wholly different subject" than getting approval for plans in the first place. Paris POLTO 380 to SecState, September 23, 1961, NSF, box 222, folder: "NATO, General Cables, 1/61-2/62 [2 of 4], JFKL.

[200] "North Atlantic Council and Berlin," UKDel to Foreign Office, October 13, 1961, FO 371/160573, NAUK.

[201] "Memorandum of Meeting with the President, October 20, 1961 – 10 A M" by Bundy, POF, folder: Germany: Security, 1961: August-December, JFKLDC.

Acheson's words held true. By the end of October, the NAC, aided by Stikker's views on "political authorities," approved the draft instructions and submitted them to the Standing Group, which would pass them onto SHAPE.[202] From October through January, the issue of Berlin lay dormant in the NAC save for the December ministerial meeting when Rusk and McNamara goaded the allies to build up their forces and face up to the "hard realities" that the crisis over Berlin might result in war.[203] Two days before the ministerial, Lord Home tried to convince Rusk that NATO, like Britain, wanted negotiations on Berlin. Rusk stressed the possible imminence of nuclear war and was "obliged to wonder whether there is in fact an alliance."[204]

In the ambassadorial group, the Americans pressed the British, French and Germans to accept a "whole series of countermeasures, some of them ineffective or undigested." But the British found it "increasingly embarrassing to raise constant objections," especially in light of American impatience.[205] Buoyed by Macmillan's belief that Kennedy was determined to find a peaceful resolution, the British continued to agree to plans that "took no account of Russian reactions" and might "involve a chain reaction and subsequent loss of control."[206] The British wished these plans were discussed in NATO, rather than the ambassadorial group, for the other allies might

---

[202] "Standing Group Liaison Office Memorandum by the Standing Group Representative Major General Barry to the Secretary General on Instructions to NATO military authorities – Berlin," LOM 130/61, October 26, 1961, NATO/MPBE.

[203] "Summary Record of a Meeting of the Council, Paris, December 14, 1961," C-R(61), January 25, 1962, NATO.

[204] Memorandum of Conversation, December 12, 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963 XIV,* doc. 238.

[205] "Berlin Counter Measures," by D.R. Ashe, November 23, 1961, FO 371/160575, NAUK.

[206] Quote from "Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 27th September, 1961 at 2.45 p.m. C.O.S.(61)65th Meeting," DEFE 7/2254, NAUK.

help convince the Americans against countermeasures that seemed to the British "ill-advised or futile."[207]

In January 1962, the quadripartite powers showed Stikker one of their joint documents, BQD-M-22, which purported to explain when authority would pass from Live Oak to NATO. But the document was confusing and seemed incomplete. It stipulated that plans for any operations up to the size of a division would be planned by Live Oak, and that NATO would be responsible for plans larger than a division. If, however, Live Oak sent a battalion-sized probe up the autobahn and it was fired upon, NATO might take over. Stikker worried that the plans implied

> NATO countries were being asked to issue a planning blank-cheque to the tripartite powers and might be asked suddenly to take responsibility for operations when they had not participated or even been aware of the planning which left them in this predicament.[208]

Would not the easier solution be to include NATO in the planning? Stikker met again with the quadripartite group in Washington. He had never heard of the larger Live Oak plans, including JUNE BALL, before the meeting. Only then was it apparent to him just how little he - and the NAC – knew about their full extent.[209] With Stikker's input, a modified version of BQD-M-22 went to Council. It explained that, in the event of a tripartite Live Oak probe, NATO forces would be advised and placed on alert, with provisions made to transfer command to NATO in

---

[207] "NATO Ministerial Meetings: Berlin Contingency Planning," undated [early December 1961], FO 371/160576, NAUK.. "Tripartite/NATO Relationship," minute by L. Fielding, January 4, 1962, FO 371/160576, NAUK.

[208] "Record of a Private Meeting 31/01/1962 in the Secretary General conference room," NATO/MPBE.

[209] Letter from the Secretary General to the French Permanent Representative, PO(62)100, February 14, 1962, NATO/MPBE.

case of fighting.[210] While this clarified the quadripartite group's thinking for the Council, it did not resolve the fundamental problem: The decision to send an armed probe into Berlin, and possibly precipitate a battle, would be taken without most of the allies' involvement. In August, NATO's military authorities replied to the Council's instructions from the fall. They distributed the military plans to the Council, with a full list of criticisms of each plan. Although Live Oak existed through to the end of the Cold War, the ground contingency plans were never executed. Although the Berlin crisis flared again in 1963, it finally fizzled out.

The United States had executed a *fait accompli* at NATO, but also won the showdown over Berlin. Khrushchev backed off his ultimatums. Kennedy maintained that Khrushchev had abandoned his threats at Vienna because the United States "still maintained a preponderance of military might."[211] And indeed, British officials were left to agree that it had been Moscow's calculations of Soviet weakness that ended the crisis.[212] The lesson for Washington was that strength wins; the corollary was that the strength and backbone of the alliance was American, not Atlantic nor European.

The crisis marked the first and only time NATO allies would attempt to use NATO's military strength as a political instrument in a crisis. But the allies had failed to find a means of coordinating the other elements of grand strategy like diplomacy and economic pressure. NATO could not do grand strategy, or could not do grand strategy short of war. And the Kennedy

---

[210] "Recommendation by the Governments of France, United Kingdom and United States concerning relationships between NATO and the Three Powers in the planning and control of Berlin Contingency Operations," BQD-M-22, February 1962, NATO/MPBE.

[211] Washington no. 532 to FO, February 20, 1962, PREM 11/3711, NAUK.

[212] Brief by Northern Department on present Soviet policy attached to untitled memorandum by Evelyn Shuckburgh, June 20, 1962. PREM11/3805; "Berlin Contingency Planning: Annex to COS.275/1/3/62," March 1, 1962, DEFE 7/2255, NAUK.

administration was never convinced that the NAC, rather than Washington, could serve as the West's center for strategy and planning.

Canada and the European allies were up in arms over the prospect that the United States would use force in Europe for reasons other than military defense, and had done their best to prevent it. Nonetheless, as the Berlin crisis unrolled, it coincided with a larger debate over NATO's nuclear and defense strategy in which the roles would be almost entirely reversed: The Europeans would seek guarantees and other ways to compel the United States would launch nuclear war to defend Europe. The bitterness, confusion, and disagreement over Berlin, however, had only reinforced thinking in Washington that there could only be one finger on the nuclear trigger, and that it must be American.[213]

[213] Rostow, *The Diffusion of Power*, 230.

CHAPTER 6: THE LIMITS OF INTEGRATION:

"MCNAMARAISM" AND NATO NUCLEAR POLICY, 1959-1962

I think I know what Norstad would do [in case of a Soviet attack], whether agreement has been reached, and we pray that he would not be so devoid of reason that he would not do so."

- British Ambassador Harold Caccia, March 1961[1]

***

The launch of Sputnik, the American plans for an atomic stockpile, and the crises over Berlin all revealed that NATO had no mechanism for deciding on or controlling the decision to go to war. From 1959 until 1962, the NATO allies debated whether and how to equip NATO with machinery for launching nuclear war. The debate was complicated by American defense policy, German worries that they would be left unprotected, and a growing fear of the other allies that the FRG wanted nuclear weapons to help them achieve reunification. These debates were made more difficult by the tremendous secrecy about American nuclear weapons and the tensions caused by a division of labor in NATO's defenses. The NATO allies never agreed on a fully developed system or machine for going to war. They stopped short of institutionalizing a process for launching nuclear weapons both because of disagreements but because they agreed that a NATO mechanism would be more cumbersome than relying on a single decision-maker, the President of the United States. Instead, the British and Americans sought to convince their allies, by a series of educational measures like speeches and committees, that a NATO mechanism or NATO nuclear force was unnecessary for their defense. These

[1] "U.S.-U.K. Talk on NATO Strategy and Nuclear Weapons, 17 March 1961," memorandum for the record, March 18, 1961, NP, box 96, folder: Assistance Secretary of Defense/ISA (4), DDEL.

measures were moderately successful and were the precursor to the far more successful nuclear education the allies received in the Johnson years.

***

Although much of NATO's defense planning was premised on a system of integrated military commands, the majority of the nuclear weapons assigned to the defense of Europe were under American, not NATO, control. William Tyler, an American diplomat, called this the "great irony" of NATO. Integration, he explained was essential to keeping Germany tied to the West, but the United States and others would not or could not expand integration to the "atomic level." The atomic plane, although the basis of NATO's defense, marked the "limits of integration."[2]

John F. Kennedy and his secretary of defense, Robert McNamara, agreed it was best to limit the possession and control of nuclear weapons, even among NATO allies. In Kennedy's first years in office, he decided not to aid the French nuclear program, and he and his advisers largely regretted Eisenhower's decisions to revive the British nuclear program in 1957.[3] This tight-fisted dominance over the destructive power of the atom was not a manifestation of American arrogance or maintenance of power for its own ends - it only felt this way to some Europeans. Instead, the American refusal to allow some integration over the control and decision-making on nuclear weapons was predicated on the horrors of nuclear war, the dangers of it being accidentally unleashed, and the military

---

[2] Tyler to Millar, January 4, 1960. EUR, OAPMA, Subject Files, 1953-1962, box 17, folder: Germany. vol. 1, NARA.

[3] Memorandum for the President from Bundy, April 24, 1962. NSF, box 170, folder: United Kingdom General 9/19/62-9/25/62, JFKL; Bundy to Raymond Aron, May 24, 1962, NSF, box 71, folder: France General, 5/19/62-5/26/62, JFKL; "Call of the West German Defense Minister, Franz Josef Strauss, on the President," memorandum of conversation, June 8, 1962, NSF, box 75A, folder: Germany General 6/62, JFKL.

necessity of a tightly controlled system of command and control.[4] Despite the massive expenditure on nuclear weapons and the detailed plans for war drafted and agonized over by officials in the United States, Kennedy no less than Eisenhower understood that general war would be indistinguishable from the apocalypse. On a White House pad, he scrawled: "These guns used to shoot only a few miles now they shoot several generations."[5]

From a "military viewpoint," the Kennedy administration thought the relationship between NATO allies and nuclear weapons was straightforward. As Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs Foy Kohler explained it, the United States "had sufficient nuclear weapons and means of delivery for every need of the alliance." Since its earliest days, the United States had borne responsibility for NATO's nuclear needs. It would be "simpler," he said, if "the situation could remain thus."[6] Kohler, however, knew there was a political problem beyond this military division of labor. The allies required reassurance

---

[4] For a broad examination on changes in NATO nuclear strategy and the nuclear strategies of the key allies, see Beatrice Heuser, *NATO, Britain, France, and the FRG: Nuclear Strategies and Forces for Europe, 1949-2000* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997). On flexible response, the first stop should be Francis J. Gavin, "The Myth of Flexible Response: United States Strategy in Europe During the 1960s," *The International History Review* 23, no. 4 (December 2001). See also Jane E. Stromseth, *The Origins of Flexible Response: NATO's Debate over Strategy in the 1960s* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988); John S. Duffield, *Power Rules: The Evolution of NATO's Conventional Force Posture* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1995), 112-76. Even early accounts note the difference in style, but essential similarities in substance, between the late Eisenhower and Kennedy strategies. William W. Kaufmann, *The McNamara Strategy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964).

[5] Undated handwritten note on White House stationery, POF, folder: "Germany: Security, 1961; January-June," JFKLDC. See also McNamara's reasoning on why "relative" standing after a nuclear war was irrelevant. Gavin, "The Myth of Flexible Response: United States Strategy in Europe During the 1960s."

[6] Washington DC to External 259, January 30, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-40 (3.2), LAC.

that "the situation was as represented," and that American nuclear might would if necessary be used to protect them. Complicating this assurance was the confusion in Europe about the full extent, purpose, and capability of American nuclear forces. What drove this confusion was the combination of American secrecy and European ignorance about the science or art of managing a nuclear force. European officials did not have the capacity to study the effects and purpose of nuclear weapons they did not possess.

Beyond reassurance, the European allies raised difficult questions about who would and should possess nuclear weapons. Some allies were content to leave nuclear weapons to the United States. Others, like France's Charles de Gaulle, identified nuclear weapons as a mark of sovereignty and prestige in international affairs; to be without nuclear weapons was to be without real power and stature.[7] One of the debates at the heart of NATO discussions of nuclear policy was whether the French program might encourage or assist a European or German program, and whether this was desirable.

Finally, there were the practical questions of defense, posed most acutely by the FRG. Could the American nuclear armory, the overwhelming majority of which was located outside Europe, defend NATO? Could these distant weapons be guaranteed to defend Europe, and defend it without destroying it in the process? And if so, who would take the decision, how, and when?

During the Kennedy years, American officials pursued two broad and not entirely distinct policies to overcome the limits of integration. One, an effort to reject the limits entirely and create an integrated NATO nuclear force - one of its many names was the

---

[7] For background of the French nuclear program, see George-Henri Soutou, "The French Military Program for Nuclear Energy, 1945-1981," Nuclear History Program Occasional Paper Series, 3, (1989).

Multilateral Force (MLF) - is alluded to here but considered in greater detail in the next chapter. The second effort assumed the limits of state control and decision-making on nuclear weapons were firm, but that greater sharing of information about these weapons would suffice to assure other allies. Carl Kaysen, the NSC adviser closely connected to nuclear policy and planning in Kennedy's White House, called this policy "McNamaraism" and delineated its three key elements: The United States would "hold on to what we have" rather than share it; "explain to the Europeans how it defends them, and continue to reemphasize our commitments to them;" and instruct the Europeans just "how fearfully expensive it would be for them to get an effective nuclear armory and how unnecessary it is."[8]

Both efforts, with modifications, continued into the Johnson administration. They are both stories of integration: the MLF plan involved physical integration of men and money, whereas McNamaraism called for the integration of ideas. He, and the American officials who supported him, believed that if the Europeans had the information necessary, they would see things in the same light as the United States. McNamaraism was not a call for joint control, or sovereignty pooling, or an Atlantic Community or Federation, but instead assumed that the only real difference between allies was the information they possessed.

---

[8] Memorandum for Schlesinger from Kaysen, July 4, 1963, Schlesinger Papers, box WH-41, folder: North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), 1961-1963, JFKL. McNamaraism and nuclear information sharing, then, was more nuanced than a difficult battle fought by the Europeans for more information. Beatrice Heuser, "Alliance of Democracies and Nuclear Deterrence," in *War Plans and Alliances in the Cold War: Threat Perceptions in the East and West*, ed. Vojtech Mastny, Andreas Wenger, and Sven G. Holtsmark (New York, NY: Routledge, 2006), 203.

2.6.1 Heretical Ideas

Nuclear weapons played an essential and overwhelmingly important role in plans to defend Western Europe from a full-fledged Soviet attack. In 1954, the North Atlantic Council made explicit NATO's reliance on the use of atomic weapons for its defense by approving the strategy document MC 48.[9] In 1956, the North Atlantic Council agreed on a new document, known as the "Political Directive," that stated NATO forces should use nuclear weapons "at the outset" of any major conflict. It added that NATO should maintain sufficient conventional forces to defend against "incursions" or "local hostile actions" short of general war, though the dividing line was never clarified.[10]

In December 1957 Eisenhower and the other NATO Heads of Government had agreed that the United States would provide nuclear weapons to NATO forces. As explained in chapter two, this decision was a response to *Sputnik* but also an effort to maintain unity in the alliance by providing a sense of common purpose. The legal obstacles to sharing American nuclear weapons inherent in the McMahon Act, and the political problems of distributing such powerful weapons to other states, were overcome by a "dual key" system. The United States sold weapons systems, such as missiles and launchers to its allies, but kept the nuclear warheads in nearby American custody - that is locked up, fenced in, and guarded by American troops. These arrangements were established by bilateral agreements between the United States and the individual NATO allies by procedures that ensure that other allies, even those with their own bilateral agreements, were not privy to the details of the other deals. Although these agreements were careful

---

[9] On NATO's "nuclearization" see Trachtenberg, *History and Strategy*, 153-68. On the evolution of NATO's early strategy and MC 48, see Robert Wampler, "Ambiguous Legacy: The United States, Great Britain, and the Foundation of NATO Strategy, 1948-1957" (Ph.D. Diss., Harvard University, 1991).

[10] Gregory W. Pedlow, "NATO Strategy Documents, 1949-1969," xviii.

legal and technical documents, the overarching decision taken in 1957 was "cast in vague and ambiguous language." By the end of the decade, no "concerted attempt ha[d] been made to define arrangements for political control" of the weapons.[11]

The North Atlantic Council avoided any real discussion of the politics or policy of nuclear sharing after the 1957 Heads of Government meeting. Instead, NATO's Infrastructure Committee, on advice from NATO's military authorities, handled all of the planning for storage. By 1959 SHAPE had plans for 153 weapons stockpile sites across Europe, a little more than half of which were in the FRG, to store nuclear warheads for NATO's nuclear-capable weapons systems.[12] These included artillery, depth charges, air-to-air missiles and anti-aircraft battalions.[13] In addition to these weapons, often called "tactical nuclear weapons" because they would be used to engage enemy forces, rather than strategic targets, in battle, NATO had three squadrons of Jupiter medium-range ballistic missiles (MRBMs), with 30 missiles in Italy and 15 in Turkey.[14] When combined with the nuclear weapons of the United States Sixth Fleet, the nuclear power assigned to NATO was tremendous.

The 1957 decision that created atomic stockpiles for NATO was only one tent in the carnival of ideas concerning the possession and control of nuclear weapons bandied about

---

[11] External to London, DL-16, July 30, 1959, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (1.1), LAC

[12] These sites were planned for Norway, Denmark, Germany, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom, though Norway, Denmark and France did not end up stockpiling weapons.

[13] Specifically: The storage facilities provided for Honest John, Corporal, Redstone, Matador, nuclear depth charges, air force weapons, rockets, and 20 NIKE battalions. MACE would later replace MATADOR.

[14] "House of Commons Committee on External Affairs, NATO – NUCLEAR WEAPONS," February 15, 1960, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (1.1), LAC.

in the 1950s. In 1957 Britain was allowed greater access to nuclear secrets by an amendment to the 1946 McMahon Act. This gave the British independent nuclear deterrent a lease on life. The letter of the amended law - though not its spirit – suggested to some Europeans they too could gain access to nuclear secrets if they achieved enough success in their national programs.

The creation of EURATOM in 1958 and a French-Italian-German effort to study nuclear science hinted at a nuclear future for Europe. One German official, speaking of a European (not German) nuclear capability, said that he, "like many other Germans, would have preferred to leave nuclear weapons in the hands of the United States." But because the UK had "broken the spell," such a development could not be held back indefinitely.[15] At the same time the Western European Union (WEU) Assembly, comprised of parliamentarians from WEU countries, called for the creation of a "Joint European Strategic Nuclear Force." And as early as 1959 British officials were thinking of an Anglo-French "pool" of weapons as a solution to the debates between the Sixes and Sevens (an idea Macmillan would revisit in the early 1960s).

If this swirl of ideas did not point to any concrete or even likely nuclear developments in Europe beyond the French program in the short term, it at least raised the possibility of Europeans possessing nuclear weapons in the future. Whether Europeans officials thought these programs were desirable or necessary hinged on the status of NATO's nuclear weapons. Whose weapons were they? They might have been legally and physically in American custody in peacetime, but what happened in war? Who controlled

[15] Memorandum of Conversation, "German-French-Italian Cooperation ion the Production of Nuclear Weapons," January 23, 1958, PPC, Subject Files, 1954-1962, box 151, folder: Europe 1958, NARA.

them and made the decision on their use? This question, avoided since 1957, came up in 1959, before the allies again kicked the can down the road.

The question came up for discussion in 1959 for multiple reasons. First, in June 1959 Prime Minister Harold Macmillan told the House of Commons that the United Kingdom would take "a positive decision" with regard to use of nuclear weapons of any kind. Macmillan's claim raised questions for all of the other NATO allies who planned to field the equipment for launching or firing American nuclear warheads. Would Britain, or any of the other allies storing nuclear weapons, take a "positive decision," and how? Some believed the decision to use atomic weapons rested solely with the President of the United States. Others believed that American commanders had been authorized in advance (pre-delegated) to use nuclear weapons if attacked. Generally, officials like Sir Patrick Dean and officers from the American Joint Chiefs of Staff assumed that because the weapons would be released by the U.S. President to NATO forces under the command of the Supreme Allied Commander (SACEUR), the North Atlantic Council would have to approve any request from SACEUR to use nuclear weapons.[16] With the decisions of 1957 so vague, surmise had come to fill the place of fact.

---

[16] On Dean and various theories, see External to London, DL-16, July 30, 1959.; State officials knew there was "no such arrangement in NATO" and were surprised that "such basic facts of life are unknown to the strategic planners in the Pentagon." "Paper for JCS on U.S. Nuclear Weapons Policy," Tuthill to Merchant and Kohler, December 2, 1959, NATO Advisor, box 1, folder: "NACNA," NARA. The debate continued in 1960: General Heusinger, on June 30, 1960 "stated that SACEUR could not authorize the use of nuclear warheads unless he had the unanimous approval of the North Atlantic Council." Strauss claimed "SACEUR can authorize the use of nuclear warheads either with the unanimous approval of the North Atlantic Council or on the authority of the President of the USA," but admitted "the whole question of nuclear warheads in Europe had deliberately been left somewhat vague." Bonn to External 322, July 6, 1960, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (1.1), LAC. Norstad, however, later said he would have bypassed the NAC entirely. Norstad Oral History, 164.

The next complicating factor was de Gaulle's refusal to allow storage of American nuclear weapons in France. Spaak tried to square the circle with his memorandum of July 24 (discussed in chapter three), in which he hinted the decision to use the weapons might be enshrined in something near a tripartite directorate.[17] Although the Americans shut down discussion of the memorandum, Spaak's suggestion of less-than-unanimous decision-making regarding nuclear weapons caught the attention of the smaller allies and attuned all permanent representatives to the issue.

Finally, in late 1959 Norstad offered his own plan for a NATO MRBM force - that is, a force of missiles with further range and power than the weapons stockpiled for NATO - that would be under his command as SACEUR. In 1957, the United States had, in principle, agreed to furnish NATO with both short and medium-range weapons, but in practice the US had equipped NATO only with short-range weapons save for the MRBMs in Italy and Turkey. Norstad's plan would go beyond these weapons. He was calling for a nuclear force that could destroy targets further back from the battlefield, such as the fighter and missile bases intended to support Soviet troops fighting in Central Europe.[18] Although some of the nuclear weapons from the current stockpile would equip strike aircraft for this role, the MRBMs could destroy targets deeper behind the Iron Curtain, and were also less vulnerable to improving Warsaw Pact air defenses. Norstad wrapped his claim in the language of dynamism so prevalent in NATO, arguing: "for the Alliance

---

[17] Defence Liaison (1) Division to the Under-Secretary, "M. Spaak's Aide-Memoire on France and NATO." September 10, 1959, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (1.1), LAC.

[18] NATOParis to External 196, January 27, 1961, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (1.2), LAC.

to have continuing life and meaning, it needs an increasing authority."[19] Norstad's concept, which he knew was "heretical," was to make NATO the fourth nuclear power and thus prevent an independent French deterrent that would likely spur nuclear proliferation in Europe.[20]

2.6.2 Pandora's Box

Spaak, concerned by the competing claims and confusion of 1959, urged the North Atlantic Council to take up a discussion of NATO nuclear policy in early 1960. "No matter how odd it might be," especially since NATO's defense had rested on a nuclear sword since 1954, Spaak and the Council collectively did not know "what atomic forces were available at present to the alliance, what controls existed over them, and what rules applied to their use." He suggested Norstad brief the NAC, even if "such a procedure might open Pandora's Box."[21]

Spaak's entreaties were encouraged in March 1960 when Thomas Gates, Eisenhower's final Secretary of Defense, told his NATO colleagues that the United States would help NATO achieve its own MRBM force by either deploying MRBMs to Europe

---

[19] "EXTRACT FROM SPEECH OF GENERAL LAURIS NORSTAD, SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER EUROPE, at the THIRTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE INSTITUTE OF WORLD AFFAIRS, SPONSORED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, PASADENA, CALIFORNIA, ON 6 DECEMBER 1959," attached to Foulkes to Robertson, January 4, 1960, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (1.1), LAC.

[20] London No. 3075 to SecState, December 11, 1959, DNSA, NP00604. The purpose of Norstad's plan was widely understood and remembered as a plan to prevent de Gaulle "from doing something foolish" rather than as a military or strategic plan. Acheson to Stikker, December 27, 1960, AP, Gen. Corr., box 29, folder: 375.

[21] NATO Paris to External 66, January 12, 1960, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (1.1), LAC.

under SACEUR's control, or assisting Europe to produce its own MRBMs to meet SACEUR's requirements.[22]

Reactions to SACEUR's requirements and the American offer were mixed. The Dutch wanted "a belt of IRBM bases … strung across Western Europe as quickly as possible for both military and psychological reasons."[23] Others feared the effects on disarmament negotiations. De Gaulle maintained that no nuclear warheads not under French control could be stored in France. The nature of the MRBM put Germany in a strange position. Being on the very front lines of any potential war, Germany's military requirements tended toward shorter-range nuclear weapons.[24] As a result, German officials publicly professed to be non-committal about Germany's requirements for Polaris.[25] Nonetheless, Adenauer and the Federal Republic's minister of defense, Franz-Joseph Strauss, privately made clear that they wanted NATO to be equipped with "deterrent nuclear weapons" - that is to have MRBMs directly under the control of SACEUR so as to dissuade the Soviets from even considering an attack.[26]

---

[22] Memorandum of Conversation by the Secretary of State, *FRUS 1958-1960 VII* P.1, doc 254, footnote 5; NATO Paris to External 1029, April 6, 1960, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (1.1), LAC.

[23] Hague to External 291, July 28, 1960, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (1.2), LAC.

[24] On Germany's defense policy and nuclear weapons, see Heuser, *NATO, Britain, France, and the FRG*, 141-46; Stromseth, *The Origins of Flexible Response*, 121-50; Catherine McArdle Kelleher, *Germany and the Politics of Nuclear Weapons* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975).

[25] Bonn to External 322, July 6, 1960.

[26] Adenauer said: "NATO's integration must be maintained and even strengthened. Developments should in no case lead to a situation in which each NATO country would produce its own nuclear weapons … I am in favour of equipping NATO with deterrent nuclear weapons." Adenauer's remarks made on October 31, 1960 and reported in Bonn to External 542, November 7, 1960. RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (1.2), LAC.

On April 6, 1960, the NAC was ready to open the "atomic 'can of worms'" by launching into a full discussion of nuclear policy, but Spaak postponed discussion at the last moment. Although he claimed the Council should wait for military advice, he sensed political problems.[27] Already, Norway and Denmark refused to station any such weapons on their soil. More important, if de Gaulle maintained his refusal to allow storage of nuclear warheads on French soil, the majority of weapons would be based in Germany.[28] Norstad understood that if too many of the weapons were in Germany, the force could not be implemented for both military and political reasons. Domestic public opinion in Germany was against nuclear weapons for the FRG, and Germany's allies and enemies worried that Bonn would put the weapons to nefarious purposes.[29] Nonetheless, since it would take years for the weapons to be made, shipped, and deployed, and his plan did not call for the weapons to be in use until 1965 or 1966, Norstad hoped some mutually agreeable "formula" could be reached with de Gaulle in the interim.[30] By August, however, it was clear that de Gaulle would not budge, and the Gates proposal was doomed. Spaak, previously so eager to have the Council discuss nuclear policy, had to convince the Americans not to bring up the MRBM plan up in Council again because it would require the permanent representatives to put on record their opposing views.

---

[27] NATO Paris to External 1029, April 6, 1960.

[28] NATO Paris to External 1191, April 25, 1960, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (1.1), LAC.

[29] Michael Geyer, "Cold War Angst: The Case of West-German Opposition to Rearmament and Nuclear Weapons," in *The Miracle Years: A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949-1968*, ed. Hanna Schissler (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001).

[30] NATO Paris to External 1084, April 12, 1960, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (1.1), LAC.

Although Gates's MRBM plan failed, Pandora's had been opened. Jules Léger, the Canadian Permanent Representative, reported that it was now "clear that the future of the alliance may rest upon the capacity of its members to formulate and implement an atomic policy generally satisfactory to its members."[31] Norstad had pressed the MRBM idea for this very reason: he detected that the control and possession of nuclear weapons would pose the greatest challenge to the spirit of the alliance in the upcoming decade.[32]

Throughout 1960, the nuclear carnival showcased five proposals: Norstad's proposal for an MRBM force in Europe, under NATO control; Gates proposal for cooperating in providing land based MRBMs to NATO countries; a German idea, propagated by Strauss, for a NATO "atomic striking force" under control of a regional authority within NATO; and de Gaulle's insistence on the maintenance of autonomous national control.[33] The fifth plan was added mid-year by Bowie's report with its plans for American-built submarines armed with Polaris missiles under the control of SACEUR.[34]

Such a force would solve numerous problems in both the short and long-term. It would meet SACEUR's military requirements; provide an envelope which the British nuclear deterrent could one day be wrapped up in, along with the nascent French

---

[31] NATO Paris to External 1084, April 12, 1960.

[32] NATO Paris to External 1084, April 12, 1960.

[33] NATO Paris to External 3039, November 21, 1960, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (1.2), LAC.

[34] Although the Europeans were not informed, Bowie's planning even suggested the force would be free of an American veto.

program; finally, it would head off any possible desire by the FRG to develop its own nuclear capacity since Germany could be assured its defense needs would be met.[35]

Bowie's proposal, because of its suggestion of a nuclear force without American control, was too radical. But the Bowie report, less the veto-less force, formed the basis of Christian Herter's December 1960 presentation to the NATO Ministerial. Herter told his allies the United States would assign five Polaris submarines to SACEUR (providing NATO with 80 MRBM missiles), and that the United States would sell 100 more Polaris missiles for a land-based system on the continent.[36]

The Herter proposal was a curious half-measure. It seemed to offer a significant new policy in the waning days of Eisenhower's presidency; indeed, the American Permanent Representative had to remind Council that Herter was merely launching an idea "and it would be for the new admin[istration] to pick it up."[37] The assignment of Polaris to SACEUR was not in itself significant, for the Americans were only likely to deploy the submarines off NATO's shores, no matter to whom they were assigned. What was new, exciting, and confusing was the claim that the MRBM force would be "multilateral" in nature, and thus would require some new understanding of the control and use of nuclear weapons by NATO. When, after the Ministerial, the NAC questioned the American representative about what these new controls might look like, he suggested they would

---

[35] Norstad claimed that French officials urged him to develop such a force so they could "cease production of their own nuclear weapons." NATO Paris to External 945, April 15, 1961, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (2.2), LAC.

[36] Numbered Letter 171, to the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs from the NATODel, "NATO Nuclear Policy – Land-Based MRBM System." January 31, 1961, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (1.2), LAC.

[37] NATO Paris to External 3179, December 1, 1960, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (1.2), LAC.

need study. But he did not disagree when a colleague suggested the studies might reveal "no more satisfactory system than that which existed at the moment could be arranged."[38]

2.6.3 Out of Channels

In January 1961, just days after Kennedy's inauguration, Norstad briefed the NAC on the command and control of NATO's weapons. But before he got to his main subject, he expounded again on NATO's need for an MRBM force. His plan was for missile-launching trucks, disguised as commercial transports, to "drive about on 300,000 miles of European roads," carrying their weapons. If SACEUR gave the order, the trucks would arrive at pre-ordained "benchmark" locations and fire their missile at one of 700 targets located more than 300 miles beyond the Iron Curtain.[39]

Norstad's briefing caused "a good deal of surprise" in Council. Representatives asked if Norstad's plan replaced Herter's proposal, and Norstad said he supported Herter's proposal for a submarine force but that land-based systems were essential for the defense of the NATO area. Norstad clearly had not sought opinions from any of NATO's other military institutions, such as the Military Committee or Standing Group, nor the United States - he had "gone out of channels."[40] His plans for a land-based MRBM force for NATO complicated discussions of NATO's strategy throughout the Kennedy administration. American officials disagreed there was a need for Norstad to have the ability to destroy these targets which the United States would cover using its own "external" forces.

---

[38] NATO Paris to External 3421, December 30, 1960, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (1.2), LAC.

[39] NATO Paris to External 196, January 27, 1961.

[40] Numbered Letter 171, to the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs from the NATODel, "NATO Nuclear Policy – Land-Based MRBM System." January 31, 1961, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (1.2), LAC.

Norstad then moved on to discuss the command and control of nuclear weapons in the alliance. This was not a hypothetical issue, Norstad reminded the Council, for NATO was already a nuclear power.[41] The chain of command for use of NATO's nuclear weapons, Norstad argued, was simple. The President of the United States would make only one decision: to release the nuclear weapons in American custody to the troops who maintained the launch systems. All of these units, whether American, Canadian, Dutch, French forces in Germany, or Germans, would at that point constitute NATO forces and serve under SACEUR's command. Norstad was explicit that the president's action "did not have anything to do necessarily with the use to be made of the released weapons."[42] The military command of these weapons, "in the final analysis, lay with SACEUR and SACEUR only."[43]

This simplicity unraveled when Spaak asked Norstad to explain what happened once the weapons were made available to NATO forces, and who would make the decision to use the weapons. "There was no question on the matter of who had the right to control the use of atomic weapons," Norstad replied. The answer was "the political authority," which meant the North Atlantic Council. But how Council would, in practice, determine and instruct SACEUR to use NATO's nuclear weapons – the basis of all NATO's defense plans - had never been considered. There was a constitutional problem: How did the NAC make the decision? Did it require unanimity, for instance, of all fifteen members? There

---

[41] NATO Paris to External 945, April 15, 1961.

[42] Numbered Letter M-142, to the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs from the NATODel, "NATO Nuclear Policy – SACEUR's Control." January 31, 1961, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (1.2), LAC.

[43] Numbered Letter M-142, to the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs from the NATODel, "NATO Nuclear Policy – SACEUR's Control."

was also a series of practical problems. The permanent representatives were diplomats who referred back to their governments for decision. They had neither the authority nor a quick and secure means of communicating such a critical decision to and from their capitals. One of the delegations paraphrased Norstad as posing the question thus: "I can carry out my responsibilities to control the military use of these weapons but can you, the Council, carry out your responsibility in such a way that the battle could not be lost before it began?"[44] Everyone, Spaak assumed, expected that SACEUR should respond to a direct Soviet atomic attack automatically, but even this was not recorded in any agreed document, text, or treaty.[45] As the British Ambassador in Washington put it, "I think I know what Norstad would do."[46]

Again, in case of a Soviet conventional attack, the organization lacked a "firm procedure for Council decision on the possible use of atomic weapons in the circumstances." "Indeed," said Spaak, there was the "utmost vagueness." Norstad suggested Council write some sort of "rules of engagement" by which SACEUR could operate after the President had released the weapons, pending discussion in Council or further agreement on standing instructions.[47]

But Norstad's briefing had occurred while a new President was taking office in the United States, with the attendant dramatic change in government personnel. Spaak suggested Council suspend its study of nuclear policy, for there was little point to

---

[44] NATOParis to External 196, January 27, 1961. Note that Norstad would later tell an interviewer that in case of war he would not have gone to Council but spoken bilaterally with countries concerned. Norstad, OH-558, DDEL, 164

[45] NATOParis to External 196, January 27, 1961.

[46] "U.S.-U.K. Talk on NATO Strategy and Nuclear Weapons, 17 March 1961," March 18, 1961.

[47] NATOParis to External 196, January 27, 1961.

discussions while the officials of the United States "had so much homework to do on subjects which were either new to them or with which they were out of touch as government officials." Although many of the allies wished to keep the discussion going so that the United States might know the Council's views as they reviewed American policy, Spaak's resignation put a full stop both to Council's discussion and studies underway by the International Staff.[48]

2.6.4 Acheson Report

Spaak's suggestion that some officials were "out of touch" with policy was a jibe at Dean Acheson, whom Kennedy had appointed to review American policy toward NATO (separate from the Berlin study). Spaak and other Europeans were surprised Acheson was "so uninformed on developments since 1953." Acheson seemed not to know much about the nuclear-ization decisions of 1954, the Heads of Government agreement in 1957, or Norstad's proposal.[49] Partly as a result of Acheson's own inclinations, and partly because Henry Owen, who had also assisted Bowie in his report, assisted him, there was significant overlap between the suggestions made at the end of the Eisenhower administration and the start of Kennedy's. Acheson did not recommend a multilateral nuclear force. He did, however, support the idea of assigning Polaris submarines.[50]

Like Bowie, Acheson believed the nuclear deterrent could only be effective with an increase in NATO's conventional forces. He called for a "pragmatic approach" to the military defense of Europe, stressing the need to prepare for "more likely contingencies,

---

[48] NATO Paris to External 455, February 22, 1961, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (2.1), LAC.

[49] Bonn to External 135, March 4, 1961, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (2.1), LAC.

[50] Kennedy himself had refused to give advance approval to any plans for an MLF as President-elect. Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 126.

i.e., those short of nuclear or massive non-nuclear attack." NATO, he argued, needed to build up its conventional forces so that if Soviet forces did advance, NATO could "halt" them "for a sufficient period to allow the Soviets to appreciate the wider risks of the course on which they are embarked."[51] This represented a significant change for NATO military planning, which - on American advice - had long assumed that Soviet conventional forces in Europe would overwhelm NATO. This assumption explains the Political Directive's call for use of nuclear weapons early in any conflict.[52]

In an addendum to his report, Acheson warned Kennedy of a "serious" issue he had missed when writing it. Acheson had come to realize that SACEUR was "relatively untrammeled by high civilian authority - American or European - or even by another high military authority;" he thus represented a major obstacle to change in NATO. [53] Much of American policy in the years to come would focus on reducing SACEUR's power or at least not aggrandizing it with control of an MRBM force.[54]

Acheson's thinking was highly unpopular with the other NATO allies. They doubted NATO's need and capacity to increase conventional strength. One problem was the simple financial burden; a British officer argued that maintaining the conventional forces the Americans wanted "would require a lowering of the standard of life in Western

---

[51] "NATO and the Atlantic Nations," April 20, 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963 XIII*, doc. 100.

[52] "Acheson on the January Debacle," Memorandum for Bundy from Kaysen, February 2, 1963, NSF, Countries, box 212A, folder: Europe, General 2/1/63-2/6/63, [folder 2 of 3], JFKL.

[53] Memorandum for the President, March 29, 1961, Neustadt Papers, box 19, folder: Government Consulting - Skybolt/NATO/Atlantic Affairs - NATO Research, 1961/2, 1 of 3, JFKL.

[54] This was the polar opposite of Adenauer's views. See "Record of Meeting Between the Prime Minister and Dr. Adenauer at Admiralty House at 10.30 a.m. on February 23," February 23, 1961, PREM 11/3345, NAUK.

Europe which would never be accepted by the Parliaments."[55] Beyond this classic clash over guns and butter was a debate over intelligence estimates. Just how much strength did the Soviet Union and its allies have in Europe, and how effective were the larger contingents of Red Army troops? The British and the Germans both accused the Americans of playing a "most dangerous game" of fitting intelligence to policy, while the Americans believed European and NATO estimates of Soviet strength were far too high.[56] These debates over intelligence and requisite forces stemmed directly from Acheson's report and the subsequent American policy. Henry Kissinger visited Europe shortly after Acheson submitted his review, and realized just how "unfortunate" it was that Acheson's paper had been prepared "without benefit of contact with the realities of the situation in Europe." The implementation of the new policy, Kissinger realized, would be "much more difficult than he had anticipated."[57]

In the midst of Acheson's study, Spaak resigned. Dirk Stikker, the man who had taken Heineken Beer international, the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs during the signing of

---

[55] Quote is of Vice Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Lt.-Gen Sir William Pike in "U.S. Military Policy in Europe," Memorandum of Conversation, May 27, 1963, NSF, box 14, folder: Europe, General 4/63-11/63, JFKL. For a thorough, if somewhat alarmist, breakdown of the political chaos that might occur in specific national contexts of an increase in defense expenditures, see Stikker's exegesis on Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway, Denmark, and Canada, in Paris POLTO 1324 to SecState, April 5, 1962, NP, box 85, folder: ATOM – NUCL POLICY '62 (2), DDEL.

[56] "U.S. Military Policy in Europe," Memorandum of Conversation, May 27, 1963, NSF, box 14, folder: Europe, General 4/63-11/63, JFKL. See also Fessenden to Norstad, February 7, 1962, NP, box 85, folder: ATOM - NUCL POLICY '62 (4), DDEL; "Re-Analysis of the Soviet Threat to NATO," Memorandum for General Hugin from Komer, May 25, 1962, Executive Secretariat, Komer Records, box 2, folder: "Komer Washington Papers," NARA; Rowen to Kaysen, May 17, 1963, NSF, Kaysen, box 375, folder: NATO - General. Box 375, JFKL.

[57] Kissinger's views were recounted by Stoessel to Fessenden, May 25, 1961, NATO Advisor, box 2, folder: Vol. II Acheson Rev., NARA.

the North Atlantic Treaty, and most recently, the Netherlands' Permanent Representative to NATO, took Spaak's place. Stikker was determined that NATO contribute to formulating nuclear policy. In his "debut" speech as Secretary General he told the Council that he did not believe there was nuclear stalemate or nuclear equilibrium, but instead a state of "Nuclear Plenty" with which NATO must contend.[58] Indeed, Stikker would seek to carve out a new role for his office and pursue initiatives of his own for NATO to follow. This differed from the role of a chairman seeking to reconcile national positions, which - however energetically he had pursued it - had been Spaak's method.[59]

Just after Stikker's debut, Thomas Finletter, the US Permanent Representative, conveyed the Acheson review - now ensconced by Kennedy as American policy in NSAM 40, "NATO and the Atlantic Nations," to his colleagues in the Council. Finletter told his colleagues that the NAC, where permanent representatives spoke for their governments, was NATO's only center of authority.[60] While Norstad would have agreed with this argument, Finletter's emphasis made it clear to other delegations that the United States was taking Norstad down a peg.[61]

Finletter explained American strategic thinking and the need to build up NATO conventional forces. This would make NATO "strong enough to be able to force a pause

---

[58] NATO Paris to External 998, April 19, 1961, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (2.2), LAC.

[59] On the comparison see Washington DC to External 2965, October 12, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (5.2), LAC. For Stikker's view of the Secretary General's responsibilities, see Stikker, *Men of Responsibility*, 343.

[60] NATO Paris to External 1061, April 26, 1961. RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (2.2), LAC. Norstad, no doubt, would not have disagreed with the letter of Finletter's statement but the emphasis on Council's role, rather than SACEUR's, was obvious.

[61] NATO Paris to External 1061, April 26, 1961.

in the event of substantial Soviet conventional aggression." Finletter's "pause" was essentially Acheson's "halt." Conventional forces, rather than nuclear forces, were "a matter of the highest priority" for NATO's defense.[62]

Finletter said the new administration would, in keeping with Herter's proposal, assign five Polaris-equipped submarines to SACEUR. Further, NATO, rather than American commanders, would target their nuclear weapons.[63] Finletter did stress, however, that the nuclear defense of Europe would be assured by nuclear weapons outside the European theatre - that is, American weapons not under SACEUR control. Finletter mentioned the multilateral force idea, but he did not present any plans and put the onus on the Europeans to come up with a concept for the force.[64] Until any agreement could be reached, the United States promised to maintain nuclear weapons in Europe.[65] This commitment had not been a foregone conclusion for the Kennedy administration. When Acheson had suggested this promise in his March 1961 report, someone had scribbled on Kennedy's copy: "for how long? Are we bound to this by Allies' feeling even after [a] Polaris [commitment]?"[66]

In a May speech to the Canadian Parliament in Ottawa, Kennedy provided some more detail on US nuclear policy. The United States, he said, "look[ed] to the possibility of

---

[62] NATO Paris to External 1054, April 26, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (2.2), LAC.

[63] NATO Paris to External 1054, April 26, 1962. This is redacted in the final statement but not the draft telegram.

[64] NATO Paris to External 1061, April 26, 1961.

[65] This assurance is redacted in the DDEL version. In the draft version, the idea that nuclear weapons would not be withdrawn "without NATO consent" was deleted. For the final wording see NATO Paris to External 1054.

[66] "A Review of North Atlantic Problems for the Future," March 1961

eventually establishing a NATO sea-borne force" that would be multilaterally owned and controlled. The promise of a sea-borne force, labeled for a brief time afterward as the "Ottawa Force," was followed with two quick caveats: First, it was up to the Europeans to express their desire and determine the feasibility of such a force. Second, the force was secondary to achieving "NATO's non-nuclear goals."[67]

Finletter also left the matter of control of nuclear weapons up to the Europeans. The Americans "would welcome any suggestions by other NATO members as to how a system of NATO control might be created" so long as it established a clear line of authority and allowed for a quick decision if necessary.[68] In the meantime, the allies should rest assured. Finletter said "the President wishes to make clear his intention to direct or to authorize, as appropriate, the use of nuclear weapons in the event that the alliance is subjected to an unmistakable nuclear attack or that NATO forces are subjected to a non-nuclear attack with which they cannot cope." Council might wish to "endeavor to refine or extend these guidelines."[69]

2.6.5 A Major Phobia

Finletter's presentation, especially its focus on conventional forces, worried allies that abutted Warsaw Pact states. If Warsaw Pact forces attacked, how long would the

---

[67] Speech to Canadian Parliament. The Canadian Government soon made representations to Finletter and Stikker to desist with reference to an "Ottawa Force." O

[68] NATO Paris to External 1054, April 26, 1962.

[69] The draft had suggested these guidelines be done in a "small committee," but - no doubt because of the recent flaps over tripartitism in the late Eisenhower years - this phrase was deleted. Untitled. [Version of Ambassador Finletter's statements to NAC re NATO defense posture], undated, NP, box 113, folder: US REP. NATO (1), DDEL. For a study that puts the suggestions for guidelines in larger perspective, see Stephen Robert Twigge and L. V. Scott, *Planning Armageddon: Britain, the United States and the Command of Western Nuclear Forces 1945-1964* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic 2000), 147-200.

pause last before nuclear weapons were used? None were more upset, however, than the Germans. After the presentation, they developed what Finletter called a "major phobia" that the United States now intended to allow a conventional battle to rage in Europe "even to point of allowing large parts of NATO territory to be occupied perhaps permanently by Russian forces."[70]

At the time of Finletter's presentation, NATO military planning was such that in the event of a Soviet attack, FRG troops in covering positions near the East German border would draw back to positions at the Weser River. If nuclear weapons were not used immediately, the Soviet forces could not be stopped early and quickly. For the soldiers, this would mean "leaving their wives and families to be overrun." For the FRG, it would mean ceding Munich and Hamburg to the Soviets.[71]

The Germans totally rejected the idea of a pause, first, because of the losses in German life and territory that would result from conventional fighting; and second, because they did not believe that the Soviet Union could ever be forced - as Acheson obviously thought they could - to "retreat and acknowledge that they had been checked."[72] The Germans and other allies, Finletter concluded, had decided based on their own studies that "no level of conventional force that is attainable" would give NATO the strength needed to eject Soviet troops after an initial attack.[73]

---

[70] Paris POLTO 766 (Section 1 of 2) to SecState, December 7, 1961, NSF, box 222, folder: NATO, General, Cables, 1/61-2/62 [3 of 4], JFKL.

[71] See Norstad's descriptions of these plans as they stood until implementation of the Forward Strategy. NATO Paris to External 518, February 26, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-40 (3.2), LAC.

[72] NATO Paris to External 998, April 19, 1961.

[73] Finletter says the Germans had convinced many allies of the legitimacy of their position. Paris POLTO 766 (Section 1 of 2) to SecState, December 7, 1961.

The Germans were upset about Finletter's nuclear statements, too. Given Finletter's emphasis on conventional priority, Strauss wondered if the United States would not continue to equip the *Bundeswehr* with nuclear weapons until the "entire NATO military build-up was completed."[74] The Germans already assumed Kennedy had decided to "retain in his own hands" the power to decide on the use of NATO's nuclear weapons. In fact, the Germans approved of this decision, but they did want a voice in the preparation of NATO's strategic plans that might lead up to the ultimate decision.[75] Because Finletter had called for European ideas, the Germans privately floated a new arrangement on the "Basic Decision on Use of Nuclear Weapons." The plan, mirroring Strauss's earlier suggestions, was for a formula whereby the decision to use nuclear weapons would be made jointly by SACEUR and the country under attack.[76] Dr. Ulrich Sahm, head of the NATO Section at the German Foreign Office, explained what was implicit in the memorandum he had drafted: The decision would be taken by the "country attacked" - Germany, most likely - and SACEUR. And although officially there would be no formal US role, "there would be some arrangement between SACEUR and the President of the United States - which nobody would or should know about."[77] The Germans later

---

[74] "Meeting with Minister of Defense Franz Josef Strauss, May 10, 1961," June 1, 1961, NSF, Kissinger, box 320, folder: Staff Memoranda, Henry Kissinger, 6/61-7/61, JFKL.

[75] Bonn to External 206, April 21, 1961, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (2.2), LAC.

[76] Translation of German document, attached to "Memo for SACEUR," from P. Von Butler to Norstad, undated [March-April, 1961], NP, box 49, folder: Germany 1961-1962 (5), DDEL; Stoessel to Fessenden, December 28, 1961, NP, box 85, folder: ATOM – NUCL POLICY 1961 (1), DDEL. See also Bonn to External 155, March 21, 1961, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (2.1), LAC.

[77] "NATO Defense Problems," Memorandum of Conversation, May 10, 1961, NP, box 87, folder: GERMANY - Problems (2), DDEL.

submitted their plan to the Secretary General, who distributed it to the NATO allies as an official NATO document.[78]

Norstad understood the German apprehensions about the conventional build-up and their worries about a decision to use nuclear weapons. He warned Washington that Germany's position in NATO was unique due to its "complete exposure to Soviet conventional attack" and its "firm conviction that any massive incursion can only be stopped by nuclear weapons." Thus the *Bundeswehr's* nuclear capability was "essential to German confidence in mutual defense arrangements." Anything that seemed to weaken those arrangements was unacceptable both militarily and politically.[79]

Still, Norstad, like Escott Reid, the Canadian ambassador in Bonn, did not think the Germans were about to make any drastic changes to their defense policy. Reid argued that if gaining independent nuclear power was the only way to ensure German security, then perhaps the Germans would seek it. This scenario "need not arise," however, "if Germany was satisfied that NATO defence arrangements were fully effective … especially that USA would not hesitate in case of need to use nuclear weapons and to release them to the forces of its NATO allies." What he and Norstad assumed was not that Germany wanted control of nuclear weapons - let alone a nuclear capacity of its own - but a means of guaranteeing Germany would be defended.[80]

---

[78] Excerpt from PO(61)573 quoted in NATO Paris to External 1882, July 19, 1961. RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (3.1), LAC.

[79] USNMR SHAPE MESSAGE 4632 to SecState, April 27, 1961, NP, box 100, folder: DOWLING, WALTER, American Ambassador to Germany (2), DDEL. See also the reasoned analysis in Tyler to Millar, January 4, 1960, EUR, OAPMA, Subject Files, box 17, folder: Germany. vol. 1., NARA.

[80] Bonn to External 790, December 20, 1961, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (3.1), LAC.

But the German plans were quickly mixed up with the worries of officials in Europe, Canada, and the United States that Germany harbored more sinister intentions. Some allies were worried that if the Germans had some control in the decision-making process, they might "impose an atomic decision on the alliance as a whole."[81] Reid believed that, whatever Strauss's intentions, the German Minister "remains fully aware of the political obstacles to any overt German effort to acquire independent control of nuclear warheads." He pointed out that Kennedy had recently told the editor of the Soviet newspaper *Izvestia* that he shared Moscow's concern about independent German control. And while the Germans might have been furious, Reid was convinced also "that they got the m[essage]."[82]

Just as worrisome as the FRG initiating a nuclear war was concern that Germany, strengthened by its own nuclear capability, might detach itself from NATO altogether. German activity in NATO worried men like U.S. Deputy Undersecretary George Ball and Spaak. Ball, after meeting with Strauss in March 1961, worried Germany might undertake "an independent bilateral negotiation with the Kremlin looking toward the reunification of Germany."[83] In reality, after Finletter's presentation, the Germans urged more, rather than less integration and training of NATO's conventional forces. For those

---

[81] NATO Paris to External 1882, July 19, 1961.

[82] Bonn to External 790, December 20, 1961.

[83] "Relationship of United Kingdom to the European Common Market," Memorandum for the President from Ball, April 1, 1961, POF, folder: United Kingdom: Security, 1961: 27 March-April, JFKLDC. See also "Mr. Spaak's Views on the "Enmeshment" of Germany and France," Memorandum of Conversation, June 9, 1961, POF, folder: Germany: Security, 1961: January-June, JFKLDC.

already convinced Germany would try to break free from NATO, German efforts to integrate themselves deeper in NATO meant little.[84]

The Germans kept trying to find a response to Kennedy's call for allied ideas on control of a nuclear force.[85] The German Ministry of Defense drew up proposals for NATO's control and use of nuclear weapons, and *Die Welt* reported that Strauss himself had "four or five proposals" to make NATO the fourth atomic power.[86] Strauss even wrote to McNamara with a plan for a NATO Nuclear Force composed of national contingents, to be controlled by SACEUR, which could destroy 90% of Soviet industrial capacity. But McNamara rejected it totally.[87] The German foreign office, wary of their allies' concerns about Germany, disclaimed any knowledge at all of Strauss's or the MOD's plans. Ultimately, the German Defense Council agreed on December 5, 1961, not to put any plans on the table at the December Ministerial.

2.6.6 Facing Up To Facts

In early 1962, Stikker took the initiative to pull together the loose ends floating around from the years before. He prepared a paper for the Council, NDP(62)2, in which he outlined the four most prominent ideas for control of nuclear weapons. Two of these were Stikker's own: He had proposed a system of "weighted voting" whereby the

---

[84] "Comments by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany on the Statement made by the United States Permanent Representative on Defence matters to the NATO Council on 26 April 1961," undated, NP, box 49, folder: Germany 1961-1962 (5), DDEL; for Strauss's personal support for military integration, see NATO Paris to External 1079, April 28, 1961. RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (2.2), LAC.

[85] Rusk had reiterated a similar call at a press conference in November. Washington DC to External 3542, November 20, 1961, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (3.1), LAC.

[86] Bonn no 1363 to SecState, December 6, 1961, NSF, box 224, folder: NATO, Weapons, Cables, 5/61-3/62, [Folder 1 of 3], JFKL.

[87] OSD Washington DEF 906763 to CHMAAG Bonn Germany, December 7, 1961, NP, box 109, folder: Secretary of Defense (3), DDEL.

Council, with each state assigned a particular weight, would vote on a decision to use nuclear weapons.[88] He had also proposed a "restricted group" of states that might make a decision. There had also been the German plan for a SACEUR and "country attacked" joint decision, and an idea for a NATO agency that possessed, maintained and operated its own nuclear weapons.[89]

Stikker did not bother to include a fifth notion, that the North Atlantic Council might be responsible for deciding on the use of nuclear weapons with a unanimous decision. This shows just how quickly the idea that the NAC was responsible for the decision to go to war had evaporated. The belief, so widely held just years before, that the NAC must agree to the use of nuclear weapons, even acquired a derisive name: "15 fingers on the trigger."[90] Stikker's oversight is more striking because Norstad had made clear in his briefings that any instruction to him, as SACEUR, to use nuclear weapon must come from the "political authority." That authority could only be the NAC.

Of all the ideas offered so far, none had been acceptable to the allies. None had found a balance between the political responsibilities of NATO countries to retain their own

---

[88] Stikker had weighted the countries in his formula whereby "one other nuclear power (US or UK) as well as Germany and France would be required to vote for use." The idea was deeply unpopular. Paris Airgram 409 to SecState, November 10, 1961, NP, box 85, folder: ATOM – NUCL POLICY 1961 (1), DDEL. See also Numbered Letter N-671 from NATODel to USSEA, May 5, 1961, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (2.2), LAC.

[89] "Control of Nuclear Weapons," Secretary General to Permanent Representatives, NDP/62/2, January 23, 1962, NSF, box 225A, folder: NATO, Weapons, Cables, France, 1/62-6/62, [Folder 1 of 3], JFKL.

[90] Paris POLTO 1003 to SecState, Section 1 of 2, February 2, 1962, NSF, box 222, folder: NATO, General, Cables, 1/61-2/62 [4 of 4], JFKL. The Canadian government compelled Stikker to issue an amendment to NDP/62/2 including the NAC option. Note that some NATO officials, including the Canadian Secretary of State for External Relations, continued to believe that any nuclear decision would be taken by the NAC. Martin, *A Very Public Life*, 2: So Many Worlds, 386, footnote 2, also 461.

power over the decision to go to war, as expressed by their own constitutional practice or jurisprudence, and the efficient decision-making required in the face of nuclear conflagration, especially if some countries waffled at the moment of crisis. As Norstad put it, the NATO countries "cannot accept less than unanimity, but at same time do not want rigidity of formal agreement on unanimity."[91]

To solve the problem, Stikker suggested Council seek formal agreement with the United States that the President act for the NATO nations and take any decision on nuclear weapons with reference to "guidelines." He laid out three lettered guidelines to explain how this process would work: "A" held that, in the event on an unmistakable Soviet nuclear attack, the Alliance would respond in kind. "B", in the event of a Soviet full-scale conventional attack, nuclear weapons should be used. If, in either scenario A or B time permitted, the President would consult with Council. In the third scenario, "C", which was any event but "A" or "B" - that is, a Soviet action short of either nuclear or conventional all-out attack - the President would consult with the NAC.[92]

The Americans saw no other option to discussing the guidelines. Had they refused, it would have fostered doubts in Council about American intentions "to a degree that would be serious."[93] The lone dissenters were the French, who thought the guidelines only highlighted the pre-eminent position of the American President that they wished to tacit.[94]

---

[91] Paris 654 to SecState, November 14, 1961, NP, box 85, folder: ATOM – NUCL POLICY 1961 (1), DDEL.

[92] "Control of Nuclear Weapons," Secretary General to Permanent Representatives, NDP/62/2, January 23, 1962.

[93] Paris POLTO 1003 to SecState, Section 2 of 2, February 2, 1962, box 222, folder: NATO, General, Cables, 1/61-2/62 [4 of 4], JFKL.

[94] Memorandum of Conversation, April 26, 1962, NSF, box 226, folder: NATO, Weapons, Cables, France, 1/62-6/62, [Folder 3 of 3], JFKL.

But the guidelines concept was popular in the abstract and provided a "better than expected start on a knotty problem.[95] The Americans were pleased because discussion of guidelines would postpone the discussion of weighted voting or restricted groups, which would no doubt be acrimonious. The Americans wished to get agreement on nuclear issues before the upcoming Athens Ministerial meeting in May so that McNamara could focus on making a strong case for increased conventional forces.

As the permanent representatives continued to discuss nuclear questions in their weekly Council sessions, Stikker flew to Washington to meet with the Kennedy, Rusk, and other U.S. officials. He explained his true motives for pressing discussions of the nuclear issue in Council: Germany. Stikker sensed a "growing nationalism" in Germany which might "eventually insist on a national nuclear capability" if no alternatives were prepared.[96] Stikker's evidence for German nationalism was limited, but he believed Bonn had a new propensity for "throwing Germany's weight around." And Adenauer had assured him (no doubt self-servingly), that only Adenauer was capable of restraining his countrymen.[97]

In Washington, Stikker and the Americans reached agreement on how to proceed on NATO strategy and nuclear policy. First, no effort would be made to change NATO's Political Directive. Instead, Council would take a "pragmatic approach" to strategy and

---

[95] Paris POLTO 1003 to SecState, Section 2 of 2, February 2, 1962.

[96] Washington D.C. to External 395, February 9, 1962. February 14, 1962. RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-40 (3.2), LAC. See also "NATO's Nuclear Role," memorandum of conversation, February 7, 1962, DDRS, CK3100112824.

[97] "NATO Nuclear Questions," memorandum of conversation, February 5, 1962, DDRS, CK3100323996. This memorandum is reiterated with different phrasing, in SecState TOPOL 1142 to Paris, February 7, 1962, NSF, box 222, folder: NATO, General, Cables, 1/61-2/62 [4 of 4], JFKL. On the Strauss-Stikker conversation, see below and Fessenden to Norstad, February 7, 1962 and Stikker, *Men of Responsibility*, 333-34.

force planning. Second, the US would agree, in principle, to guarantee an adequate level of nuclear weapons in Europe, to cover with their own forces any targets beyond SACEUR's capability, and to provide information on nuclear stocks and targeting. Finally, the United States agreed to remain open to the possibility of a multilateral or multinational MRBM force if only because "a political requirement may exist for such a force."[98]

Before he left the United States, Stikker visited the Strategic Air Command (SAC) Headquarters in Omaha, Nebraska, where he was given an introduction to American nuclear targeting. He was convinced by what he saw that the United States could cover any targets "of particular interest to Europe," and that these targets were afforded the same priority as targets that threatened the US. On the airplane ride from Omaha, Foy Kohler explained to Stikker that in the United States government, there had recently been "much educating and facing up to facts … Something similar is required in the Alliance."[99]

Stikker's trip convinced him there could be no profitable discussion of nuclear policy in NATO until all members had a better understanding of the "nuclear picture" he glimpsed in Omaha.[100] Both the French and German governments had expressed a

---

[98] "NATO's Nuclear Role: Stikker Visit," February 8, 1962, NSF, Kissinger, box 462, folder: Background Briefing Material for H. A. Kissinger on 2/13+14/62, Folder 1 of 2, JFKL.

[99] "On the plane going to and from Omaha," Memorandum of Conversation, March 8, 1963, NSF, box 221, folder: NATO, General 7/62-11/63 [Folder 2 of 3], JFKL.

[100] NATO Paris to External 485, February 22, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-40 (3.2), LAC; Memorandum to the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense, from Bundy, July 14, 1961, NSF, box 220A, folder: NATO, General 7/61-5/62/61 [Folder 1 of 3], JFKL; "Nuclear Capability of Forces Committed to NATO," Memorandum for the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, July 22, 1961, NSF, box 220A, folder: NATO, General 7/61-5/62/61 [Folder 1 of 3], JFKL.

"strong desire" to know more about the Alliance's nuclear capability, and Strauss had been asking for years for details about nuclear weapons in Germany: "i.e., their location, numbers, yields, targets, and proposed method of employment."[101] With this information, he hoped to divine the true nature of the weapons' availability and commitment to Germany.[102]

But the Europeans lacked information about much more than the number of warheads. General Paul Stehlin, a French officer who had commanded air forces in Germany, explained the problem to the Americans. As a commander of forces who would be equipped with nuclear weapons in war, he knew the targets and availability of some of the nuclear weapons in Europe. And other allied officers assigned to the SHAPE staff, not just Americans, would also have an idea of NATO's nuclear capability because of their involvement in selecting those targets. But they knew nothing about the larger strategic picture. NATO's nuclear weapons were but part of a broader nuclear striking system, that also the UK Bomber Command and the US Strategic Air Command. Altogether, these forces contributed to the American Single Integrated Operations Plan, or SIOP, the plan for nuclear war. Because of this compartmentalization, and the fact that SHAPE targets were an isolated component of a secret American plan, virtually no European officials or officers had participated in planning for large-scale nuclear war. Stehlin warned that "very few people" including many generals and even de Gaulle himself, understood the

---

[101] Fessenden to Norstad, February 7, 1962.

[102] Memorandum for the Record, February 3, 1962, NP, box 85, folder: ATOM - NUCL POLICY '62 (4), DDEL. See also Memorandum from Wolf to Stoessel, January 26, 1962, NP, box 85, folder: ATOM - NUCL POLICY '62 (4), DDEL.

issues of nuclear strategy.[103] Although the British were further up the nuclear food chain because of Bomber Command's special role, even they did not know as much as the other allies might have assumed. In April 1962, there was one RAF Liaison Officer at Omaha, but he was attached to Tactical Operations Division. Like all foreign nationals, therefore, he had no "access to strategic target planning or SIOP information."[104]

This lack of knowledge complicated efforts to agree on a balance between conventional and nuclear forces, let alone guidelines or rules of engagement.[105] Throughout 1961 American officials, in bilateral conversations, came to understand that the ignorance of targeting policy was at the heart of European worries.[106] For instance, in December McNamara had attempted to assure Strauss that SAC targeted nuclear targets threatening Europe, and in some cases, the targets were covered by both SAC and SACEUR. This was not satisfactory for Strauss, who wanted European targets to be covered by SACEUR. Strauss's worry was that if the Soviets increased the number of ICBMs - that is, weapons that could reach the United States - then SAC would prioritize destroying these sites, leaving, perhaps, other targets that threatened Europe partially or

---

[103] "Memorandum of Conversation," August 31, 1959, NATO Advisor, box 1, folder: NACNA, NARA. See also De Rose's comments in Memorandum of Conversation, April 17, 1961, NSF, box 220, folder: NATO, General 4/8/61-3/30/61, JFKL.

[104] Memorandum from Kranich to Fessenden, April 11, 1962, EUR, RPM, NATO Affairs, 1959-1966, box 7, folder: Defense Affairs NATO 1962-. DEF 12 Nuclear France," NARA.

[105] See de Rose's comments in "NATO and Nuclear Relationships," memorandum of conversation, April 11, 1961, NSF, box 221, folder: NATO, General, Rostow, 1/61-11/61 [Folder 4 of 4], JFKL. Stehlin linked this issue directly to de Gaulle's policy and the "psychological impact of a situation in which the U.S. is so completely dominant." "Memorandum of Conversation," August 31, 1959.

[106] For an overview of the diverse policies, plans and issues involved in nuclear targeting, see the essays on national policy in Part II of Desmond Ball and Jeffrey Richelson, *Strategic Nuclear Targeting* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1986).

wholly untargeted.[107] Stehlin put it more simply to Henry Kissinger: the French believed American nuclear targeting was "designed to make the U.S. a sanctuary."[108]

2.6.7 The Three-Pronged Approach

On his return from the USA, Stikker told the Council that the United States was prepared to share more information. Finletter made good in February with an initial explanation of the SIOP, and explained that targets threatening Europe were given the same priority as those targeting North America. Later, Britain would associate itself with this general assurance.[109] Stikker hailed the American commitment to share information as "an enormous step forward in the control problem."[110] Still, the allies needed more information and a means to connect this information with policy.

Peter Ramsbotham of the British Foreign Office collated the perceived needs and incorporated them into a "three-pronged approach" that would form the basis of NATO's discussion of nuclear policy in 1962. The NATO allies needed, first, assurances that the United States would maintain nuclear weapons in Europe and in support of NATO. Second, NATO must reach agreement on guidelines. And third, the NATO allies must receive information on the strength, deployment, and targeting of the West's nuclear capability. "Once this information starts flowing," Ramsbotham told Canadian diplomats, the problems would be solved; the Europeans would understand that an MRBM force

---

[107] Memorandum of Conversation, December 15, 1961, NSF, Kaysen, box 375, folder: NATO - Subjects: Nuclear Deployment, JFKL.

[108] "Note on Franco-German Relations" by Henry Kissinger, February 20, 1962, NSF, Kaysen, box 375, folder: NATO - Subjects: Nuclear Deployment, JFKL.

[109] NATO Paris to External 858, March 31, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (4.2), LAC.

[110] NATO Paris to External 485, February 22, 1962. RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-40 (3.2), LAC.

was unnecessary and pressure for a national German nuclear force should recede.[111] This plan, Ramsbotham admitted, contained "a certain amount of 'window dressing.'"[112] Still, even if his program failed it would have "the virtue of having bought time" for a grand bargain with the Soviet Union on Berlin and Germany, rendering the most pressing issues moot.[113]

The Americans, via Finletter, had already made their guarantee to NATO to maintain adequate nuclear weapons in Europe. Next was the related issue of information. With some stops and starts, including a botched proposal for a restricted committee, the full Council decided it would meet under special security measures to hear American (and sometimes British) experts present nuclear information.[114] After wrangling in Washington over just what information could be released to the allies, the United States established a system - codenamed CABAL - for security checks on officials and rules for presentations that would allow NATO allies to receive American nuclear information under the

---

[111] Ramsbotham was one of few British officials who saw pressure for a "national German nuclear force," but he did not think an MRBM force was possible at the moment. London to External 1083, March 2, 1962. RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (4.1), LAC.

[112] NATO Paris to External 664, March 9, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (4.1), LAC.

[113] London to External 1083, March 2, 1962.

[114] Paris POLTO 1274 to SecState, March 27, 1962, NSF, box 222, folder: NATO, General, Cables, 3/1/62-6/14/62 [1 of 4], JFKL. See also NATO Paris to External 764, March 22, 1962. RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (4.1), LAC. The plan is in NDP/62/3. The British had initially suggested a committee with a "consultative" function. See NATO Paris to External 453, February 20, 1962. RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-40 (3.2), LAC; London to External 671, February 26, 1962. RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-40 (3.2), LAC; "Letter and Note from U.K. Delegation on the NATO Nuclear Committee," July 31, 1962, NSF, box 223, folder: NATO, General, Defense Policy Conference, 10/11/62 [Folder 2 of 2], JFKL; "UK Proposal for Additional NATO Nuclear Consultation," October 11, 1962, NSF, box 223, folder: NATO, General, Defense Policy Conference, 10/11/62 [Folder 2 of 2], JFKL.

"Restricted Data" classification.[115] This information, on types of weapons, numbers, striking power, deployment and targeting policy, would allow the Council to "monitor US assurances" regarding the maintenance of adequate capability to NATO.[116] The allies were enthusiastic and the permanent representatives believed the American willingness to "break the pattern" of secrecy was nearly as important as the information itself.[117]

Until NATO reached agreement on guidelines, the President would operate under guidelines he proposed. The United States, Finletter explained, was committed to use nuclear weapons in the event of either an unmistakable nuclear attack or a non-nuclear attack with which NATO "cannot cope." Furthermore, the President would consult Council "on the use of nuclear weapons anywhere within or without the territory of the Alliance."[118] For officials concerned with nuclear policy, this promise to consult on the use of nuclear weapons even outside of NATO was a "big step."[119] Nonetheless, these guidelines raised questions about the use - and timing of the use - of the weapons.

There remained the mystery of how, exactly, the weapons assigned to NATO forces would be used. A contradiction in NATO's organization framed the mystery. The North Atlantic Treaty's provisions for collective defense, articulated in Article 5, assumed allied states would take individual decisions to contribute to collective defense in the event of

---

[115] The first iteration of the security system was called "NACIN." NATO Paris to External 764, March 22, 1962.

[116] SecState TOPOL 1508 to Paris, April 6, 1962, NP, box 85, folder: ATOM – NUCL POLICY '62 (2), DDEL.

[117] NATO Paris to External 716, March 16, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (4.1), LAC.

[118] NATO Paris to External 764, March 22, 1962; Washington DC to External 878, March 21, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (4.1), LAC.

[119] London to External 1083, March 2, 1962.

attack on another signatory. NATO's command structure, with SACEUR at the top, had been added later and was responsible to the NAC rather than any individual state. It represented a different version of collective defense. The President could authorize the release to NATO forces, but the NATO forces would then be under the command of SACEUR. Norstad, as SACEUR, was responsible only to the North Atlantic Council and did not take orders from the President. He was, of course, also an American officer who maintained his position of Commander-in-Chief, Europe (CINCEUR) in the U.S. chain of command. But it was unclear and seemed dubious that, as CINCEUR, Norstad had the authority to order non-American forces to fire nuclear weapons.[120] There remained all of the practical problems, especially lack of communications technology, which prohibited placing any great stock in the NAC being able to take a timely decision on the use of atomic weapons.[121] These contradictions were never resolved.

Still, discussion in Council provided important educational benefits more important than a technical resolution to command and control issues. The Germans picked over the American guidelines carefully. They were worried that in the event of an invasion Germany would be overwhelmed before consultation occurred. Somewhat paradoxically, given the importance for many of the allies that NATO be consulted, the United States calmed these fears by stressing that consultation was "not a condition to releasing nuclear weapons." The Americans explained that the weapons would be released when advanced

---

[120] A number of the issues regarding use are discussed in Paris POLTO 1209 to SecState, March 15, 1962, NSF, box 222, folder: NATO, General, Cables, 3/1/62-6/14/62 [1 of 4], JFKL.

[121] For British views on the general problem see NATO Paris to External 704, March 14, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (4.1), LAC; for Canadian views, stressing communications equipment, see NATO Paris to External 555, February 26, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-40 (3.2), LAC.

warning of an attack had been received. This was an improvement, though the Germans had not forgotten that during the Berlin crisis three Soviet divisions had moved undetected.

The Germans were also concerned by the president's plan to release weapons in the event of a conventional attack if NATO forces "cannot cope." Did this mean that the United States would wait until the Soviet conventional attack had overrun NATO forces, proving they could not cope? The Americans responded that the weapons would be released in case of an attack with which NATO forces "will not be able to cope." The distinction between such phrases had enormous ramifications for the Germans, and the clarification, gained by discussion in Council, was considered by representatives to demonstrate the value of such exchange.[122] A few weeks later, Maxwell Taylor visited NATO headquarters and agreed with the Germans that "nuclear weapons should be used before Hamburg, Hannover and Munich are taken."[123]

Positive momentum in the Council came to a halt in the last week of March. On March 21, Finletter issued a statement reiterating the American views on the need for a conventional build-up. In his statement, he linked the questions of guidelines and the increase in conventional forces, making it seem to the allies that the American "nuclear guarantee" depended on "total acceptance" by the Europeans of conventional requirements that had not yet been met. In discussing the issue a week later, Stikker "boiled over," becoming so upset that he was "taken with a slight seizure." Finletter said

---

[122] Paris POLTO 1209 to SecState, March 15, 1962; Paris POLTO 1255 to SecState, March 22, 1962, folder: NATO, General, Cables, 3/1/62-6/14/62 [1 of 4], JFKL.

[123] Memorandum from Fessenden to Kohler, March 30, 1962, NSF, Kaysen, box 375, folder: Carl Kaysen, NATO, Nuclear Deployment, JFKL.

it was perhaps best to "forget the March 21 statement" and that the US was "setting no absolute conditions." Still, there remained a hint - like the caveats in Kennedy's Ottawa speech - that the Americans expected the allies to hold up their end of the defense bargain.[124] Unofficially, Americans were saying the same in Europe.[125]

2.6.8 Athens

Despite the drama at the end of March, there were signs that the "three-pronged approach" was succeeding. Public statements by Adenauer and Strauss indicated that the Germans, and Strauss especially, were backing away from their calls for NATO to become an independent nuclear power.[126] Officials at the Quai d'Orsay were surprised the FRG was "prepared to be satisfied with quite a bit less than they had been demanding for the last couple of years.[127]

Much of the momentum had been generated by the discussions in Council, where the permanent representatives spoke without being pressed to make formal commitments on behalf of their government. Nonetheless, Stikker pushed for a formal agreement on the guidelines so ministers could formally adopt them at Athens. Only the French objected. On instructions from de Gaulle, the French Permanent Representative told his counterparts that the guidelines were "too hypothetical" and "too vague." Von Walther asked him, "in the name of my government" but with the support of the Italians and

---

[124] NATO Paris to External 859, March 31, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (4.2), LAC.

[125] Paris to External 1545, November 30, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (5.2), LAC.

[126] NATO Paris to External 1070, April 26, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (4.2), LAC.

[127] Paris to External 585, April 17, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (4.2), LAC

Belgians, to request new instructions from Paris.[128] The Quai d'Orsay warned de Gaulle that France was isolated and that there were benefits to accepting. He would not relent.[129] This upset the Germans, who thought de Gaulle's reservation to be "far and away the most significant anti-NATO act France has taken to date," and presciently judged that it portended a "real danger of split in alliance."[130]

In Washington, in the lead up to Athens, much of the three-pronged approach had been enshrined in NSAM 147, "NATO Nuclear Program," which emphasized information sharing with the allies. This American assessment of NATO's desires fit the mood of the allies. The Germans had become increasingly disillusioned with what a land-based MRBM force would mean in practice. The FRG, with its 160 stockpiles of nuclear munitions, was already a prime target for Soviet missile strikes in the event of a war. The Germans, their Permanent Representative von Walther told his colleagues, worried that if there were "lorry-drawn MRBMs wandering the countryside" the Soviets would launch "indiscriminate strikes against Germany in order to try to knock out these mobile weapons."[131] An American memorandum put the state of the MRBM issue succinctly: "US is not taking the initiative, the Germans are no longer pressing, and Stikker is

---

[128] NATO Paris to External 984, April 14, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (4.2), LAC. See also Paris POLTO 1368 to SecState, April 12, 1962, NSF, box 222, folder: NATO, General, Cables, 3/1/62-6/14/62 [2 of 4], JFKL.

[129] Paris to External 576, April 17, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (4.2), LAC.

[130] Paris No. 4886 to SecState, April 17, 1962, NSF, box 222, folder: NATO, General, Cables, 3/1/62-6/14/62 [3of 4], JFKL.

[131] "Memorandum of Conversation at Mr. Durbrow's Residence," March 20, 1962, NSF, Kaysen, box 375, folder: Carl Kaysen, NATO, Nuclear Deployment, JFKL.

suggesting that the whole matter need not be raised for Athens discussion."[132] The MRBM issue was dormant.

McNamara and Rusk were both eager to use the Athens meeting to generate momentum for a build-up of non-nuclear forces. They wished to give the allies a detailed presentation of "the considerations" that led them to their strategy, including nuclear information and analysis of Soviet conventional strength. Although the Athens conference is remembered for McNamara's remarks disparaging the French nuclear program, it should be properly viewed as the consummation of the work done in Council so far in 1962.

Rusk reviewed this work for his ministerial colleagues: The guidelines had been accepted (with the French reservation); the United States had assured the presence and provision of nuclear weapons; Washington had confirmed that the US "accords the same, repeat same, priority to targets of specific interest to Western Europe as for those more directly endangering the United States;" the CABAL system was functioning in support of what was now called a "Defence Data Programme;" and the United States had committed Polaris submarines. Finally, Rusk "trod warily" over the issue of a multilateral MRBM force for NATO, promising to study the issue "if our allies desire."[133]

McNamara followed with a detailed review of American nuclear policy in much greater detail than had ever before been shared at a Ministerial meeting.[134] In a few short

---

[132] "NATO Nuclear Role," memorandum by Robert H. Kranich, March 21, 1962, NSF, Kaysen, box 375, folder: Carl Kaysen, NATO, Nuclear Deployment, JFKL.

[133] Memorandum to the Under-Secretary from DL(1) Division, "NATO Defence Policy: Comments on Mr. McNamara Statement," May 29, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (4.2), LAC.

[134] The final text of McNamara's speech is available online, but in sanitized form. Freedom of Information - International Security Affairs, "Remarks by Secretary

years, McNamara told his colleagues, the West would have 935 long-range bombers, 808 air-launched missiles, and over 1500 ICBM/Polaris missiles. This force of around 3300 weapons had a total yield of 4700 megatons.[135] Because "megaton" was not a common form of measurement for most ministers, the only way for some allies to make sense of nuclear firepower was to compare numbers to the "total explosive dropped on Germany and Japan" during the Second World War, which measured at a little over 2 megatons.[136]

McNamara's hard numbers demonstrated the awesome firepower at the President's command. This firepower gave the United States a "second strike capability" that could destroy the Soviet Union and their satellites even after the United States had been attacked.[137] The allies, McNamara added, need not fear a surprise nuclear attack. They could be confident that the USSR would "not initiate the use of nuclear weapons in the face" of this nuclear superiority. If, however, the Kremlin was irrational enough to try, the Soviets "could not win such a war" and "might lose their country in the course of the conflict."

McNamara. NATO Ministerial Meeting, 5 May, 1962, Restricted Session," Department of Defense, http://www.dod.mil/pubs/foi/International_security_affairs/nato/45.pdf. An unsanitized draft, slightly different, is "Remarks by Secretary McNamara. NATO Ministerial Meeting, May 6, 1962. Draft: April 23, 1962," undated, Executive Secretariat, Komer Records, box 2, folder: NATO Defense Data Program (NDDP) 10/25/62, NARA. Specifics available in the draft but redacted in the draft are verified by reports from other national delegations. See footnotes below.

[135] "NATO Defence Policy – Statement by Secretary of Defence Mr. McNamara," DL(1) to USSEA, May 14, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (4.2), LAC. For a table showing US strategic retaliatory forces in each year from 1961 to 1965, see "Remarks by Secretary McNamara. NATO Ministerial Meeting, May 6, 1962. Draft: April 23, 1962."

[136] Memorandum for the Minister from E.L.M. Burns, "'Fire-power' of Polaris-carrying Submarines," May 11, 1961. RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (2.2), LAC.

[137] "Nuclear Weapons Policy," Memorandum of Conversation, July 12, 1962, EUR, RPM, NATO Affairs, 1959-1966, box 7, folder: Defense Affairs NATO 1962-1963. DEF 12 Nuclear France, NARA

McNamara gave a detailed breakdown of how American units would cover "SACEUR's Threat List," which was Norstad's list of 600 targets. The list included Soviet "MRBM sites, bases for Soviet nuclear-capable aircraft, nuclear storage sites, and military command and control centers."[138] To destroy these 600 targets, the United States planned 1800 total sorties or strikes to be taken by a range of bombers, carrier-based aircraft and missiles, with redundancy designed to ensure destruction. Of the 600 targets, SACEUR was solely responsible for 60, and US external forces for another 300. The rest would be attacked by a combination of NATO and American forces. The "nuclear defense of NATO," McNamara said, had been planned on a "global basis."[139] In fact, the nuclear defense of NATO had largely been undertaken on a non-European basis; 90% of the total number of nuclear weapons and 90% of the total yield of nuclear weapons were "stationed outside of European territory."[140]

Although most weapons were located far from Europe, McNamara forcefully rejected the idea that the US and Soviets might "seek to use Europe as a nuclear battleground." Such a premise "ignored the basic facts of nuclear warfare." These facts, he argued, also made clear that the nuclear "theatre is world-wide," and so centrally controlled forces were essential. For this reason, McNamara delivered an infamous statement railing

---

[138] Redacted in the official version but seems to be the same line in the draft. "Remarks by Secretary McNamara. NATO Ministerial Meeting, May 6, 1962. Draft: April 23, 1962."

[139] See both "NATO Defence Policy – Statement by Secretary of Defence Mr. McNamara," DL(1) to USSEA, May 14, 1962 and "Remarks by Secretary McNamara. NATO Ministerial Meeting, May 6, 1962. Draft: April 23, 1962." Specifics on the number of SACEUR targets, the American capability to launch "an A4D from an aircraft carrier in the Mediterranean" and other data was sanitized in the copy released by DOD.

[140] "Remarks by Secretary McNamara. NATO Ministerial Meeting, May 6, 1962. Draft: April 23, 1962."

against the dangers of "weak nuclear capabilities," suggesting that the French nuclear program was much more of a nuisance than a benefit to the West's defense.[141]

The truth is that in 1962 the United States nuclear armory was so large, and the Soviets so weak, that officials in the United States began to doubt the need of maintaining such a large force. Nonetheless, the purpose of McNamara's assurances was to convince the Europeans of the outstanding truth: NATO's nuclear needs were met. But there were other fears; the crisis of Berlin had pointed to the possibility of limited war but also the solution. Here was the crux of the argument McNamara had been making all along: NATO needed to increase its conventional forces. The nuclear scenario made conventional war more likely; what reduced the likelihood of any confrontation was the message sent by NATO's conventional build-up.[142]

McNamara's Athens speech has been remembered primarily for denigrating French and British deterrent forces, and French officials immediately complained. But such criticism obscures the full story. Strauss, for example, "expressed his enthusiasm." McNamara's speech, he said, was the "first time that the Council had received a full, serious and meaningful strategic analysis and contrasted this with the canned platitudes which he said had been customary in the past."[143]

---

[141] "NATO Defence Policy – Statement by Secretary of Defence Mr. McNamara," DL(1) to USSEA, May 14, 1962.

[142] "NATO Defence Policy – Statement by Secretary of Defence Mr. McNamara," DL(1) to USSEA, May 14, 1962; "Remarks by Secretary McNamara. NATO Ministerial Meeting, May 6, 1962. Draft: April 23, 1962."

[143] "Memorandum for files," May 6, 1962, EUR, RPM, NATO Affairs, 1959-1966, box 2, folder: NATO Athens – 1962, NARA.

2.6.9 Irregular, Tricky, and Unprecedented

The Kennedy administration had been very careful to soft-pedal any plans for a NATO MRBM force, always putting the onus on the European allies to come up with ideas and delicately linking the plan to conventional force increases. The Americans, having suggested the plan originally, did not wish to kill it, and a hard core of American officials still believed it necessary. Stikker, for his part, had never let the MRBM go, and was determined to raise it in Council after Athens. Kennedy and his advisers moved to pre-empt Stikker.[144] The President, already "impressed with the abundance of nuclear weapons available for the defense of the Alliance," wanted Finletter to force the Europeans to "face up early to the problem of financing any MRBM arrangement which they might wish to propose."[145] Although so much of the thinking about MRBMs had, and would later, be predicated on fears of Germany pressing for such a force, Bonn was not pressing for one in June 1961.[146] Thus Kennedy instructed Finletter to speak to the Council and "make it very plain that the military need for this force is not proven," Moreover, the United States would promise to participate, and pay its share, but not

---

[144] Stikker had made it clear to other delegations, including the Americans, that he planned to present a paper on MRBMs the week after Finletter's remarks. NATO Paris to External 1439, June 15, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (5.1), LAC.

[145] "Meeting with the President on MRBM Instructions to Ambassador Finletter," Memorandum for the Record by Legere, June 13, 1962, NSF, Kaysen, box 375, folder: Carl Kaysen, NATO Nuclear Force – 1962, JFKL.

[146] Before Finletter's statement, Strauss had visited Washington and had suggested that any "multilateral approach, possibly on a European basis" would have to wait until after de Gaulle. Washington 1363 to Paris, June 12, 1962, NP, box 85, folder: ATOM – NUCL POLICY '62 (1), DDEL. Overall, Bundy thought the real German goal was to be sure of a "quick and sure determined nuclear defense" in the event of attack; and that they - including Strauss were - pleased by the existing arrangements and wanted no change "in basic responsibilities." "Some interim conclusions about the responses to the President's eight questions," June 17, 1962, NSF, box 226, folder: NATO, Weapons, Cables, France, Eight Questions, May 25, 1962. [6/17/62], JFKL.

finance the whole project. This non-offer, according to Finletter's instruction, was at the time only intended for "educational effect" since "the probability of final affirmative action on this MRBM force is low at present."[147]

Finletter dutifully told his colleagues there existed "no urgent military requirement" for MRBMs.[148] Still the United States would assist in creating a force of 200-250 MRBMs, but it would cost two billion dollars and "the bulk of this expense would necessarily fall upon European participants."[149] The statement rankled nearly all the allies and it was apparent it had been designed to kill any prospect for a multilateral force. Stikker was profoundly upset, describing the American maneuver as "irregular," "tricky," and "unprecedented." He considered asking Norstad to defend the MRBM idea before Council, even if it would "lead to a direct clash" between Norstad and the American delegation.[150]

Stikker, always worried about the FRG, believed the Germans were "deeply disturbed."[151] Finletter, though he had been the one to deliver the message from

---

[147] Department of State TOPOL 1922 to Paris, [To Ambassador Finletter from the President], June 14, 1962, Neustadt Papers, box 19, folder: Government Consulting - Skybolt/NATO/Atlantic Affairs - NATO Research, 1961/2, 2 of 3, JFKL.

[148] On the issue of military necessity, Stikker pointed out that the Heads of Government communiqué of 1957, MC-70, and the requirements in PO(60)437 of April 11, 1960, and MC26/4 all said otherwise. NATO Paris to External 1495, June 21, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (5.1), LAC.

[149] NATO Paris to External 1439, June 15, 1962.

[150] NATO Paris to External 1495, June 21, 1962. McNamara, in fact, asked Norstad to cancel such a briefing. NATO Paris to External 1820, July 27, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (5.1), LAC.

[151] "Subject: Initial Reactions to the American Paper on MRBMs," Memorandum for the File, June 18, 1962, NP, box 113, folder: US REP. NATO (1), DDEL.

Kennedy, shared Stikker and Rusk's worry.[152] He reported that without a multilateral force, the "Germans will reach point of despair" and would "move, surreptitiously at first and then openly, to create their own nuclear force."[153]

Dean Rusk had similar worries. A week after Finletter's statement, Rusk visited Europe, stopping in the North Atlantic Council but also London and Bonn. In Bonn he grew increasingly worried that Germany was seeking its own national nuclear force.[154] In London, the British told Rusk they saw no such desire; in fact they were sure the "Athens Package" had removed any pressure from Bonn on the nuclear front. Rusk asked the British minister of defence Peter Thorneycroft not to "kill" the MRBM idea. The United States would remain "not for or against the project," and they did "not wish to push it or delay it." They simply just wanted "it there."[155]

2.6.10 Rocking the Boat

Other Americans disagreed with Finletter's prognosis. Timothy Stanley, an expert on defense policy who held various positions in the White House and Pentagon, visited Europe after Finletter's speech. He found the Europeans were worried Washington viewed the European allies as little more than a "strategic satellite." These feeling had

---

[152] "Subject: European Unity: Memorandum of a conversation between the Secretary General and Ambassador Finletter on 30th June, 1962," July 2, 1962, NP, box 110, folder: SECRETARY GENERAL-NATO (2), DDEL.

[153] Paris POLTO 21 to SecState, July 5, 1962, NSF, box 222, folder:, Cables, 6/15/62-3/31/63 [1 of 5], JFKL. Kennedy took the telegram for "weekend reading." The American Embassy in Bonn disagreed with his assumption of a "rapidly emerging West German objective to have atomic weapons in one form or another." Bonn No. 57 to SecState, July 7, 1962, NSF, box 222, folder: NATO, General, Cables, 6/15/62-3/31/63 [1 of 5], JFKL.

[154] This is dealt with in more detail in the next chapter.

[155] London to External 2313, June 27, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (5.1), LAC. See also London to External 2250, June 22, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (5.1), LAC.

been aggravated by McNamara's style. Everywhere Stanley heard a plea for "no more speeches or press conferences."[156] This matched the gentle recommendation of German diplomats in Washington, who noted that "too often the Europeans found themselves on the receiving end of rather complicated presentation by the Americans" that led to unnecessary misunderstandings that would be better solved by quiet study and information sharing. Still, there was in Europe a growing acceptance of the military logic of McNamara's Athens speech.[157]

Harold Macmillan, for his part, had been annoyed since Stikker had first brought up the issue of nuclear guidelines and the ensuing back and forth over details. The guidelines, he wrote, were "supposed to please the Germans, so we are friendly to it: then we find it infuriates the French, so we have to withdraw a little. Do the Americans want it? Nobody knows. Is it Stikker's child? And if so, who is he trying to please? And so it goes on."[158]

Macmillan complained about those "who will never leave NATO alone for a single minute and are always trying to write great theories of strategy and tactics for wars which will never be fought, or, if they are, will be fought in much more simple and brutal ways."[159] The pressing issue for the British in the summer and fall of 1962 was not control of nuclear weapons but whether Britain would join the Common Market. The

---

[156] "European Attitudes on NATO Problems," Memorandum for the Record, July 26, 1962, EUR, RPM, NATO Affairs, 1959-1966, box 1, folder: NATO 1. Policy. Plans. 1962, NARA.

[157] "Luncheon Conversation with Dr. Hans Wieck, Second Secretary, Germany Embassy," August 16, 1962, EUR, RPM, NATO Affairs, 1959-1966, box 6, folder: Defense Affairs NATO 1961-1963. DEF 12 Nuclear Germany, NARA.

[158] "Foreign Policy," Harold Macmillan to the Foreign Secretary, April 15, 1962, PREM 11/3778, NAUK.

[159] Ibid.

British were desperate for no one to "rock the boat." They wanted the Americans and others to leave aside issues of NATO's nuclear strategy until the Brussels negotiations concluded.[160]

Finletter was recalled to Washington and returned to Paris convinced NATO should postpone all discussions of MRBMs.[161] But Stikker insisted and raised the issue in Council.[162] Stikker invited Norstad anyway, and the General told the NAC that "without MRBMs there will be no defence which is synonymous with there being no NATO."[163] It seemed to most at NATO that Stikker made a grievous mistake by pushing for something that the United States had seemed to reject and the British and French did not want to deal with.[164] Privately, delegations wondered about the competence of both Stikker and the International Staff.[165]

October proved serendipitous for proponents of the MLF. In the weeks after Norstad's briefing, the world was transfixed by the drama of the Cuban Missile Crisis with its

---

[160] Department of State TOPOL 1893 to Paris and other NATO Capitals, June 8, 1962, NSF, box 222, folder: NATO, General, Cables, 3/1/62-6/14/62 [Folder 4 of 4], JFKL; Airgram A-1503 from Bonn to Department of State, June 14, 1962, NSF, box 222, folder: NATO, General, Cables, 3/1/62-6/14/62 [Folder 4 of 4]; "Your Meeting this afternoon with Lord Hood," Memorandum to Tyler from Popper, November 21, 1962, EUR, RPM, NATO Affairs, 1959-1966, box 5, folder: Defense Affairs - NATO - 1963. DEF-1 Consultation-UK Proposal," NARA. Personal Minute from the Prime Minister to the Foreign Secretary, June 6, 1962, PREM 11/3805, NAUK.

[161] NATO Paris to External 2030, August 30, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (5.1), LAC.

[162] Via NDP/62/10. See NATO Paris to External nos. 2060, 2061, 2062, all dated September 5, 1962, all in RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (5.1), LAC.

[163] NATO Paris to External 2402, October 18, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (5.2), LAC.

[164] Paris to External 1276, September 27, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (5.2), LAC.

[165] NATO Paris to External 2379, October 15, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (5.2), LAC.

attendant nuclear possibilities. The United States had agreed, as part of the crisis' resolution, to withdraw the MRBM squadrons in Italy and Turkey (though they vehemently denied to their NATO allies that any such "strategic bargain" had occurred).[166] Thus, no sooner had the United States shut down discussion over MRBMs for NATO than it confronted a gap to fill in its nuclear planning. Without laying any preliminary groundwork, American officials suggested a multilateral seaborne force might be launched on a test basis, in the Mediterranean, breathing some life into the nearly extinguished plan for a multilateral MRBM force.[167]

McNamaraism began as an imperfect instrument, and the full exchange of information about nuclear weapons was delayed when a battle erupted between McNamara and the Joint Chiefs of Staff over strategy. The CABAL system, however, would go on to underwrite the NATO Defense Data Program, which would begin in earnest in 1963. The thinking behind the NDDP, that accessibility of information would cause the allies to view issues of strategy and defense policy from the same perspective, would provide the ultimate solution to NATO's nuclear problem in the Nuclear Planning Group established in the Johnson years.[168]

The British had encouraged McNamaraism, seeing it, at best, as a way to solve NATO's nuclear policy without losing their privileged position, and, at worst, a way to buy time to resolve other issues. In fact, the three-pronged approach had bought time for

---

[166] NATO Paris to External 2628, November 12, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (5.2), LAC.

[167] Washington DC to External 3351, November 12, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (5.2), LAC.

[168] See the next chapter.

McNamara and his acolytes to calculate what was required for the defense of Europe.[169] By May 1963, Henry Rowen could write to Carl Kaysen that "NATO is in splendid shape at sea, pretty good shape in the air, and not so hopelessly off on the ground."[170]

The German response to the various NATO nuclear policy discussions reveals that the FRG was already enmeshed in the West and NATO. German diplomats and politicians were careful to participate in NATO discussions and observe the consultation and information exchange. What is more, despite no move toward nuclear integration, the FRG continued to seek out opportunities to further integrate its military forces with its allies, especially the United States, and in 1962, the United States signed a significant logistics integration agreement with the FRG.[171] The United States had pursued this integration for years, because as William Tyler explained, the "greater the degree of integration, the less Germany could attempt, were it ever tempted to do so, to pursue a policy based on the threat of independent military action."[172] Harold Watkinson, the British Minister of Defense, also encouraged this process because "integrated NATO

---

[169] McNamara's shifting position on the value and proposed use of tactical nuclear weapons drove part of the change. He increased his "willingness to entertain the concept of using tactical nuclear weapons in a limited battlefield environment "Secretary McNamara's Meeting with Defense Minister von Hassel on Strategic Subjects, July 31, 1963, in Bonn," Memorandum for the Record, September 4, 1963, EUR, RPM, NATO Affairs, 1959-1966, box 2, folder: NATO 1963 Policy. Plans, NARA. See also Gavin, "The Myth of Flexible Response: United States Strategy in Europe During the 1960s."

[170] Rowen to Kaysen, May 17, 1963, NSF, Kaysen, box 375, folder: NATO – General, JFKL. See also Philip A. Karber and Jerald A. Combs, "The United States, NATO, and the Soviet Threat to Western Europe: Military Estimates and Policy Options, 1945-1963," *Diplomatic History* 22, no. 3 (Summer 1998): 427.

[171] Joint Message ECJD 9-97634from USCINCEUR to OSD/ISA and JCS, November 29, 1962, NP, box 49, folder: Germany 1961-1962 (3), DDEL. See this folder for more and a copy of the Gilpatric-Strauss agreement.

[172] Tyler to Millar, January 4, 1960, EUR, OAPMA, Subject Files, 1953-1962, box 17, folder: Germany. vol. 1, NARA.

logistical support" would effectively bind the FRG "as closely as possible to her allies in NATO."[173]

Stikker, Finletter, Ball, and other American officials, however, judged the connections made by sharing information, and the logistical and military integration short of nuclear weapons, insufficient. They continued to believe that NATO needed to enmesh Germany in Europe on a grander scale. What was needed was "a centralized and multilaterally controlled nuclear force," Finletter argued, for it would be as important in the defense field as the Marshall Plan had been in the economic."[174] This belief would lead the US and some of its allies on a long and difficult detour to find a mechanism for organizing and expanding nuclear participation in the alliance before returning to the information sharing as the only acceptable means of overcoming the limits of integration.

---

[173] P.A. Bridle to George Ignatieff, January 23, 1961, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (1.2), LAC.

[174] NATO Paris to External 2273, October 1, 1962, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (5.2), LAC.

CHAPTER 7: NUCLEAR NOISES:

DOUBLE CONTAINMENT AND THE SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECY OF THE MLF

Adenauer: "We were good boys, too good, and good boys never get what they want."
Stikker: "Please continue to be good boys. It will pay off."
- Conversation between Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and NATO Secretary General Dirk Stikker in Bonn after the Nassau Agreement, January 1963. [1]

You are sick of hearing me say it, but we are making a mistake in pressing too hard for the multilateral force. It is now becoming something that we want, a German favor to us. It was once a concession by us … we are so impetuous that we soon come to believe our own bunk."
- Dean Acheson to Robert Schaetzel, April 1963[2]

In fact if it were not for American restlessness NATO would be in good shape. [The United States] seemed to feel obliged to come up with a new scheme every year and thereby threw everybody into turmoil.
- Lord Mountbatten, May 1963[3]

The saga of the multilateral force was an exercise in using the NATO machine to contain Germany and prevent its "return to the bottle" of chauvinistic nationalism and aggression.[4] The MLF grew out of fears that Germany did, or would soon, seek out its own nuclear forces.[5] These fears belie the claim that NATO endured because of shared values or the inherent democratic nature of the allies. The resolution to the problem of Germany's

---

[1] Stikker, *Men of Responsibility*, 371.

[2] Acheson to Schaetzel, April 1, 1963, AP, Gen. Corr., box 25, folder: 356.

[3] "Conversation with Lord Louis Mountbatten," May 31, 1963, POF, folder: Schlesinger, Arthur M., 1963: May-June, JFKLDC.

[4] The phrase is John McNaughton's. Memorandum for Bundy from McNaughton, November 9, 1965, NSF, Country File, box 193, LBJL.

[5] Historians too, have mistaken American fears and perceptions of German wishes as indications of the German reality, which was much more complicated. Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, 341.

involvement in nuclear policy was not found in plans for a joint nuclear force but rather in the exchange of information through a revived NATO nuclear committee.

*****

In the autumn of 1963 the prospect of a multilateral force remained barely afloat. But in December 1963, when John F. Kennedy and Harold Macmillan met in Nassau, Bahamas, they gave the MLF a major boost. At Nassau Kennedy agreed to sell Polaris missiles to the British. The Americans, worried that the sale of such weapons to Britain would rile the other allies, convinced Macmillan to join a half-baked promise to work toward a multilateral force for NATO. This pledge led to efforts in the North Atlantic Council, and in a committee in Paris, to adumbrate the specifics of a multilateral force (MLF) for NATO that would include the joint control of nuclear weapons.

But the pledge to create an MLF, sketchily outlined in the Nassau Agreement, did not stand alone. The agreement also called for an Inter-Allied Nuclear Force (IANF), in which nuclear weapons would remain under national control yet assigned to SACEUR. In the aftermath of Nassau NATO held "parallel but separate" discussions in Council on each type of force.[6] The results of these dueling exploratory talks led to distrust in NATO. The British pressed for development of an IANF-style force. The United States pushed strongly for an MLF force. Most of the other allies were stuck between these positions.

The United States had supported a multilateral force since 1959.[7] As explained in the previous chapter, Washington's advocacy was both halting and confusing, and the allies

---

[6] NATO Paris to External 302, February 6, 1963, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (6.2), LAC.

[7] On the MLF, see especially David N. Schwartz, *NATO's Nuclear Dilemmas* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1983), 82-135; John D. Steinbruner, *The Cybernetic Theory of Decision: New Dimensions of Political Analysis* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University

struggled to determine whether Washington actually wished to see such a force created. Their difficulty was understandable. Although Kennedy had publicly supported the concept at Ottawa, his June 1962 instructions to Thomas Finletter reveal that he had serious misgivings. But Dean Rusk was more sympathetic. In fact, his State Department amassed the bureaucratic resources to sustain advocacy for a multilateral force, and Rusk's deputy, George Ball, was one of the MLF's most vocal champions.[8]

Kennedy's policy of allowing key administration officials to pursue separate, sometimes competing policies abroad exacerbated severe divisions between different branches of the his administration. As a consequence, MLF supporters found opportunities to strike out on their own.[9] As one advisor put it, they had "valid 'hunting licenses' from this administration," but the problem was "the President and they don't seem to read those license alike."[10] This disarray continued into the presidency of Lyndon Johnson until the White House clamped down on unapproved statements and speeches.

Scholars have long understood the MLF was the manifestation of two powerful impulses in American official thinking: First, it "gave expression to residual fears of German militarism." But secondly, it "connected to a mainstay of postwar policy - support for political and economic integration in Europe."[11] A small group of influential officials, known as the "true believers," or

---

Press, 1974); Andrew Priest, *Kennedy, Johnson and NATO: Britain, America and the Dynamics of Alliance, 1962-68* (London: Routledge, 2012).

[8] Steinbruner, *The Cybernetic Theory of Decision*, 44, 53-54, 241.

[9] Lawrence S. Kaplan, Ronald D. Landa, and Edward J. Drea, *The McNamara Ascendancy, 1961-1965*, History of the Office of the Secretary of Defense (Washington, D.C.: Historical Office, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2006), 362, 98.

[10] "Weekend Reflections on MLF and the President's trip," Neustadt to Bundy, June 18, 1963, Neustadt Papers, box 20, folder: Government Consulting Skybolt/Atlantic Affairs. Atlantic Assignment, 1963, JFKL.

[11] Steinbruner, *The Cybernetic Theory of Decision*, 200.

as the "Theologians," expounded both of these points in in endless memorandums, speeches, and letters.[12] The Theologians were a mix of Kennedy appointees, like Ball and Walt Rostow, who developed relationships with career officials in the State Department, including Henry Owen, Rostow's deputy, and Robert Schaetzel, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Atlantic Affairs. Robert Bowie, responsible for the first iteration of the MLF, returned to the State Department as a special consultant. These officials, constituted the linchpin for the development of European policy – if not its implementation. Many of them had worked in postwar Germany, on the Marshall Plan, or on other aspects of the early European integration policy.[13] Not career foreign service officers, they were, as a general rule, not concerned with the give-and-take of diplomacy. Rather, they concentrated on long-term thinking. In the era of grand designs, these were the ultimate designers.[14]

Their ideas were intertwined with issues of NATO defense policy, nuclear strategy, and the process of European integration. But at heart, American efforts to achieve an MLF reveal what NATO meant to key policymakers in Washington. The basis of the Theologian's worldview was fear of a resurgent Germany. This fear of Germany's future rested almost entirely on Germany

---

[12] Patricia Winand has echoed Steinbruner's dual explanation, though she argues discouraging national ventures outweighed the integrationist impulse. Pascaline Winand, *Eisenhower, Kennedy, and the United States of Europe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 221. For diverse interpretations of the motives behind the MLF proposal, see: Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, 305. Kaplan, Landa, and Drea, *The McNamara Ascendancy, 1961-1965*, 385-85; Lawrence S. Kaplan, "The U.S. And NATO in the Johnson Years," in *The Johnson Years, Volume 3: LBJ at Home and Abroad*, ed. Robert A. Divine (Lawrence, Kan.: University Press of Kansas, 1994), 121; Sherrill Brown Wells, "Monnet and 'the Insiders': Nathan, Tomlinson, Bowie, and Schaetzel," in *Monnet and the Americans: The Father of a United Europe and His U.S. Supporters*, ed. Clifford P. Hackett (Washington, D.C.: Jean Monnet Council, 1995).

[13] Steinbruner, *The Cybernetic Theory of Decision*, 257.

[14] "Memorandum of Conversation with Seymour Weiss. Office of Political Military Affairs, Department of State," May 29, 1963, Neustadt Papers, Box 20, folder: Government Consulting Skybolt/Atlantic Affairs. Atlantic Assignment, 1963," JFKL.

history, with little reference to the current state of German politics or the logical strategic options and possibilities available to Germany in the 1960s and beyond. A.J.P. Taylor wrote that, in 1848, German "history reached its turning point and did not turn."[15] The Theologians' conviction was that Germany could never turn from its destructive course.

The Theologians saw no common ground on which to base German relations with the other NATO allies. Germany had to be tied to the West institutionally to prevent it from striking a deal with the Soviets. This was dual containment in its baldest form. But the Theologians thinking about Germany and the MLF reveal the greatest contradiction in the history and rhetoric of NATO. It is surely incompatible to argue that NATO served both to contain Germany, and that NATO worked effectively because transnational linkages such as democracy connected NATO states. Why, if democracies make for such natural allies, would there be a need to contain Germany? Democracy, in Germany's case, was something to be feared, not celebrated.

2.7.1 The German Nixon

FRG's defense minister Josef-Franz Strauss embodied the Theologians' fears of a nuclear-hungry, revanchist Germany.[16] According to one State Department official, Strauss was "like Nixon" and looked the "wrong type [with] too heavy a beard."[17] They believed Strauss was at the center of a "handful of men" who wished for a "stockpile of nuclear weapons independent of

---

[15] A. J. P. Taylor, *The Course of German History: A Survey of the Development of Germany since 1815* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1962), 68.

[16] Mark Cioc, *Pax Atomica: The Nuclear Defense Debate in West Germany During the Adenauer Era* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988); Kelleher, *Germany and the Politics of Nuclear Weapons*; Jeffrey Boutwell, *The German Nuclear Dilemma*, 1st ed. (London: Brassey's, 1990), 14-52. See also Ronald J. Granieri, "The Fall and Rise of German Christian Democracy, From Détente to Reunification," unpublished manuscript in author's possession.

[17] Millar to Alan [?], July 8, 1960, EUR, OAPMA, Subject Files, 1953-1962, box 22, folder:. John Y. Millar - Trip to Europe. June-July, 1960, NARA.

U.S. supply and control." Strauss figured prominently in American worries not only because of his portfolio and a reputation for operating without Adenauer's knowledge, but because some thought he might succeed Adenauer.[18] German officials fed American fears of Strauss. They warned that Strauss would manipulate any European nuclear combine, like those proposed in a series of French-Italian-German agreements (FIG). Somehow, he would find a means to achieve German control "over its own warheads."[19]

These warnings were never absolute. Herbert Blankenhorn, the German Permanent Representative to NATO, claimed that contact with Americans and visits to the United States would be enough to "keep … Strauss properly oriented."[20] They did. On a visit in February 1958, Dr. Josef Rust, State Secretary of the FRG's Defense Ministry, was taken on a tour of the Chrysler plant in Chicago that manufactured Jupiter missiles. Rust was amazed by what he saw. He understood immediately that the "tremendous physical and financial effort involved in a nuclear missile program" rendered any idea of "Continental independence in nuclear missiles" - let alone a German nuclear program - a "hopeless pipedream for many years to come." Rust was so impressed that he reported to Strauss and Adenauer in Bonn; Strauss then visited the plant himself. A few months later, Department of State officials reported that Strauss had been "so

---

[18] Blankenhorn thought Strauss the leading candidate to replace Adenauer; Paris 1653 to SecState, November 4, 1958, DNSA, BC00230; Millar to Alan [?], July 8, 1960.

[19] Paris 1653 to SecState, November 4, 1958, and Bonn No. G-63 to SecState, August 8, 1959, PPC, Subject Files, 1954-1962, box 151, folder: Europe 1959, NARA. See also "French-Italian-German Nuclear Collaboration," Memorandum from Elbrick, Smith and Farley to Acting Secretary, a/13/58 [sic], NATO Advisor, box 1, folder: TS Master Files, 6/57-10/11/58, NARA; "French-German-Italian Cooperation on New Weapons Production," Memorandum for the Secretary from Elbrick, February 5, 1958, PPC, Subject Files, 1954-1962, box 151, folder: Europe 1958, NARA; "French-German-Italian Collaboration in Production of Nuclear Weapons," Memorandum by Fearey, March 3, 1958, NATO Advisor, box 2, folder: Strauss Visits 1958 & 1960, NARA; "Various Subjects as Indicated," Memorandum of Conversation, NATO Advisor, box 2, folder: Strauss Visits 1958 & 1960, NARA.

[20] Paris 1653 to SecState, November 4, 1958.

overwhelmed with what he saw in the U.S. that he now is more inclined to the view that anything done in FIG or WEU must bend to U.S. wishes and assistance, and that under no circumstances would he disturb this basic tie to the U.S."[21]

This did not mean Strauss simply left matters of nuclear defense alone. As explained in the previous chapter, he was one of the most active ministers in efforts to find a NATO nuclear policy that would ensure the defense of Europe.[22] But when reporters asked Norstad, off the record, whether Strauss had "occasionally strayed" from the German line of not asking for control of nuclear warheads, Norstad was "very firm" that neither the defense minister nor anyone else in the Bonn government had even floated the idea of an independent nuclear capacity in speeches. "All of the German representations," he said, "have been within a multilateral NATO framework."[23] British Foreign Office officials, for their part, believed Strauss "really is dedicated to NATO and the Western alliance." Most important, he has never advocated "a separate German nuclear programme; he has always talked of a NATO nuclear deterrent."[24] In 1961, the reporter Robert Estabrook asked former ambassador to Bonn David Bruce "if Strauss

---

[21] Robert H. Kranich to Fearey, April 28, 1958, RA, R. RA, Records of the Director, Correspondence, 1955-1959, box 1, folder: Correspondence II (1958-1960), NARA.

[22] For Strauss's later plans and hopes for European nuclear forces, see Beatrice Heuser, "The European Dream of Franz Josef Strauss," *Journal of European Integration History* 4, no. 1 (1998). See also Ronald J. Granieri, "The Fall and Rise of German Christian Democracy, From Détente to Reunification."

[23] "Memorandum: Background conference with General Lauris Norstad, December 12, 1961. Supreme Commander, Allied Powers Europe," December 12, 1961, Estabrook Papers, box 1, folder: General Lauris Norstad, London, 12/12/61, JFKL.

[24] "Memorandum. Luncheon with John Killick," March 6, 1962, Estabrook Papers, box 1, folder: John Killick, London, 3/6/62, JFKL.

was not the German Nixon." Bruce gave the heartiest of denials: "absolutely not."[25] Strauss's "dedication to the West," Bruce said, "cannot be questioned."[26]

2.7.2 Pouring our Money into the Ocean

While American diplomats in Europe exonerated Strauss, events in the early Kennedy administration conspired to create an atmosphere of morbid curiosity about Germany's past – and thus its future. The sensational trial of Adolph Eichmann and the publication of William Shirer's best-selling *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* brought Nazi atrocities back to the fore of public thinking about the FRG.

This was also the era of armchair psychology in international relations.[27] In early 1961, Henry Kissinger, a Harvard professor and a part-time consultant on the NSC staff, used his masterful language skills to paint a lurid picture of the Germans for Kennedy. The FRG, he wrote, was suffering "psychological exhaustion" and thus was "a candidate for a nervous breakdown."[28] A few months later, Kissinger wrote to Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., to warn that his "nightmare remains that a continuation of present trends will lead to a resurgence of nationalism in Germany and to Soviet-German deals on a national basis, wrecking the achievements of fifteen years of European integration."[29] German diplomats in Washington did little to soothe

---

[25] "Memorandum: Luncheon with Ambassador David Bruce," November 2, 1961, Estabrook Papers, Box 1, folder: David Bruce, London, 11/2/61, JFKL.

[26] "Talk with Ambassador David Bruce," April 16, 1962. Estabrook Papers, Box 1, folder: David Bruce, London, 4/16/62, JFKL.

[27] Frank Costigliola, "The Nuclear Family: Tropes of Gender and Pathology in the Western Alliance," *Diplomatic History* 21, no. 2 (Spring 1997).

[28] "Visit of Chancellor Adenauer – Some Psychological Factors," Memorandum for the President from Kissinger, April 6, 1961, POF, folder: Germany: Security: Adenauer meeting: General, April 1961, JFKLDC.

[29] Kissinger to Schlesinger, October 3, 1961, Schlesinger Papers, box WH-13, folder: Kissinger, Henry 4/19/61-12/2/61, JFKL.

these worries.[30] American officials filled the gaps in their understanding of German intentions by summoning history rather accepting the present reality.

Kennedy understood that a nuclear Germany would be dangerous. In February 1962 he told French Premier Edgar Faure that among "the major problems of concern to us, was that of the possibility of the Germans acquiring nuclear weapons for themselves."[31] But he did not think this scenario likely. In a March 1962 NSC meeting, Kennedy posed a critical question to his advisors. The Eisenhower administration had made an offer to the NATO allies of a NATO nuclear force, which Kennedy had repeated at Ottawa, for two basic reasons: The first was to "dissuade the French, and the second was "to deal with the problem of whether the Germans would be stimulated to do the same thing. Since we are clearly failing in our first aim, is it wise to go ahead simply on the ground of dealing with the Germans[?]" Kennedy worried he was "pouring our money into the ocean in this proposition in order to satisfy a political need whose use was dubious."[32]

Kennedy continued to ponder the interconnected problems of whether or not to aid the French nuclear weapon and the need for a multilateral force to satiate German desires for a nuclear weapon. In the spring of 1962 he asked the Departments of Defense and State for their opinion.[33] State argued against helping the French nuclear program largely because officials feared the effects on Germany. It was "unrealistic," wrote Henry Owen, "that over a period of

---

[30] Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy from Fred Holborn, October 13, 1961, NSF, box 74A, folder: Germany 8/1/61-10/14/61, JFKL.

[31] "US-French Divergencies: Berlin, the Nuclear Question and NATO," Memorandum of Conversation, February 28, 1962, NSF, box 71, folder: France General, 3/11/62-3/30/62, JFKL.

[32] "Memorandum of Meeting - 5:00 - 5:30 PM, March 15, 1962," March 16, 1962, NSF, Kaysen, box 375, folder: NATO - Subjects: Nuclear Deployment, JFKL.

[33] Memorandum for the President from Bundy, June 17, 1962, Neustadt Papers, box 20, folder: NATO Nuclear Weapons / AID, 2 of 2, JFKL.

time German politicians could resist the temptation to exploit the issue of US nuclear discrimination against Germany." Compounding this problem was the Theologians' belief that Germany's desires were insatiable. "The only arrangement likely to prevent German pressures for a national program would be … a genuinely multilateral program" akin to the "approach and proposal that Secretary Marshall extended in the economic field in 1947."[34] But the State Department's advice to Kennedy was peculiar in that it offered no suggestion that other factors, like Soviet threats, public opinion, or ongoing diplomatic efforts could thwart German desires for control.

It was the Pentagon that gave more credence to diplomacy. It maintained that NATO worked along a "fairly well established pecking order of national power and prestige," which "runs, after the U.S., the U.K., France, Germany, Italy, the Low Countries." As the top country gained a nuclear capability, so the next in line would desire one for motives "largely, and vaguely, political." "In light of Germany's special history and position, it is likely, however, that the process will stop at France."[35] Perhaps some Germans would be unhappy and feel discriminated against in this case, but the Pentagon believed "obstacles, principally allied opposition, to German possession of nuclear arms would remain formidable."[36]

These positions set the terms of the debate for the rest of the Kennedy administration and beyond. The Pentagon thought that a German desire for nuclear weapons was a moot point because of the international political pressure on Germany. The State Department believed

---

[34] "France and Nuclear Weapons: Answer to Eight Questions," Records of Ambassador Charles E. Bohlen, 1942-71, box 26, folder: Ball, George, 1963-1966 correspondence, NARA.

[35] "Answers to Eight Questions re European Nuclear Matters," Memorandum for the President from McNamara, June 16, 1962, Neustadt Papers, box 20, folder: NATO Nuclear Weapons / AID, 2 of 2, JFKL.

[36] Draft [of DoD response to Eight Questions], June 2, 1962, DDRS, CK3100116250.

German domestic political pressure for a nuclear weapon must be taken for granted, and that no level of international pressure could halt German development once the domestic demand had grown to a certain size. Neither side would budge.

Kennedy's Special Assistant for National Security, McGeorge Bundy, broke the deadlock. Siding with the Pentagon, he wrote Kennedy that "the danger of heavy pressure for a German national nuclear deterrent is not the central justification of our current policy" of not aiding France. The real issue for the Germans, he wrote, was that they wanted to be assured of a quick and sure nuclear defense. "The truth is that the existing arrangements please them very much."[37] It was this attitude that led Kennedy in June 1961 to personally instruct Finletter to tell the NATO allies that any NATO nuclear force was unnecessary, and that the Europeans must carry the financial burden.[38]

2.7.3 The Inevitable Growth of German Pressure

It just so happened that Dean Rusk visited Europe the week after the brouhaha evoked by Finletter's statement in Council. While in Europe, Rusk became fully converted to the Theologians' thinking. Rusk had opposed American aid to the French nuclear program because of its "effect on German aspirations" and worried the Germans might themselves ask directly for aid to a German program.[39] Rusk also feared a joint Franco-German program. In 1962, when

---

[37] "Some interim conclusions about the responses to the President's eight questions." June 17, 1962, NSF, box 226, folder: NATO, Weapons, Cables, France, Eight Questions, May 25, 1962. [6/17/62], JFKL. This seems to read in direct contradiction with Trachtenberg's views that American opposition to the French program was only because of the German problem. *A Constructed Peace*, 305.

[38] See pages 330-331, above.

[39] Washington no. 4770 to Paris [Personal for Ambassador from Secretary], May 5, 1961, NSF, box 70A, folder: France-General, 4/22/61-4/30/61, JFKL.

visiting London, he agreed to "cooperate [with the British] on a study of French and German cooperation in the nuclear field."[40]

The British and American embassies in Bonn and Paris ferreted about for evidence of Franco-German cooperation on nuclear weapons. In France, they asked around at the French Ministry of Defense, the Foreign Office, and the agencies concerned with atomic energy.[41] In Germany, they looked for unaccounted budget funds and concentrations of scientific personnel, and they checked up on the activities of firms that might be involved in such a project. They found no evidence "which would justify conclusion German activity under way." In their judgment, moreover, Franco-German cooperation, though it existed, concentrated on theoretical studies that were only distantly related to weapons development, if at all. In reasoning through the absence of any such cooperation, "both Emb[assie]s are convinced that, at present, balance of advantage for FRG lies in existing, openly known arrangements stemming from NATO membership and US possession of nuclear deterrent." Although there was the "intangible factor" of Germany following "pure nationalistic motivations," it seemed the Germans would continue to guide its policy by "their relationship with US and NATO."[42]

Rusk came to a strikingly different conclusion. On June 23, 1962, he reported to the President, "My visit to Bonn removed any doubt I might have had as to the inevitable growth of German pressure for nuclear weapons unless there are multilateral arrangements in NATO or Europe or unless there are significant steps toward disarmament in this field." How had Rusk

---

[40] Airgram A-322 from London to SecState, June 28, 1962, NSF, box 226A, folder: NATO, Weapons, Cables, Germany, FRG-French Nuclear Cooperation, JFKL.

[41] Paris no. 6066 to SecState, June 18, 1962, NSF, box 226A, folder: "Franco-German cooperation," JFKL.

[42] Bonn no. 3165 to SecState, June 24, 1962, NSF, box 226A, folder: "Franco-German cooperation," JFKL; "Possible Joint French-German Arrangements in Nuclear Weapons field," February 26, 1963, POF, folder: Germany: Security, 1963: January-March, JFKLDC.

reached such a dark view? He explained to Kennedy that Adenauer had "asserted in the most positive terms" that his 1954 declaration renouncing production of nuclear weapons was not permanent. It had been made, Adenauer said, under the conditions of the time, and that even John Foster Dulles had offered the legal maxim *rebus sic stantibus* as a means of interpreting the Chancellor's pledge.[43] Adenauer's comment sent State Department officials searching through their records to determine whether Eisenhower's Secretary of State had, in fact, made such a pledge. Since Dulles himself had called a halt to verbatim note taking during the conversation in question, no clear evidence existed.[44]

Rusk's *rebus sic stantibus* rabbit hole ignored the context in which Adenauer refused to again renounce Germany's production of nuclear weapons. It was only in response to a request from Rusk for Adenauer to reiterate their voluntary pledge as part of the American push for a nonproliferation agreement that Adenauer had demurred. While it might not have been apparent to Rusk, it was obvious to officials in the Office of the Secretary of Defense's International Security Affairs branch (ISA) that Bonn would not unnecessarily forfeit one of Bonn's strongest cards in any eventual negotiation over German unification.[45] Strauss had made this argument to

---

[43] Bonn SECTO 48 to SecState, August 8, 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963* XV, doc. 172. On balance, the evidence available suggests Dulles never made such a pledge. See Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, 341-42; Heuser, "The European Dream of Franz Josef Strauss," 97.

[44] "German Nuclear Developments and rebus sic stantibus," July 6, 1962, NSF, box 226A, folder: NATO Weapons Cables Germany 3/61-9/63, JFKL.

[45] Draft [of DoD response to Eight Questions], June 2, 1962. Relevance to unification negotiations was confirmed by Muller-Roschach who told Rostow that Schroeder was pro-MLF, because "perhaps above all – it is an essential bargaining card to interest the Russians in German unity, since Schroeder is prepared to surrender a German nuclear role in the context of a German unity negotiation." "Conversations with Germans at APAG Meeting," October 19, 1965, NSF, Subject File, box 24, LBJL. Carstens, even in 1965, considered the pledge "a card" Bonn did "not want to throw away" without improved nuclear arrangements or progress toward reunification." As quoted in Hood to Shuckburgh, July 15, 1965, FO 115/4629, NAUK. See also the quotes of German officials that connect reunification with a

Rusk seven months before.[46] Still, Rusk could not see the connection between renunciation and reunification.

On the same trip in June 1962, Rusk met with Gerhard Schroeder, the German foreign minister. Schroeder assured Rusk "with some solemnity that trust in reliability of US is [the] cornerstone German foreign policy." Schroeder wished for Rusk to understand that Germany was "not politically as healthy" as the United States. As a result, the US would "need occasionally to show more understanding for Germans than Germans sometimes do for us." Schroeder's humble plea was really a clever effort to implore Rusk to look at the larger picture of German's domestic politics and German's awkward geography. But this was not something most Americans in the Department of State concerned with the nuclear issue could do, blinded as they were by German's past.[47]

The perspective of Lord Home, British Foreign Secretary in a country whose elites and general public had no sympathy for Germany, contrasted sharply with Rusk's. Although Home had roughly the same information as Rusk, he found little to worry about. Indeed, he sought to assuage his American counterpart. The British, said Home, had determined from recent discussions with their German counterparts that the FRG was "quite satisfied, at least for present," by American promises to share more information about the nuclear deterrent with their NATO allies." Rusk disagreed, telling Home again how Adenauer had left him "with [the] strong impression that future German pressures for [a] nuclear role [were] bound to be very strong."

---

nuclear renunciation in "German Views on Nuclear Sharing – Background Memorandum," undated, RG59, EUR, RPM, NATO Affairs, 1959-1966, box 8, folder: "Germany II," NARA.

[46] "Meeting Between the Secretary and the German Foreign Minister," Memorandum of Conversation, November 22, 1961, NSF, box 75, folder: Germany General 2/62, JFKL.

[47] London SECTO 60 to SecState, June 25, 1962, POF, folder: State, 1962: June-July, JFKLDC.

The Germans, Rusk went on, gave a "clear impression" that they wanted "to reserve their position" on nuclear questions."[48] A few weeks after returning to Washington, Rusk wrote to Finletter that he was "prepared to see us lean quite hard on the political importance of multilateral force, in view of the impressions of German attitudes which I formed in Bonn."[49]

2.7.4 A Nassau Track?

Rusks' worries might have amounted to little had not political events in Great Britain intervened. Britain's nuclear deterrent rested primarily on the strength of its V-Bombers (a series of airplanes with class-designations beginning with the letter "V"). The British had hoped to increase the life of the planes by purchasing Skybolt nuclear missiles from the United States. But after study, Robert McNamara cancelled the Skybolt and told the British he would only continue the program if they paid half the costs. This created an embarrassing crisis for Macmillan by revealing the extent Britain's "independent" nuclear capability was dependent on America. The solution to Macmillan's political problems, agreed to at Nassau, was the American sale of Polaris to Britain.

Kennedy and McNamara's decision to sell Polaris missiles ran counter to the American policy, set out in NSAM 40, of encouraging Britain to renounce its independent deterrent.[50] The Theologians and many other American officials judged the sale a bad idea. Rostow reported that he had "rarely seen so dangerous a gap" between a "high level decision and judgment of junior subordinates."[51] He worried that a Polaris deal between Britain and the United States would

---

[48] London SECTO 81 to SecState, June 26, 1962. POF, folder: State, 1962: June-July, JFKLDC.

[49] Department of State TOPOL 128 to Paris, July 19, 1962, NSF, box 222A, folder: NATO, General, Cables, 6/15/62-3/31/63 [Folder 2 of 5], JFKL.

[50] "NATO and the Atlantic Nations," April 20, 1961, *FRUS 1961-1963 XIII*, doc. 100.

[51] "A Word on Nassau," Memorandum to the President from W. W. Rostow, December 17, 1963, POF, folder: United Kingdom: Security, 1962: October-December, JFKLDC. See also

provide "no clear operating track for de Gaulle and Adenauer."[52] He wanted any deal to include "A Nassau Track" for discussion of multilateral force. This was the only means, he told Kennedy, to "avoid Germany either turning away from the West or acquiring a national nuclear capability."[53]

The Theologians got their way. Paragraphs 7 and 8 of the Nassau Agreement noted that Kennedy and Macmillan had agreed on "the development of a multilateral NATO nuclear force in the closest consultation with other NATO allies" and that they would "use their best endeavors to this end." Macmillan, however, never intended to support the plan. He agreed but "secretly hope[d] the scheme w[oul]d fall through."[54] What is more, the Prime Minister shrewdly negotiated for the inclusion of another plan that suited British interests. Paragraph 6 recorded Kennedy's acceptance of Macmillan's plan for "subscribing" current forces, from SAC, Bomber Command, and of tactical nuclear weapons now in Europe, to "a NATO nuclear force … targeted in a accordance with NATO plans."[55]

Neither of these ideas had been thought through and reflected the hasty nature of the Nassau Agreement.[56] When would the "NATO nuclear force" of Paragraph 6, which came to be known

---

Gilaptric's comment that he was not aware of any "anti-special relationship lobby" trying to end UK deterrent. Interview with Mr. Roswell-Gilpatric on Thursday, 29th January 1970, Nunnerley Papers, box 1, folder: Transcripts – Fraser – Gore-Booth, JFKL. The disconnect between NSAM 40 and Gilaptric's statement is remarkable.

[52] "A Word on Nassau," December 17, 1962.

[53] "A Nassau Track," December 15, 1962, attached to "A Word on Nassau," December 17, 1962.

[54] *MD:PM,* 547-48.

[55] "Statement on Nuclear Defense Systems," December 21, 1962, in *American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1962* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966), 635-637.

[56] Richard E. Neustadt, *Report to JFK: The Skybolt Crisis in Perspective* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999). See also Neustadt's *Alliance Politics*.

by various names including the Inter-Allied Nuclear Force (IANF) come into existence, what would it consist of, and when would it be replaced by the paragraph 7 force? There had been no planning for follow through with the French or Germans.[57] Rostow, along with Michael Carey, the deputy secretary to the British cabinet, agreed that "neither British nor European opinion had been adequately prepared for the agreement." From their point of view, "an interval of study, consultation, and preparation - at home and in Europe - would have been the better course."[58]

Nonetheless, the deal had been struck. The Americans hoped France would purchase Polaris missiles, both to help with American balance of payments and to placate de Gaulle's desire for assisting the French nuclear program.[59] But de Gaulle attacked the Nassau Agreement and announced he would not buy Polaris missiles. In the same announcement, de Gaulle refused to accept the proposed British modifications to the Common Market, effectively ending negotiations for Britain's accession to EEC.[60]

As Bohlen pursued de Gaulle in an effort to sell Polaris missiles and draw France into an IANF, George Ball gave a rousing talk to the North Atlantic Council proclaiming the Nassau Agreement as the first step towards an MLF for NATO. Bohlen later blamed Ball's efforts for

---

[57] "Nassau Follow-Up," Record of Meeting, December 28, 1962, EUR, Deputy Assistant Secretary. Subject Files (J. Robert Schaetzel) 1961-1966, box 2, folder: Post-Nassau (Miscellaneous Papers), NARA.

[58] "Next Steps," Memorandum of Conversation, January 18, 1963, NSF, box 171, folder: United Kingdom General, JFKL. The lack of planning raises serious doubts that Nassau was part of a well-thought out Kennedy plan. Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, 356-57. It is better understood as representative of the "lack of coherence and clarity" characterizing Kennedy's policy towards NATO. Kaplan, Landa, and Drea, *The McNamara Ascendancy, 1961-1965*, 384.

[59] "Ambassador Bohlen's initial Exchange with French Officials," Draft Memorandum for the Secretary, December 29, 1962, EUR, Deputy Assistant Secretary. Subject Files (J. Robert Schaetzel) 1961-1966, box 1, folder: France, 1962-1965, NARA.

[60] Paris no. 2804 to SecState, January 15, 1963, NSF, box 212, folder: Europe, General 9/62-1/24/63 [Folder 1 of 2], JFKL.

scuttling his approach to de Gaulle.[61] But back in Washington American officials briefed allied embassies that the United States had "moved from a position of conditional willingness to accept a multilateral force to one of active promotion thereof."[62] In Paris, Finletter said that the "log jam had been broken": Because of America's initiative, a multilateral force was now on the NATO agenda.[63]

Others - including other Americans - were doubtful that anything much had changed. Eugene Rostow, the Dean of the Yale Law School and Walt Rostow's brother, found the claim that Nassau could "reunify the Alliance … a bit Alician." He could not "see how NATO solidarity is reinforced by our acting alone, and then proclaiming the procedure as a principle."[64] Even the Germans were wary. They worried that the creation of a NATO nuclear force might lead to reductions in the deployment of tactical weapons, and that any new separate command created for the MLF would be "less responsible to local requirements" than current arrangements.[65] They might have sensed, too, that McNamara believed the MLF was a stick with which he would press the Germans "harder to make a more realistic contribution to conventional capabilities."[66]

Bundy told Kennedy the Americans needed to "emphasize" to the British that they had accepted the principle of a multilateral force at Nassau. The British were "still dragging their

---

[61] Charles E. Bohlen, *Witness to History, 1929-1969* (New York: Norton, 1973), 501.

[62] Washington DC to External 50, January 8, 1963, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (6.1), LAC.

[63] NATO Paris to External 58, January 9, 1963, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (6.1), LAC.

[64] Eugene Rostow to Gilpatric, January 15, 1963, EUR, Deputy Assistant Secretary. Subject Files (J. Robert Schaetzel) 1961-1966, box 1, folder: "France, 1962-1965," NARA.

[65] Regarding command and local requirements, see Bonn to External 19, January 7, 1963, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (6.1), LAC; regarding withdrawal of tactical weapons, see NATO Paris to External 58, January 9, 1963, RG25, vol. 5959, file: 50219-AL-2-40 (6.1), LAC.

feet."[67] Had the British misunderstood the agreement? Finletter responded that the British understood completely that they "committed themselves to support of and some kind of contribution to MLF," and knew this meant a "mixed-manned, multilaterally owned and controlled nuclear force."[68] The British response was different. They contended that they had agreed to "the development of a multilateral N.A.T.O. force in the close collaboration with other N.A.T.O. allies." "[O]nly subsequently," they claimed, did the Americans add on the idea for a mixed-manned fleet.[69]

This argument over who said what mattered little. For the MLF had "created more resistance in the British government than any decision in recent years."[70] British officials and politicians rejected the Theologians' claims of an acute German nuclear problem and thought the MLF might spur a demand that did not currently exist.[71] "Most British officials," reported Rostow, thought the US was "stimulating pressures we would not be able to control."[72] Mountbatten, the most vociferous opponent of the plan, went so far as to threaten that if Britain

---

[66] "Nassau Follow-Up," Record of Meeting, December 28, 1962, EUR, DAS, Schaetzel Files, box 2, folder: Post-Nassau (Miscellaneous Papers), NARA.

[67] Memorandum for the President from Bundy, January 12, 1963, POF, folder: Bundy, McGeorge, 1963: January-June, JFKLDC; "Your Talk with the Earl Mountbatten," Memorandum for the President from Bundy, February 6, 1963, POF, folder: United Kingdom: Security, 1963: January-April, JFKLDC.

[68] Paris POLTO 1448 to SecState, May 6, 1963, POF, folder: United Kingdom: Security, 1963: Ma-June, JFKLDC.

[69] "Presentation of U.K. attitude to mixed-manned nuclear force," A.R. Moore, July 1, 1963, FO 953/2112, NAUK.

[70] "Conversation with Michael Cary, Deputy Cabinet Secretary (I am not absolutely sure about the title) at lunch – May 20, 1963," May 31, 1963, POF, folder: Schlesinger, Arthur M., 1963, May-June, JFKLDC.

[71] See for example "Conversation with Lord Louis Mountbatten – May 20, 1963," May 31, 1963. POF, folder: Schlesinger, Arthur M., 1963, May-June, JFKLDC.

[72] "Conversation with Michael Cary, Deputy Cabinet Secretary […]," May 31, 1963.

were forced to join the MLF he would "simply cut thirty thousand men out of the conventional establishment" and leave the Americans to deal with problems east of Suez.[73] Other British critics worried Britain's joining the MLF without France would foreclose any future dialogue with France over entry into the Common Market.[74] The question was how best to sink the American project. On May 17, 1963, the British Cabinet agreed the UK should "move slowly in the hope that some other country would shoulder the onus for thwarting the project."[75]

2.7.5 A Residuum of Dark Forces

The Theologians' fear of a German resurgence, the primary motive for their support of the MLF, reached a fever pitch as Adenauer prepared to resign the Chancellorship in 1963. Adenauer had carefully handled relations with the West since the days of the American postwar occupation, and Western officials considered him a bulwark against both the extreme left and right. As Ball put it, the United States "simply had no experience of a Federal Republic freed from the Old Fox's iron discipline." He thought Ludwig Erhard, Adenauer's most likely successor, had no political convictions and was weak and thus easily manipulated by a "residuum of dark forces moving beneath the surface."[76] Finletter agreed. He urged Washington to push forward with the MLF "in order that they [the Germans] may be fully enmeshed in the Alliance machinery."[77]

---

[73] "Conversation with Lord Louis Mountbatten – May 20, 1963," May 31, 1963.

[74] "Your Conversation with David Ormsby Gore this afternoon," May 15, 1963, POF, folder: United Kingdom: Security, 1963: May-June, JFKLDC.

[75] "Conversation with Michael Cary, Deputy Cabinet Secretary […]," May 31, 1963.

[76] "The Mess in Europe and the Meaning of Your Trip," Memorandum to the President from Ball, June 20, 1963, Records of Ambassador Charles E. Bohlen, 1942-71, box 26, folder: Ball, George, 1963-1966 correspondence, NARA.

[77] "General Discussions of NATO Matters," memorandum of conversation, March 27, 1962, EUR, RPM, NATO Affairs, 1959-1966, box 2, folder: NATO 7 Gen. Taylor - Mar 1962, NARA.

Because of its Rube Goldberg organization, however, The MLF was hardly an ideal solution. Even Walt Rostow conceded that it might "seem odd to create such an elaborate structure merely to solve the problem of Germany's nuclear role." But, he claimed, it was precisely because of this apparent oddness that the MLF had so much to commend it. The "truth is," he explained, "that most of our creative innovations in European policy since 1945" - Rostow listed the Marshall Plan, NATO, the Schumann Plan, and the Common Market - "have been more or less directly the result of efforts to solve aspects of the German problem." The MLF, he argued, was just one more "multilateral formula" on the "familiar and reasonably distinguished track" of tying "Germany tightly to both Western Europe and the U.S."[78]

As evident in the 1962 responses to Kennedy's question, the theologians assumed Germany wanted its own nuclear capability. Rusk clearly believed this. And Rostow argued that if the MLF failed, the Germans would believe "some kind of national effort is the only feasible answer."[79] Ball told Kennedy that it was "no good saying that Germans do not want atomic weapons." He went on: "Even if that were true today - and the evidence is confusing - what Germans will come to demand in a competitive Europe is power and equal treatment."[80]

Ball's conviction rested entirely on historical precedent. He admitted as much. If "the world learned anything from the experience between the wars," Ball wrote in a memorandum intended for Kennedy, it should certainly have learned that ganging up on Germany would not keep the FRG to its 1954 self-denying promises. If Germany were discriminated against, it would succumb to a "festering resentment." Because "a Germany at large can be like a cannon on

---

[78] "Congressional Consultation about MLF," Rostow to the Secretary, December 5, 1963, Records of Under Secretary of State George W. Ball, 1961-1966, box 26, folder: Misc. Multilateral Force – 1963, NARA.

[79] "Congressional Consultation about MLF."

[80] "The Mess in Europe and the Meaning of Your Trip," June 20, 1963.

shipboard in a high sea," it had to be "tied institutionally to the West." The West, he argued, pointing to German rearmament in the interwar period, "cannot afford to make the same twice."[81]

Rostow, too, relied largely on what he called "Historical Analogy." He argued that if the MLF failed the German centrists would be, like Chancellor Brüning in the last years of Weimar, torn between a left hostile to rearmament and a right wishing to renounce Germany's promises – then Versailles, now Adenauer's promises. This, argued Rostow, was America's chance to ensure Germany did not repeat the same mistake. "Our task is to ensure that German moderate leadership has a better chance this time to survive."[82]

The Theologians greatest worry was West Germany's engaging in "a game of maneuver between East and West that would play havoc with the delicate power balance."[83] This echoed, or perhaps drew from, similar anxieties espoused by Jean Monnet. Monnet, from 1959 until 1963, had warned his American friends of the danger that the "Germans and the Russians will one day get together again" and "we would be lost." Any German feeling of discrimination on the nuclear issue would "be the opening wedge to permit the Soviets to leverage Germany into its camp."[84]

---

[81] Ibid.; see also "German Rearmament in the Inter-War Period," by A. France, June 12, 1963, Records of Ambassador Charles E. Bohlen, 1942-71, box 26, folder: Ball, George, 1963-1966 correspondence, NARA.

[82] "Congressional Consultation about MLF," Rostow to the Secretary, December 5, 1963, Schlesinger Papers, box WH-41, folder: Multilateral Force, 1963, JFKL.

[83] "A Further Nuclear Offer to General de Gaulle?" memorandum to the President from Ball, August 8, 1963, NSF, box 226A, NATO, Weapons, Cables, France, 6/63-11/63, JFKL.

[84] Memorandum of Conversation, Jean Monnet and Gerard C. Smith, December 18, 1959, PPC, Subject Files, 1954-1962, box 151, folder: Europe 1958, NARA. See also Memorandum of Conversation, Monnet and Smith, December 16, 1960, PPC, Subject Files, 1954-1962, box 152, folder: Europe Aug. - Dec. 1960, NARA; Memorandum for the Record, December 15, 1961, NSF, box 220A, folder: NATO, General 7/61-5/62/61 [Folder 2 of 3],

Marc Trachtenberg emphasizes that American strategic theorists in the first decades of the Cold War thought ahistorically.[85] The Theologians demonstrate the reverse of this dictum. So focused were they on historical allusion that they ignored both strategic logic and current diplomatic and intelligence reporting and analysis.

2.7.6 A Purely Theoretical Model

Emotional historical references can serve as rhetorical tools for policy officials. Was the histrionic language used by the theologians merely a means of dressing up information received by diplomatic reports or intelligence sources? The best way to get to address this question is to compare the Theologian's arguments, explained above, with the analyses made in other branches of the US government, as well as other NATO allies. The result of such a comparison is unambiguous. The Theologians were almost entirely arguing against the information received from American diplomats abroad and the analysis provided by the American intelligence community, including even the State Department's own Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR).

Early in Kennedy's term, INR judged that it was "unlikely" Germany would withdraw from NATO. It had "essentially no alternative to an exclusively pro-Western policy course" and relied heavily on the US security guarantee. INR's analysis is a classic geopolitical assessment, but the conclusion was supported by evidence. The analysts noted that whenever NATO unity was threatened by French "hypernationalist policies," the FRG "exerts all its influence to counteract such pressures and to preserve the NATO security system." At the same time, there was "no

---

NARA; Finletter to Ball, April 26, 1963, Records of Under Secretary of State George W. Ball, 1961-1966, box 26, folder: Misc. Multilateral Force – 1963, NARA.

[85] Marc Trachtenberg, "Strategic Thought in America, 1952-1966," *Political Science Quarterly* 104, no. 2 (Summer 1989): 333-34.

evidence" that the USSR was prepared to offer any concessions to Germany that might entice it from the alliance.[86]

Throughout the Kennedy years, INR doubted that the FRG would leave NATO, let alone reach some kind of accommodation with the Soviet Union. Certainly, INR wrote, the FRG's "economic dynamism" and its geopolitical positions gave it a "capacity to embark upon a potentially disastrous independence in foreign policy." But it was precisely because of this capacity - and the German understanding of the risks inherent any such policy - that Bonn "yearns avidly for US guidance and that its leaders, regardless of party, are malleable to US suggestion in the formulation of their policies."[87]

In the lengthy report, the INR analysts considered "The Specter of Rapallo" - a reference to the interwar Soviet-German condominium. Worries of "a new Rapallo" cropped up in newspapers and the idle chat of diplomats. An especially pervasive rumor raised the specter of "vaguely defined 'German industrial circles' with a fatal attraction toward the USSR."[88] This attraction was thought to mirror the *Drang nach Osten* of German past, and rumors of its prevalence were encouraged by the stresses of the Berlin Crisis and the difficulty of forming a new West German government after the 1961 elections. But INR argued that the bonds upon which *Drang nach Osten* had been based "have been eradicated by the sequences of Nazi depredations, spreading Communist power, and mass migrations during and after World War II; today only a Drang nach Westen offers any prospect for the re-establishment of German

---

[86] "Notes on possibility of a German Withdrawal from NATO, pw - S-S-61, INR/REU," undated, NSF, box 220A, folder: NATO, General 7/61-5/62/61 [Folder 1 of 3], JFKL.

[87] "The Crisis of Confidence in West Germany," INR Research Memorandum REU-21, January 3, 1962. NSF, box 74A, folder: Germany 1/7/62-1/13/62, JFKL.

[88] Monnet, for example, was worried about Ruhr industrialists who were "still very interested in Soviet and Chinese orders, the potential magnitude of which they are grossly exaggerating." Memorandum of Conversation, Monnet and Smith, December 16, 1960.

influence on a worldwide scale." Ultimately, according to INR's assessment, Bonn remained "firmly convinced" that the Federal Republic "had no useful alternative to the policy of intimate association with the West." [89]

INR's assessment matched the impressions of other US analysts. By April 1963 the American Embassy in Bonn told the State Department that the German press was treating the MLF as a dead issue with little prospect of materializing. Only 7% of the population was in favor of the FRG having its own nuclear force. [90] When Ray Cline, who headed the Central Intelligence Agency's Directorate of Intelligence, visited Germany in 1963, he found that the Germans were "not clamoring for nuclear weapons, either control of ours or possession of their own." German citizens in their 40s and 50s, he observed, were "savoring the pleasures of material comfort and absence of immediate military danger." These men and women, had, after all, lived through the depressions, Second World War, and deprivations of the early postwar period. "None of the people who are going to be running things in Western Europe through most of the 1960's," Cline wrote Bundy, were "inclined to battle for 'independence' or for NATO or for anything else if they can help it." In fact, the German leaders had such an interest in keeping the United States in Europe they would "go along with almost any NATO rigmarole which will please us." And putting up with rigmarole was precisely what Cline estimated that the Germans were doing with the MLF. They saw the whole idea "as a kind of charade which we are playing

---

[89] "The Crisis of Confidence in West Germany." *Drang nach Osten*'s English equivalent is somewhere between "yearning for the East" and "drive toward the East." *Drang nach Westen* is identical, but to the West.

[90] "West German Views Concerning Nuclear Weapons and MLF," Memorandum from William K. Hitchcock to Henry Owen, April 13, 1963, EUR, RPM, NATO Affairs, 1959-1966, box 8, folder: Germany I, NARA

for our own benefit while pretending we are responding to a European demand (which does not yet exist) for control of nuclear weapons."[91]

In 1964, Alistair Buchan, influential director of the Institute for Strategic Studies in London, looked back on the Kennedy-era debates over the MLF and marveled how the MLF had such staying power in Washington despite the lack of evidence supporting its rationale. "To my mind," he wrote unequivocally, "the Kennedy Administration created a purely theoretical model about German demands upon its allies and about the conceivability of Germany deciding to acquire national nuclear weapons if they were not satisfied."[92]

2.7.7 Nuclear Noises

Albeit perhaps purely theoretical, the model had highly practical results. In 1963 Adenauer told Kissinger that he would never have requested a force such as the MLF. "However," Kissinger recorded Adenauer as saying, "once the United States had proposed it only one answer was possible for the Federal Republic." Germany, he said, "would join the multilateral force in order not to lose contact with America."[93] Adenauer's comments confirmed the worst fears of the MLF's opponents. Kennedy's advisors, like Arthur Schlesinger, had come to worry that as the United States "raised the possibility of German participation, any German government will have to make nuclear noises."[94]

---

[91] "Europe in the '60's," by Cline, May 25, 1963, NSF, box 214, folder: Europe, General 4/63-11/63, JFKL. See also "Merchant Memorandum on the MLF," memorandum for Bundy from Schlesinger, Schlesinger Papers, box WH-41, folder: Multilateral Force, 1963, JFKL; Bohlen to Ball, August 2, 1963. Records of Ambassador Charles E. Bohlen, 1942-71, box 26, folder: Ball, George, 1963-1966 correspondence, NARA.

[92] "The Coming Crisis of the MLF," by Alistair Buchan, June 23, 1964, NSF, Subject File, box 23, LBJL.

[93] "Meeting with Chancellor Adenauer – May 17, 1963," May 30, 1963, POF, folder: Schlesinger, Arthur M., 1963: May-June, JFKLDC.

[94] "Merchant Memorandum on the MLF," memorandum for Bundy from Schlesinger, Schlesinger Papers, box WH-41, folder: Multilateral Force, 1963, JFKL.

In 1964 Martin Hillenbrand, America's chargé d'affaires in Bonn, reflected on the evolution of the MLF. What initially had been only a "gimmick" intended to discourage European yearnings for MRBMS had gradually become "a political cause which, with our usual enthusiasm, we began to push very hard indeed and to vest with all sorts of emotional connotations." The Germans, he said, did the same thing, and the project generated its own momentum.[95] The momentum for the MLF in Germany was partially the result of the German leadership's political needs, but it would not have developed if not for loud and fervent support for the MLF coming from the United States.

Adenauer's succession and the domestic struggle for power in 1963 turned Bonn into "a morass with everyone ready to cut everyone else's throat."[96] This infighting enveloped the ruling party itself. Almost immediately on becoming chancellor, Erhard came under attack from Adenauer and the right wing of the CDU/CSU.[97] Looking to shore up his flank, the chancellor sought to move forward on the MLF, no doubt because U.S. support for the force suggested it could produce quick results. Thus Erhard advocated for the MLF, although his support was mild and he left the heavy lifting to his foreign minister, Gerhard Schroeder, and defense minister, Kai-Uwe von Hassel. [98] As the German ministers attached themselves more thoroughly and

---

[95] Hillenbrand to Klein, November 25, 1964, DDRS, CK3100139304.

[96] This is the description by the Italian ambassador. January 21, 1963. "Memorandum of Conversation with Ambassador Cattani in Rome, January 16, 1963," January 21, 1963, DDRS, CK3100054276. See especially Ronald J. Granieri, "The Fall and Rise of German Christian Democracy, From Détente to Reunification," unpublished manuscript.

[97] "Schroeder, the German Reunification Proposal, Etc." from Klein to Bundy, April 23, 1964, NSF, Country File, box 183, LBJL.

[98] "The Right Wing in German Politics," September 29, 1964, NSF, Country File, box 183, LBJL.

publicly to the MLF, some Americans worried that abandoning the MLF now would undercut their staunch allies in Bonn.[99]

The Theologians had created a self-fulfilling prophecy. Controversy and opposition to the MLF in Germany from Erhard's own party proved Ball's argument further. Now Ball could point to the right wing of the CDU/CSU as indicative of a "strong stain of resurgent German nationalism."[100] Denis Healey, the new British Minister of Defence under Harold Wilson, suggested to Ball that it was the Americans who had stimulated the German desire to participate in the MLF. Ball's response was to wrap the project in the mantle of earlier transatlantic programs: "every constructive post-war step that had been taken in Atlantic arrangements had been controversial. This was an essential aspect of progress."[101]

The NSC staff pointed out that while now the Germans were publicly in favor of the MLF, they had not been as recently as 1961 and 1962. There had been "no great pressure within the German Government and no pressure at all from any segment of the German public for closer German association with strategic nuclear weapons." The Germans themselves were only for it because of "rather certain strong proponents of the MLF within the U.S. Government."[102] Henry Kissinger, who frequently travelled to Europe and had many contacts in Germany, told Bundy the MLF was only a significant policy issue in Germany because "Erhard and Schroeder at

---

[99] December 9, 1964. RLG's [Gilaptric's] Notes on 12/9/64 Discussion with Messrs. Dean and McCloy on Problems of Europe and NATO," December 9, 1964, NSF, Committee File, Committee on Nuclear Proliferation, box 1, LBJL. See also Kissinger to Acheson, December 31, 1964, AP, Gen. Corr., box 18, folder: 226.

[100] Memorandum from the Under Secretary of State (Ball) to Secretary of State Rusk, November 17, 1964, *FRUS 1964-1968 XIII,* doc. 49.

[101] London SECUN2 to SecState, December 1, 1964, NSF, International Travel and Meeting File, box 32, LBJL.

our urging have staked their prestige on it." The Americans now had to navigate "between the shoals of excessive pressure for a version of the MLF which is becoming less and less acceptable in the rest of Europe," still only supported by part of the CDU, and "abandoning individuals who have staked their careers on an American project."[103] NSC staffers went to work on formulating plans for "de-fusing" the MLF.[104]

By late November 1964, the forces aligned against the MLF were overwhelming. The USSR and France were adamantly opposed. A deeply reluctant Great Britain constantly offered modifications that were unwelcome to the Germans. The Germans themselves were divided. The MLF put strains on the Italian governing coalition.[105] In the United States, the American military, except for the Navy, were against the plan, and it had virtually no support in Congress.[106] Prominent commentators on American foreign affairs like George Kennan and Walter Lippmann lambasted the idea.[107] There were more than enough reasons for

---

[102] "Considerations Involving Germany and France Which are Pertinent to Modification of the US Position on MLF," by David Mark, November 4, 1964, NSF, Subject File, box 23, LBJL.

[103] Kissinger to Bundy, November 27, 1964, LBJL, NSF, Files of McGeorge Bundy, box 15, LBJL.

[104] "First Thoughts on De-Fusing MLF (if need be)," memorandum for Bundy, November 7, 1964, NSF, Country File, box 206, LBJL.

[106] If the vote were held in late 1964, warned an NSC staffer, a "curious collection of liberals, Joint Committee atom-guarders, and neo-isolationists would probably beat the MLF today if there were a totally free, silent, secret vote in the Senate." "NATO Nuclear Policy, memorandum to the President from Bundy, November 8, 1964, *FRUS 1964-1968 XIII,* doc. 46.

[107] "MLF – An Alternative View," memorandum to the President from Bundy, December 6, 1964, *FRUS 1964-1968 XIII,* doc. 57

National Security Advisor Bundy to recommend that "the U.S. should now arrange to let the MLF sink out of sight."[108]

By the end of the meeting with his advisors in early December 1964, President Lyndon Johnson seems to have grasped the essential paradox at the heart of the MLF as a solution to the German problem: "We seem to be unable to initiate a course and bring it to success. And often enough our policy seems circular."[109] The defining nature of a circle, however, is that it never ends. How could the United States extricate itself after years of support for the MLF? McNamara argued that the time had come "to have done with this issue, either by action or by blowing the whistle." It was time to "go on to real life" after years without success.[110] But White House officials under Bundy understood things would only worsen if the MLF came to a "dead-stop labeled 'failure.'"[111] Bundy advised the President that if he were to go "full steam ahead," he would face confrontations with Congress and de Gaulle, and there was "a possibility of defeat." If, however, the United States backed off and went "half steam ahead, there will probably be no MLF, but it will not be your fault alone."[112]

The President accepted Bundy's advice and issued a National Security Action Memoranda (NSAM) forbidding government officials from encouraging the MLF without his

---

[108] Memorandum from Bundy to Ball, November 25, 1964, *FRUS 1964-1968, XIII,* doc. 52.

[109] "The Wilson Visit and MLF," memorandum of conversation, December 6, 1964, DDRS, CK3100076994.

[110] "Memorandum of Conversations with Secretary of Defense, 20 November 1964," November 21, 1964, NSF, Country File, box 206, LBJL.

[111] "First Thoughts on De-Fusing MLF (if need be)," memorandum for Bundy, November 7, 1964, NSF, Country File, box 206, LBJL. See also "Note to Mr. Bundy and Mr. Klein" from Neustadt, NSF, Country File, box 206, LBJL.

[112] "MLF – An Alternative View," memorandum to the President from Bundy, December 6, 1964, *FRUS 1964-1968 XIII,* doc. 57.

authorization.[113] Inside the government, the theologians' were muzzled; or in, Neustadt's terms, their hunting licenses were revoked. Finletter, in Paris, was considered a "particularly important target" of the NSAM.[114] To ensure the allies knew of his decision, Johnson showed the NSAM to *New York Times* reporter James Reston who published an account of the policy.[115]

German supporters of the MLF were surprised by Reston's revelations, but immediately understood it signaled the abandonment of the MLF.[116] Schroeder, in particular, felt "let down." In Bonn, there were predictions of Germany moving "substantially closer" to France. George McGhee, who had been in Bonn as Ambassador for almost two years, described the atmosphere as "the worst I have encountered during my stay."[117] This current crisis in American-German relations, he wrote, had been "set in motion by events emanating from the US, which led to a genuine misunderstanding" of American intentions to proceed with the MLF.[118]

Erhard himself had sent "high level, secret German political signals" to Washington hoping Johnson would relax pressure on the MLF before Germany's September elections, and this was a further motive for Johnson.[119] The MLF had a deep source of tension between

---

[113] Bundy had been urging this since November. "NATO Nuclear Policy," November 8, 1964.

[114] "Next Steps on NATO Nuclear Policy and ANF," memorandum for Bundy, December 17, 1964, NSF, Agency File, box 35, folder: NATO General, vol. 2, LBJL.

[115] Steinbruner, *The Cybernetic Theory of Decision*, 309.

[116] Berlin 36 to SecState, July 12, 1965, NSF, Country File, box 182, LBJL.

[117] Bonn 2558 to SecState, January 11, 1965, NSF, Country File, box 184, LBJL.

[118] Bonn 2651 to SecState [for the President], January 16, 1965, NSF, Files of McGeorge Bundy, box 16, LBJL.

[119] "Atlantic Nuclear Questions: A Point to be made to Foreign Secretary Stewart," Rostow to the Secretary, October 8, 1965, Bator Papers, Box 29, LBJL; see also Berlin 36 to SecState, July 12, 1965.

Germany and France, and Erhard had worried that the debate over the MLF might affect the elections.[120] By May, the entire German cabinet save for Schroeder and von Hassel was "convinced that the MLF was dead and, at this stage, undesirable."[121] Given the strains the MLF was putting on Franco-German relations, Erhard, opined David Klein of the NSC, "is probably the most relieved politician in the Alliance not to have the MLF on his shoulders."[122]

Still nursing his hopes for the MLF, in autumn 1965 Ball waged a duel of memos with Bundy for Johnson' attention. Ball went on at length about the interwar period, warning that a "frustrated and neurotic Germany is quite capable of making a deal with the Soviet Union on terms catastrophic to the West. The Germans did it at Rapallo in 1922 and again in 1939." Germany might easily become "prey of its own Teutonic fantasies," and the United States "cannot afford another psychotic Germany."[123] But Bundy, finished with the MLF, wrote to the President saying that the United States, and by extension NATO, should build on the

---

[120] Bonn 2651 to SecState [for the President], January 16, 1965, NSF, Files of McGeorge Bundy, box 16, LBJL. See also Berlin 36 to SecState, July 12, 1965, NSF, Country File, box 182, LBJL.

[121] "Meeting with Minister Heinrich Krone – New York, March 25, 1965," Kissinger to Bundy, March 30, 1965, NSF, Files of McGeorge Bundy, box 15, LBJL. See also the still partially sanitized intelligence report, "West Germans Views on Nuclear Sharing," December 10, 1965, Bator Papers, box 29, folder: MLF/ANF (Multilateral Force/Atlantic Force), LBJL.

[122] "Erhard and De Gaulle at Rambouillet," from Klein to Bundy, NSF, Country File, box 184, LBJL. See also "A Possible George Ball MLF Speech," memorandum for the President from Bundy, February 2, 1965, NSF, Subject File, box 23, LBJL.

[123] "The Case for a Strong American Lead to Establish a Collective Nuclear System that would Help Save the Western World from Repeating an Old Mistake," undated [date on cover memo is October 27, 1965], NSF, Agency File, box 39, LBJL.

promises made at Athens and improve nuclear consultation rather than provide Germany with nuclear hardware.[124] This memo killed the MLF.[125]

2.7.8 We Should Really Bury This One

Both American diplomats and intelligence analysts supported the White House decision. In December 1965, the CIA reported that "One point . . . on which all responsible German leaders are agreed is that at present, legal, political and moral considerations rule out either German manufacture of nuclear weapons or the acquisition of an independent national nuclear complement." There remained "widespread public indifference in Germany to the nuclear sharing problem," despite the Theologian's prognostication that the end of the MLF would stir up a hornet's nest in Germany.[126] The Embassy in Bonn agreed that "no responsible political leader in Germany of any party, any known private group, or any discernible body of German opinion, that considers it desirable for the Germans to have an independent nuclear capability." While this did not mean Germany could be excluded from an important role in nuclear defense, there were overwhelming legal, political, and geostrategic reasons not to develop their own nuclear force.[127]

The State Department remained riven by bitter divisions, especially between Washington officials that had been pro-MLF and their diplomatic counterparts in the field who had seen the

---

[124] December 9, 1965. "The Case Against Offering the Germans Ownership in Nuclear Hardware," December 9, 1965, Bator Papers, box 29, LBJL; see also attached document: "A Proposal for Nuclear Consultation," October 27, 1965 and George W. Ball Oral History, LBJL, 13.

[125] "Interview with Mr. McGeorge Bundy on 20th January, 1970," Nunnerley Papers, box 1, folder: Transcripts - Ball-Douglas-Home, JFKL.

[126] "West Germans Views on Nuclear Sharing," December 10, 1965, Bator Papers, box 29, folder: MLF/ANF (Multilateral Force/Atlantic Force), LBJL.

[127] "German Attitudes on Nuclear Defense Questions," October 20, 1965, EUR, RPM, NATO Affairs, 1959-1966, box 6, folder: "Defense Affairs NATO 1963-1965. DEF 12 Nuclear Germany."

problems caused by the idea. At a meeting of American ambassadors to Europe in 1966, George McGhee railed against the MLF as "a major disservice to Germany. [The Theologians] have stimulated fears of Germany throughout Europe - both East and West."[128] When Schaetzel disagreed, McGhee continued his diatribe:

> This is a dead issue. It should never have been raised. Congress doesn't want it, the President doesn't want it. The idea of an alleged German demand for nuclear weapons is a straw man. It is not real. The only people who believe or care about the issue are Von Hassel and Schroeder. Erhard doesn't care. He wishes it would go away. We should really bury this one!![129]

Why were there such differences of opinion on this issue within the US administration? And what does this reveal about NATO in this era? First, the Theologians understood nuclear weapons purely as a matter of prestige and as a political device. Officials in the National Security Council, the Pentagon, and especially in Germany, believed there was more to nuclear weapons. Certainly, they were important for prestige. But they had two other important functions: first, for the defense of Germany, and second, as a possible bargaining chip over reunification.

More perplexing however, were the deep rifts within the State Department, particularly between foreign service officers and officials in Washington. When Kennedy asked whether the MLF was stillborn, Owen and the Theologians wrote a lengthy missive arguing that the MLF was alive and well. The Western Europe desk (WE), on the other hand, wrote its own answer, not incorporated into the final report. To the question of whether the NATO nuclear force should be pursued or had been still born, WE needed only 5 words: "It was dead in 1958."[130] As

---

[128] Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense drafted by Col. Hoover and Mr. Barber, April 5, 1966, Bator Papers, box 28, LBJL.

[129] "Schaetzel-McGhee Exchange on MLF," attached to ibid. See also McGhee's comments in George McGhee Oral History, LBJL, 14-15.

[130] "WE answers to the Ball Questionnaire," drafted by Beigel, May 28, 1962, EUR, RPM, NATO Affairs, 1959-1966, box 7, folder: Defense Affairs NATO 1962-. DEF 12 Nuclear France," NARA.

demonstrated above, moreover, diplomatic reporting, and intelligence reports and analysis, repeatedly suggested that the bedrock of the Theologians' worry - fear of a German resurgence of German chauvinism, propelled by acquisition of a nuclear weapon - was without foundation.[131]

Nonetheless, the MLF saga reveals the allies' continued interest in using NATO to tie Germany to the West by limiting its military power and thus its capacity for war or diplomatic maneuver. Manlio Brosio, NATO's Secretary General during the latter part of the MLF debate, outright said that "NATO has a double purpose: defense against the Soviet threat and provision of a framework for Germany in Western Europe."[132] In fact, American Embassy personnel from Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, Italy, France and the UK all reported that their host countries viewed "the containment of Germany as the primary purpose of NATO.[133] In 1965, INR wrote that the alliance, though formed to resist the Soviets, "has become equally important as a political system … for handling the 'German problem.'" NATO, INR argued, was promised a long life, as long as it continued "to serve the political functions regarding West Germany which the latter's neighbors wish it to serve."[134]

2.7.9 A Nuclear Education

Some American officials, knowing the MLF was fraught with potential pitfalls, had looked for "something to fall back on" in case the MLF project were delayed or collapsed. McGhee, writing from Bonn, agreed with many in Washington that some form of consultation and

---

[131] George Ball conceded this point in his memoir. George W. Ball, *The Past Has Another Pattern: Memoirs* (New York: Norton, 1982), 274.

[132] "Plans for December NATO Ministerial Meeting and Related Matters," memorandum of conversation, November 16, 1966, Central Foreign Policy File, 1964-1966, box 3271, folder: NATO 3 Meeting Sessions. 1/1/66, NARA.

[133] Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense drafted by Col. Hoover and Mr. Barber, April 5, 1966.

[134] "Western Europe looks at Germany," INR Memo REU-30, August 6, 1965, DDRS, CK3100383557.

exchange of information in NATO, like that begun in the Kennedy years, should be encouraged as "a hedge in our efforts to solve the nuclear problem which originally inspired the MLF."[135]

The NATO Defense Data Program (NDDP), designed to share nuclear information with the allies, had suffered from bitter infighting between the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the JCS. By 1964, American officials believed the NDDP and Nuclear Committee had been "almost stillborn" and that meaningful consultation had only been conducted in bilateral meetings between ministers of defense. But there was still an enormous range of information the allies needed to understand US nuclear policy: SIOP concepts, tactical nuclear doctrine, the connection to force planning, new weapons development, the locations of nuclear weapons and their strategic concepts for their use, and an explanation of American intelligence acquisition to give the allies "a better appreciation of the adequacy of US target inventory data."[136]

Some officials in the United States still believed, as Ramsbotham had before, that sharing this information would end the press for a NATO nuclear force. Others thought it a necessary but not sufficient corollary to the MLF. American officials in different departments started thinking about how best to create a consultative process in case the "hardware solution" went belly up. There was debate on the best forum for exchanging this information. Should this process remain the purview of ministers of defense in their bilateral meetings, or should the discussions occur in NATO? Should NATO create a new "inner group or executive committee of the NAC?" State Department officials believed it was best to build upon the modest and halting steps which ha[d]

---

[135] Bonn 4985 to SecState, June 23, 1965, NSF, Country File, box 185, folder: "Germany, Volume 8, 4/65-7/65," LBJL. See also Andrew Priest, "From Hardware to Software: The End of the MLF and the Rise of the Nuclear Planning Group," in *Transforming NATO in the Cold War: Challenges Beyond Deterrence in the 1960s*, ed. Andreas Wenger, Christian Nuenlist, and Anna Locher (London: Routledge, 2007).

been taken so far."[137] The thinking was not exclusive to the State Department. Peter Ramsbotham of the FO had championed the NATO nuclear committee, and McNamara had also strongly supported the idea. In 1963, Patrick Gordon Walker, the British Labour shadow Minister of Defence, also promised that a Labour government would press for such a committee.[138]

Many officials were skeptical that "mere souped-up consultation" would help solve German worries for more than a couple of years, at best.[139] American officials continued to disagree with one other whether the Germans would be satisfied without some sort of tangible control. There was unanimous agreement, however, that the locus for NATO's nuclear problem must be based on an Anglo-American-German center.[140]

In May 1965, Robert McNamara suggested to his NATO colleagues that NATO establish a temporary "Select Committee" of defense ministers to discuss NATO nuclear issues.[141] All allies would be welcome to receive the reports from the committee, but the Select Committee and its three working groups would have restricted membership. There was lots of haggling in NATO as

---

[136] "Draft Discussion Paper: Nuclear Consultation," by Ronald Speiers, November 17, 1964, RG59, OES, MLF Documents, 1960-1065, box 1, folder: "The MLF - ANF (August 1960 - December 1964) Vol. 1," NARA.

[137] Ibid.

[138] "Talk With Patrick Gordon Walker," Memorandum from Rostow to Tyler, February 17, 1964, RG59, EUR, DAS, Schaetzel Files, box 1, folder: "Britain," NARA.

[139] "U.S. NATO Ambassadors' Conference in The Hague," memorandum for the record, October 27, 1965, NSF, Agency File, box 35, folder: NATO General, Volume 2, LBJL.

[140] "Hillenbrand Study of Nuclear Problems of the Alliance: INFORMATION MEMORANDUM," Memorandum from Leddy to the Under Secretary, September 23, 1965, RG59, EUR, RPM, Trilateral Records. Box 1, folder: "Collective Nuclear Arrangements (Papers from Mr. Leddy's File," NARA.

[141] The relevant NATO documents that reestablished discussion of a nuclear committee after McNamara's suggestion are "Resumption of Discussion of Nuclear Questions," Secretary

to who would sit on what committee, and how many allies would participate.[142] In the end, the NATO Select Committee established three working groups, one each for studying communications, data and intelligence, and nuclear planning.[143] The idea of the committee and its working groups was, according to the American permanent representative, "work out ways of holding practical consultations at government level about our whole nuclear strategy … within the framework of the alliance."[144]

The Committee was established in December. The purpose of the committee was, broadly, to inform the allies about nuclear policy, but the main targets were German leaders. The Americans goal was to use the committee "to make FRG status in nuclear planning evident to all without national nuclear force."[145] This appealed to the British, who saw in the Select Committee an opportunity to establish "tripartite machinery" whereby the US, UK and FRG could discuss nuclear issues. The three defense ministers were "already in the process of establishing an 'inner group'" to discuss nuclear policy that quaintly came to be called the "dinner club."[146]

General to Permanent Representatives, PO(65)360, June 29, 1965, and "Nuclear Problems," Secretary General to Permanent Representatives, PO(65)411, July 21, 1965, both in NATO.

[142] Text of a Paris POLTO 832 to State, "Primary Objective Special Committee of Defense Ministers." November 21, 1965, NSF, Agency File, box 39, folder: "NATO, Special Committee of Defense Ministers in Paris (Sec. McNamara)," NARA.

[143] Paris POLTO Circular 18 to SecState, November 27, 1965, NSF, Agency File, box 39, folder: "NATO, Special Committee of Defense Ministers in Paris (Sec. McNamara)," LBJL.

[144] "Initial Statement of the SecDef," November 20, 1965, NSF, Agency File, "NATO, Special Committee of Defense Ministers in Paris (Sec. McNamara)", Box 39.

[145] Draft State-Defense Message to Cleveland, November 15, 1965, NSF, Agency File, "NATO, Special Committee of Defense Ministers in Paris (Sec. McNamara)", Box 39.

[146] "Various Nuclear Matters," memorandum of conversation, October 11, 1965, RG59, EUR, DAS, Schaetzel Files, box 1, folder: "Britain," NARA; "German Veto on Nuclear Weapons Use on Their Soil by US or Other Troops," December 13, 1965, Bator Papers, box 29, folder: "MLF/ANF (Multilateral Force/Atlantic Force), LBJL.

This set-up suited the FRG, too. Bonn had no desire to establish a separate and formal tripartite group like de Gaulle had called for. This would offend and worry their both Germany's allies and the Soviet Union. By forming a committee in NATO, Bonn, London and Washington could avoid any charges that they were excluding their allies. Still, the obvious prominence of the three powers worried NATO's newest Secretary General, Manlio Brosio, who feared the committee portended an "alliance within an alliance." McNamara did not disagree with as much as steamroll over Brosio. For him, the primary issue was the exchange of national views, whether in NATO or not.[147] The policy work for Special Committee and working groups was all done in national capitals, and the national NATO delegations handled the secretariat work in Paris. The NATO secretariat itself did very little other than keep a roof over the heads of the committee meetings.[148]

The Special Committee provided a shelter for an informal tripartite directorate that managed NATO's nuclear affairs. McNamara declared to officials in Washington that he "approved trilateralism as a substitute for NATO as a means of concerting power." The Special Committee was the example of how this would work: He "was prepared to have any number join [the committee] but use a tripartite group to coordinate and run it behind the scenes."[149]

With the collapse of the MLF in 1966, McNamara moved to make the Special Committee a permanent committee at NATO, to be known as the "Nuclear Planning Group."[150] After some

---

[147] Memorandum for the President from McNamara, July 27, 1966, NSF, Country File, box 186, LBJL.

[148] December 14, 1965. Paris 3379 to SecState, December 14, 1965, NSF, Country File, Box 172, LBJL.

[149] "France and NATO," memorandum of conversation, October 8, 1965, *FRUS, 1963-1968, XIII*, doc. 106.

[150] "Meeting with the President, 1:15 p.m., Thursday, June 23. Talking Points," June 23, 1966, Bator Papers, Box 28, LBJL.

careful maneuvering in the State Department, Dean Acheson convinced Dean Rusk to sign off on the idea, somehow avoiding George Ball.[151] By the end of the year, the NATO allies had agreed to establish the NPG. McNamara believed the "task was to drive it forward fast."[152] He pressed to ensure that the NPG meetings were substantive and insisted that the conference table used for the meetings be so small that only defense ministers could sit. He encouraged his colleagues to discuss freely rather than allowing them to rely on "some canned words" their staffs had prepared.[153] The NPG got down to work discussing issues related to tactical nuclear weapons doctrine, various new nuclear munitions, and the host of issues that the original NATO Nuclear Committee had been meant to provide.[154]

The Americans, British, and Germans agreed that they would continue their private discussions, intended to narrow differences between them, and then bring their ideas to the NATO committee.[155] This practice, Dean Acheson wrote, might "perhaps, in time" lead to "a coherent strategy can be built on some combination of the conventional defense, tactical nuclear

---

[151] Bator to Bill Moyers, April 12, 1966, Bator Papers, Box 28, LBJL.

[152] Record of Meeting with President Johnson. December 17, 1966, *FRUS, 1963-1968, XIII*, doc. 106, 231.

[153] "Interview - Mr. Robert McNamara. Thursday February 27th, 1970," Nunnerley Papers, box 1, folder: Transcripts - John - Norstad, JFKL.

[154] The NPG was the forum for development on NATO nuclear policy going forward; Daalder's excellent account of NATO's post-1968 nuclear strategy begins where this account leaves off. Ivo H. Daalder, *The Nature and Practice of Flexible Response: NATO Strategy and Theater Nuclear Forces since 1967* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991).

[155] The NPG also helped strengthen Anglo-German relations at a critical period. Christoph Bluth, "British-German Defence Relations, 1950-80: A Survey," in *British-German Defence Co-Operation: Partners within the Alliance*, ed. Karl Kaiser and John Roper (London: Jane's for the Royal Institute of International Affairs and Deutschen Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik, 1988), 22-24.This is significant in light of Chapter 9.

weapons, and the war at sea."[156] The NPG was not seen as an immediate solution to NATO's nuclear policy, but an effort to elevate the FRG, informing the allies about the American armory, and exchanging concerns and ideas. Some officials of the day, like historians since, defined the committee as just "words," where the MLF has been "a real thing."[157] But others, like the State Department's John Leddy, recognized that the MLF, if formed, would still have provided the allies with only part of the larger nuclear picture. What McNamara did was "in effect educate them on the nature of the nuclear weapon" in its broadest sense.[158]

McNamara's committees represent the marriage of international interests and the hope of transnationalism in NATO. He insisted that the committee operate on a basis of discussions between states, but that it was necessary to reveal some of the most closely guarded secrets on nuclear planning. That this served as an opportunity for McNamara to call what he thought to be European bluffs, and to press for his own strategic vision, was no small benefit. He opened the door to the allies "fully … and sincerely," not for altruistic reasons but "solely for the purpose of integrating [European] thoughts and [European] ideas, [European] counsel with ours."[159]

---

[156] "The Nuclear Problem in NATO," undated [May 24, 1966], Bator Papers, box 27, LBJL.

[157] Thomas Finletter Oral History, LBJL, 22. Haftendorn, for instance, emphasizes the limitations of the NPG. Helga Haftendorn, *NATO and the Nuclear Revolution: A Crisis of Credibility, 1966-1967* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 112.

[158] John Leddy Oral History, LBJL, 6.

[159] "Interview - Mr. Robert McNamara. Thursday February 27th, 1970."

SECTION 3: THE END OF THE ATLANTIC MYSTIQUE:

EUROPE, DÉTENTE AND THE COSTS OF NATO, 1965-1967.

"We are somewhere between a cold war between two great blocs and a world of nation states; we are somewhere between a world organized rationally, respectful of the inescapable interdependencies of modern life, and the chaos of old-fashioned nationalism; we are somewhere between a world split on lines of wealth and race and differing stages of modernization and a community of partners in the spirit of the United Nations Charter."

- Walt Rostow, March 1965[1]

"Leadership, like the rest of nature, abhors a vacuum, and there is an insistent European leader, i.e., General de Gaulle, ready to fill it."

- US Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, 1965[2]

***

In 1966, Dean Acheson was back at the State Department. He had been invited to return to Foggy Bottom as a senior hand on European issues, especially to advise how best to keep de Gaulle from taking any rash action against NATO. In March, however, de Gaulle announced France would leave NATO's integrated military command structure and that all NATO forces must leave France. George Ball wrote Acheson a tongue in cheek note. Even though de Gaulle had not been thwarted, Ball was having "a special medal struck" in Acheson's honor. The obverse of the medal would depict "an elegantly attired figure with a mustache firing his musket over the top of the barricades while some anonymous figures are trying to pull the barricades apart stone by stone."[3] No better image represents the State Department's difficult adjustment and slow acceptance that NATO's world was changing. They were the old guards, trying to

---

[1] "Some Reflections on National Security Policy. February 1965," March 5, 1965, NSF, Agency File, box 52, LBJL.

[2] Bonn to SecState 3180, February 24, 1965, NSF, Country File, box 185, LBJL.

[3] George Ball to Acheson, July 15, 1966, AP, Gen. Corr., box 2, folder: 24.

maintain and defend NATO. But they wished to demonstrate strong American leadership when the opposite was required.

What Acheson had been trying to save, from behind his barricade, was the idea that NATO was the embodiment of Western unity in the Cold War. NATO had always been, in the words of one Foreign Office hand, "to some extent a confidence trick." Its military forces might be "overstretched and often undermanned and underequipped" and "the consultative and executive machinery of the Alliance is inevitably cumbersome." But still, because the NATO allies had put such emphasis and effort into appearing united, NATO had succeeded in building "up a powerful mystique over the years."[4]

After 1963, however, NATO lost some of its luster. The United States turned its attention to Southeast Asia. The Europeans turned inwards, though they opened up a little more to Eastern Europe. In the capitals of Western Europe, where once officials had feared Soviet assaults and blackmail, there was hope that the Cold War might be very near the end. De Gaulle's veto of the British application to join the Common Market and his rejection of the Polaris plan struck at Nassau also did much to spoil the vision of cooperation the allies had always burnished in public. If de Gaulle were to take another step and leave the alliance, he "could destroy this image" of a united West.[5] And if there was no need for the defense of Western Europe, or if the allies could not agree to cooperate, what good was NATO? De Gaulle posed the most obvious threat to some Americans' dreams of a larger Atlantic community, and even to NATO itself. Some historians have argued that it was de Gaulle alone who ended the prospect of NATO and the Atlantic nations emerging as a more unified entity - a new Atlantis.[6]

---

[4] Draft Paper by LF[ielding], May 3, 1963, FO 371/173436, NAUK.

[5] Draft Paper by LF[ielding], May 3, 1963.

[6] Reyn, *Atlantis Lost*.

The other European allies agreed that de Gaulle was damaging NATO and worried he might wreck the emerging European community. But they did not blame de Gaulle alone for the NATO's troubles in the 1960s. By the middle of the decade, the other NATO allies started to point the finger at the Americans, blaming them for widespread malaise about NATO's purpose and ability to cope with a changing world. Patrick Dean, the British Ambassador in Washington, blamed the Kennedy administration, especially Robert McNamara. Dean indicted McNamara for his inability to conceive of NATO as an entity unto itself. Instead, "he saw the Alliance mainly as an extension of American military power."[7] Frank Roberts agreed. McNamara's "computer-like approach" to matters of defense policy was "salutary … in many respects," but had been "damaging for the alliance." By focusing only on calculations for American defense he ignored matters of diplomacy, prestige and politics that were shaping European relations with each other and the United States.[8]

McNamara, the British thought, was both a "symbol and cause" of a broader change in the American thinking, which was "increasingly disenchanted with NATO."[9] Since the late 1940s, he recalled, the Americans had been "inclined to consider the North Atlantic Alliance as being almost as much a part of the nation's political life as the American Constitution." A "closer drawing together of the Atlantic community [had been] an unquestioned objective, which appealed strongly to American idealism," even if they had not thought about the implications for their own freedom of action.[10] Now, in 1966, Dean worried that American officials were questioning the value and resenting the costs of NATO. The crises of the Kennedy years, in

---

[7] Dean to Hood, November 16, 1966, FO 1042/156, NAUK.

[8] Roberts to Hood, November 26, 1966, FO 1042/156, NAUK.

[9] Roberts to Hood, November 26, 1966.

[10] Dean to Hood, November 16, 1966.

Berlin and Cuba, could only have convinced the Americans that the "allies' role was very marginal" in times of trouble. Vietnam had "driven home the same point more dramatically." As the Johnson administration looked to the Pacific, the "North Atlantic partnership has proved almost entirely useless in this context from an American point of view." The "Atlantic 'mystique,'" concluded Dean, "has evaporated."[11]

The British ambassadors' account is as instructive for understanding how the NATO allies felt about the United States as it was self-serving. Dean's and Roberts's complaints reflected larger fears that the United States had outgrown NATO. While there had always been a gap between the United States and the other NATO allies, the "vast and growing disparity between American military and economic power and that of its allies," was more apparent to the systems analysts and more "hard-headed" thinkers of the Kennedy and Johnson administration.[12] The British heard rumors of "new philosophizing among top people around the White House and the State Department." The new philosophy called for coming "to some kind of terms with the Soviet Union" and all but ignoring Western Europe.[13] American officials like Walt Rostow had hypothesized to Dean that NATO might dissolve and the U.S. could withdraw from Europe. Rostow's comments, even if "semi-rhetorical excursion," shocked Dean, for the Americans had never before hinted that their NATO commitment was finite. He worried Rostow's comments were a "straw in the wind" warning that the Johnson administration questioned the "sanctity of NATO's existing institutions."[14]

---

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid.

[13] "Sir P. Dean's letter of 30 December to the P.U.S.," minute by A.A. Stark, January 13, 1967, FO 1042/156, NAUK.

[14] Patrick Dean to Sir Paul Gore-Booth, December 30, 1966, FO 1042/156, NAUK.

Officials in Washington did not think NATO's future was quite so dire. The American thinking about the Cold War was changing, especially about the risks posed by the Soviet Union.[15] But they still believed NATO was necessary. Walt Rostow, who had so worried Dean, could still write to the President that the "maintenance of an integrated NATO capable of continuing to deter Moscow is fundamental."[16] The saga over nuclear policy and the MLF revealed the allies still thought NATO essential to keeping the Germans down. What officials in Washington were asking was not whether NATO should be maintained in the face of changes in Europe and the Cold War, but how. Should NATO limit its goals and focus solely on defense? Or should it continue its gradual expansion into a forum for discussing and perhaps coordinating a range of foreign policies? Officials in the State Department argued for co-ordination and charged the United States with responsibility for encouraging this change. "No other country or group of countries," the argued, "can now substitute for that leadership." Officials in the White House opposed this thinking. The notion that the United States could, should, or must provide strong leadership on all European issues was "the fundamental danger and fallacy" for American policy.[17]

It was difficult for the Americans to know what the Europeans wanted. Konrad Adenauer, still an important voice in German politics after his Chancellorship, complained in 1965 that the United States had abandoned Europe: "there is no more American interest - no more

---

[15] Thomas Schwartz, "Moving Beyond the Cold War: The Johnson Administration, Bridge Building, and Détente," in *Beyond the Cold War: Lyndon Johnson and the New Global Challenges of the 1960s*, ed. Francis J. Gavin and Mark Atwood Lawrence (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

[16] Memorandum from the President's National Security Adviser (Rostow) to President Johnson, April 17, 1966, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XII*, doc. 157.

[17] "Next Phase in Policy Toward Europe," January 19, 1965, NSF, Agency File, box 52, LBJL.

leadership."[18] Yet, in the coffee-houses and campuses of Europe, and in the press and publishing houses, Europeans voiced outrage that the United States was "dominating" Europe militarily, economically, and in less quantifiable cultural methods.[19] Significant books by high-profile Europeans, like Jean-Jacques Schreiber and Franz-Josef Strauss, hammered home the claim that America represented a challenge to Europe.

The State Department retained its strong core of officials who believed the US must lead Europe.[20] But some of this caste worried the American capacity to lead was slipping away, particularly because the Europeans themselves were "less willing to accept U.S. leadership" as the Cold War stalemate reduced their fears of the Soviet threat.[21] Just as the British worried that the United States had outgrown NATO, Americans feared the Europeans now thought the Cold War was over and NATO useless. In 1959, Charles de Gaulle had proclaimed his vision of a Europe that stretched all the way to the Urals - a new Europe based on cooperation between Western and Eastern Europe that had no place for rival military alliances. By 1963, Zbigniew Brzezinski wrote to the White House to report how often and with what frequency de Gaulle's call was repeated by Europeans. "It means something," he wrote: "Namely that Europe is

---

[18] Bonn to SecState 3180, February 24, 1965.

[19] There are a number of studies of "Americanization" and French and European reactions. The best remains Richard F. Kuisel, *Seducing the French: The Dilemma of Americanization* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1993). See especially 131-153.

[20] See the remarks by Popper and Schaetzel in "Atlantic Affairs Conference in Bonn, May 15 - 16, 1964," EUR, DAS, Schaetzel Files, box 2, folder: "Atlantic Affairs Conference, Bonn, 5/15-16/64," NARA.

[21] "OSD Proposal for Reducing U.S. Forces in Europe," Memorandum to the Secretary, from Messrs. Eugene Rostow, Robert Bowie, John Leddy, and Jeffrey Kitchen, January 30, 1967. EUR, RPM, Trilateral Records, box 1, folder: "Conversation Bet. Gen. Wheeler & Mr. McCloy. 10/25/66," NARA.

beginning to think in long range terms, and that it is searching for medium range concepts and policies to that end."[22]

There were other Europeans, however, who called for United States to take a leading role. In 1964, Schroeder, the German foreign minister, urged Walt Rostow to encourage the United States to show "leadership" in Europe. Rostow "told him of our puzzlement with the concept and said we would be grateful for clarification."[23] This pedantic response revealed how murky was the concept of American leadership. George McGhee, the American Ambassador in Bonn, summed it up best: "Europeans accept our leadership more readily when it points in a direction in which they already wish to go." But when American leadership was "directed at something distasteful," it was considered "only unwanted pressure."[24]

Schroeder's request is revealing in other ways. For after Rostow asked him to clarify, Schroeder explained that he wanted the United States to "exert steady pressure towards the kind of Europe which the US and most Europeans want" - that is, a Europe of supranational institutions that would grow to include the United Kingdom and other countries and retain close links to the United States.[25] Schroeder wanted the United States to support a policy that he and many other - but certainly not all – Europeans wanted. American leadership in Europe would mean pressing at least some Europeans in directions they refused to go.

The crises of the late 1960s required a new, less overbearing approach to NATO from the United States. Acheson had ridiculed Eisenhower's approach as a "disastrous experiment with

---

[22] Zbigniew Brzezinski to Arthur Schlesinger, jr., May 7, 1963, POF, folder: "Schlesinger, Arthur M., 1963," JFKLDC.

[23] "Schroeder and Erler on US Leadership in Europe," Rostow to the Secretary, May 22, 1964, NSF, Komer Files, box 20, LBJL.

[24] Bonn to SecState 3180, February 24, 1965.

[25] "Schroeder and Erler on US Leadership in Europe," May 22, 1964.

leadership through indolent and meretricious charm."[26] But American policy toward NATO under Kennedy had engendered far more bitterness between allies than Eisenhower's rhetorical assurances of unity and common spirit. By 1966, the days when Acheson could advise a U.S. President that he should not negotiate with his allies, but just tell them American policy, were long gone.[27] This change had come about for a number of reasons and Lyndon Johnson recognized that America's capacity to force change in Europe was not what it had once been. In the great debates over Berlin and nuclear policy in the early 1960s, the United States could simply call the trump because they held all the high cards. But on the emerging challenges in 1966 and 1967, which revolved around the relationship between NATO and the European Economic Community, the financial arrangements underpinning NATO's forces, and the increasing range of economic, cultural, and political contacts with Eastern Europe, the United States was not in a position to run the table.[28] Fortunately for NATO, there was a growing interest among the allies, especially the British, to seek a solution to NATO problems. A less forceful American presence in NATO created opportunities for the European allies to find ways to use the NATO machine to meet their own ends. This created further incentives to ensure NATO endured whatever new challenges it faced.

De Gaulle's partial withdrawal from NATO in 1966 brought several simmering problems to a head. De Gaulle had planned to renounce the North Atlantic Treaty. French officials convinced him that renouncing the treaty might invalidate the 1954 agreements that allowed French troops in Germany and provided a system for integrating, and thus controlling, German

---

[26] July 6, 1960. Acheson to Tyler, AP, Gen. Corr., Box 32, Folder 405.

[27] See Chapter 5.

[28] IN 1965, some American diplomats argued that the only "U.S. 'leadership' in Europe is on [the] military side" anyway. "U.S. NATO Ambassador's Conference in the Hague," Memorandum for the Record, October 27, 1965, Bator Papers, box 26, LBJL.

military power. He decided to settle for the less serious but still significant step of withdrawing French forces from NATO and kicking NATO troops out of France.[29] Old habits die hard in Washington: Acheson and State Department officials initially insisted that the United States must take the "lead in this affair."[30] But Johnson and his advisers were unwilling and unable to provide firm leadership for the other allies in the face of the Gaullist challenge. They recognized a showdown between Paris and Washington would play into de Gaulle's hands. The Americans cast the problem as a NATO-France rift, rather than a Franco-American spat, and they were careful to avoid antagonizing de Gaulle or challenging him publicly. The British, for their own reasons, provided a rallying point for NATO's other fourteen allies.

On the heels of de Gaulle's withdrawal came an even more critical threat to NATO's existence. Economic and political problems in Bonn, London, and Washington threatened to reduce the Anglo-American continental commitment and unravel NATO's defenses. The "offset crisis" of 1966-1967 and the resulting Anglo-American-German negotiations rebuilt "NATO around the core of a special, close-knit, Anglo/U.S./German relationship."[31] The Americans facilitated a three-way agreement to solve the financial problems. This was American leadership, but of a different sort. John Leddy, the Assistant Secretary of State for Europe, captured the

---

[29] EmbParis to External 511, March 9, 1966, RGDND, S-2-5100-7F, v. 1, LAC. See also Paris 4867 to SecState, February 11, 1966, DDRS, CK3100312987; Paris 5900 to SecState, March 16, 1966, DDRS, CK3100075379; Telegram from the Embassy in France to the Department of State, February 25, 1966, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XII*, doc. 54.

[30] "Closer European Collaboration as one Objective of the France/NATO Crisis," Memorandum by Schaetzel, sent to Acheson, April 11, 1966, EUR, DAS, Schaetzel Files, box 3, folder: "Acheson," NARA.

[31] Dean to Hood, November 16, 1966.

mood when he wrote to Rusk: "once more (sorry!) US (and State leadership) is an absolute must."[32]

Both crises raised doubts about NATO's future. De Gaulle's withdrawal from the integrated command, and the willingness of the allies to adapt the committees of NATO to France's new status, seemed to offer an alternative possibility for the NATO allies in which NATO was reduced to a simple alliance, devoid of military integration or coordination.[33] Similarly, the trilateral negotiations, though they provided a sound footing for the Anglo-American continental commitment, left the other NATO allies out of important decisions governing Western Europe's defense. These crises contributed to a broader political mood in the United States and Europe that questioned the need for maintaining NATO, a relic of the Cold War, when many hoped such antagonisms a thing of the past. NATO's response to these crises was a broad study of NATO's future tasks. The Americans played a key role in the study, and led the allies to agreement on the shape of NATO's future. But they did so by listening to their allies' concerns and finding a means to resolve their allies' worries while also maintaining NATO's defensive organization. The final "Harmel Report," the public outcome of the study, confirmed that NATO, especially its military commands and forces, were necessary, just as de Gaulle argued they were not. It ensconced NATO as a machine for checking and coordinating allied policy in terms that justified NATO's existence through the end of the Cold War and beyond.

---

[32] "Meeting with President, March 9, on Trilaterals," Leddy to the Secretary, March 8, 1967, Bator Papers, box 18, LBJL.

[33] See unpublished memoirs of Sir Patrick Reilly. Papers of Sir (D'Arcy) Patrick Reilly [hereafter: Reilly Papers], MS. Eng.c.6925, Memoirs, 1964-6, 73-74, BL.

CHAPTER 8: THE GOOD ALLY:

BRITAIN AND THE GAULLIST CHALLENGE TO NATO, 1963-1966

"We could surely say that while we believe the Atlantic Alliance to be essential to the Free World we are not necessarily wedded to NATO itself."

- British Foreign Office paper, spring 1962[1]

[There] "is of course an obvious attraction in profiting by the upheaval caused by de Gaulle to re-establish our political position in Europe."

- David Bendall of the British Foreign Office, June 1966[2]

"[The] problem is not complicated (just keep rest together)."

- Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara on the Gaullist challenge, January 1966[3]

In March 1966, Charles de Gaulle withdrew France's forces from NATO's integrated military command and insisted NATO troops not under French command leave French soil. Chip Bohlen, the American Ambassador in Paris, knew de Gaulle wanted the allies to drag their heels and "to behave in a rather bitchy fashion."[4] So the NATO allies complied quickly to avoid charges of overstaying their welcome, with the Department of Defense inspired by Macbeth: "If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well / It were done quickly."[5] They shuttered their bases in France and relocated their air forces and ground troops to other NATO countries. NATO's civilian and military headquarters left the Paris area for Belgium, both for symbolic reasons and

---

[1] "Possible British Proposals for a New Order in a Truly United Europe," undated, likely May 1962, PREM 11/3775, NAUK.

[2] "Sir E. Shuckburgh's Report on Conversation about U.K. and Future of NATO," D. V. Bendall, June 25, 1965, FO 115/4628, NAUK.

[3] Handwritten notes re: UK Defense Review, January 27, 1966, Bator Papers, box 25, folder: "Europe," LBJL.

[4] Bohlen, *Witness to History, 1929-1969*, 508.

[5] "Relocation from France," Hoffman to Yarmolinsky, April 4, 1966, Yarmolinsky Papers, Subject Files, box 32, folder: "France-NATO, 1963-1967," JFKL.

because of the impracticality of maintaining military headquarters where there were no NATO military forces.

In his move against the NATO organization and military command, however, de Gaulle did not renounce the North Atlantic Treaty. France remained an ally and thus entitled to the collective defense provisions and a seat on the North Atlantic Council. This raised a number of complications. The other allies worried France was maintaining its seat only to disrupt the work of the Council, yet they also wanted to maintain links between France and NATO. To ensure smooth operation of the organization, fourteen allies established another layer of committee membership in which they would meet to discuss issues pertaining to defense and the military commands that France had abandoned.

De Gaulle's withdrawal from the integrated military system was not a surprise.[6] To officials of the day, the withdrawal seemed the logical conclusion of de Gaulle's efforts since 1959 to bring French troops under exclusively French command. The 1966 withdrawal appeared part of a grand plan to chip away at NATO and loosen transatlantic links. De Gaulle sought a new balance of power in Europe, based on states, not blocs. His Europe would span from "the Atlantic to the Urals," and include the country he studiously referred to as "Russia."[7]

---

[6] For a thorough history of efforts to anticipate and react to a potential French withdrawal, see Anna Locher, *Crisis? What Crisis?: NATO, De Gaulle, and the Future of the Alliance, 1963-1966*, 1. ed. (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2010). See also "A Crisis Foretold: NATO and France, 1963-1966," in *Transforming NATO in the Cold War: Challenges Beyond Deterrence in the 1960s*, ed. Andreas Wenger, Christian Nuenlist, and Anna Locher (London: Routledge, 2007).

[7] Significant American efforts to define de Gaulle's goals are: "De Gaulle," Schlesinger to the President, January 29, 1963, POF, folder: France: Security, 1963, JFKLDC; Bohlen to Bundy, July 27, 1964, NSF, Bundy Files, box 16, LBJL. See also "Tripartitism," memorandum of conversation, June 20, 1960, *FRUS, 1958-1960, VII*, *Pt. 2,* 389.

Most accounts of this Gaullist challenge to NATO celebrate how the alliance rolled on, like a self-repairing tire, quickly congealing around the hole punctured by de Gaulle. Anna Locher notes that the French crisis interconnected to many issues but that it was mostly "about NATO as an institution and guarantor of transatlantic synchronization."[8] She argues that the NATO crisis revealed the importance of the smaller NATO powers in making the alliance work. And some of the smaller allies, especially the Belgians, played an important role in the diplomacy at NATO that helped find a new operating procedure for the NAC. The Belgians would also play an outsized role, through their Foreign Minister, Pierre Harmel, when the NATO allies launched a major review of the organization's purposes at the end of 1966.[9]

Still, it was the British response to the Gaullist crisis that proved the crux of NATO's survival. Britain was the rallying point for the NATO allies as they regrouped from de Gaulle's attack. But London never viewed NATO as sacrosanct or inviolable, and the British role was not preordained. Indeed, throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the British had, like de Gaulle, sought to reshape the alliance to fit their larger national goals, and were willing to away over its importance.

De Gaulle's opposed military integration on principle and also because of the tricky politics of Algeria. His thinking later merged with his plans to ensure French leadership in a changing Europe. For Britain, and Macmillan and his successors, NATO was an economic albatross. The British resented the costs of maintaining their continental commitment. The Cold War bloc system and its artificial crises – especially Berlin – frustrated Macmillan as much as de Gaulle. But when de Gaulle made his move against NATO the British saw an opportunity to improve their chances of eventually joining the Common Market.

---

[8] Locher, *Crisis? What Crisis?*, 20.

The security relationship to the United States was the most important factor shaping the British attitude toward NATO. But British support of NATO wavered due to an awkward disconnect between British desires to save money by limiting its continental commitment and the belief that NATO was the best way to keep Germany tied – in fact tied down – to the West. In 1964, senior Foreign Office officials like Pierson Dixon and Lord Hood could agree "that the worst thing that could happen to the Western world's coherence would be that the Europe of the Six should really get organized as a political force in its own right … without the participation of Britain."[10] This would leave Britain isolated, and also allow Germany, in the long-term, to dominate Europe politically and economically.[11] The Gaullist challenge to NATO allowed Britain to convince the five other members of the Six that Britain was a good ally, France a bad one, and that Britain deserved a place in Europe. By using NATO to achieve this end, the British were obligated to support the NATO structure rather than press for major changes when de Gaulle challenged NATO's status quo. The British position gave the fourteen NATO allies focus and bought them time to adjust the alliance to France's new position. This role is of even greater importance when considered against the economic crises that struck NATO in the summer and fall of 1966 just after the NATO allies had regrouped from the Gaullist challenge.[12]

3.8.1 Broken Backs

In 1956, many months before the Suez Crisis, Harold Macmillan warned Anthony Eden that Britain's economic situation was not as healthy as it appeared. Macmillan, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, warned the Prime Minister that Britain was "like a man in the early stages of

---

[9] This is the subject of Chapter 10.

[10] Dixon to Hood, May 14, 1964, FO 371/179064, NAUK.

[11] "Chronological Minute" of a 3 p.m. meeting at Chequers, November 29, 195, PREM 11/2679, NAUK; "France", undated [March or April 1961], PREM 11/3311, NAUK.

[12] This is the subject of Chapter 9.

consumption, [with] flushed cheek and apparent health concealing the disease."[13] Macmillan became convinced in 1956, and would remain convinced throughout his service in Cabinet and as Prime Minister, that it was "defence expenditure which has broken our backs."[14]

In his first months as Prime Minister, Macmillan moved to reduce Britain's continental commitment. By the terms of the 1954 Brussels Treaty, Britain agreed to maintain 77,000 troops on the continent. But by claiming economic hardship, Macmillan gained the begrudged consent of the allies to reduce British obligations to 55,000 troops.[15] He hoped to continue reducing this obligation by increments of ten thousand troops into the 1960s. His eagerness to reduce troop commitments stemmed partly from changes in military doctrine that emphasized nuclear defense, and partly an inclination "to discount the imminence of military aggression."[16] At root, however, was Macmillan's worry about the British economy.

Macmillan viewed the British Army on the Rhine (BAOR), and Britain's NATO commitment as a whole, as a bargaining chip in negotiations between the Sixes and Sevens. Macmillan told his foreign secretary Selwyn Lloyd that if the British-backed European Free Trade Agreement (FTA) did not develop in parallel along with the "Little Europe" being forged by the Six, "we would take our troops out of Europe. We would withdraw from NATO." Britain would instead

---

[13] Chancellor of the Exchequer [Macmillan] to the Prime Minister, May 17, 1956, PREM 11/1178, NAUK.

[14] Chancellor of the Exchequer [Macmillan] to the Prime Minister, March 23, 1956, PREM 11/1178, NAUK.

[15] Saki Dockrill, "Retreat from the Continent? Britain's Motives for Troop Reductions in West Germany, 1955-1958," *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 20, no. 3 (September 1997): 45.

[16] Memorandum of a Conversation, Mid-Ocean Club, Bermuda, March 22, 1957, *FRUS, 1955-1957, XXVII,* doc. 277.

"surround ourselves with rockets," and tell the "Germans, the French and all the rest of them[:] Look after yourselves with your own forces."[17]

Macmillan tried out this position in his first meeting with Charles de Gaulle in 1958. He warned the new French leader that if the Maudling Committee, a group trying to negotiate relations between the Six and Seven, "failed to reach agreement, it might even spell the end of NATO. He meant this very seriously."[18] This was not bluster, for Macmillan confided to his diary that if Britain and Europe reached no suitable cooperation on trade, "I don't see how NATO could survive."[19]

Macmillan, however, was playing the NATO card with two severe disadvantages. First, continental Europeans (though surely the Germans were in a category of their own), agreed with Macmillan's own assessment that general war in Europe was unlikely. Thus the conditions that enabled Macmillan to threaten withdrawal made it ineffective. Second, though de Gaulle had not yet issued his 1958 memorandum when Macmillan made his threat, a reevaluation or diminution of NATO was not likely to exert much leverage over France. In fact, Macmillan's threat to surround Britain with rockets and isolate itself was a remarkable premonition of the policy de Gaulle and his officials articulated in the 1960s.

Indeed, Macmillan and de Gaulle's views on NATO were hardly antipathetical. As explained in Chapter 3, Macmillan saw an opportunity for a deal with de Gaulle on his 1958 memorandum. And Macmillan and his closest advisors thought "there was much to be said for President de

---

[17] Macmillan to Foreign Secretary, June 24, 1958, PREM 11/2315, NAUK.

[18] "Record of Conversation Between the Prime Minister and the President Du Conseil at the Hotel Matignon after Dinner on June 29, 1958," June 29, 1958, PREM 11/2326, NAUK.

[19] Macmillan Diary entry for June 23, 1958, *MD:PM*, 128.

Gaulle's view that the present organisation of NATO was outdated."[20] While it was essential to "keep [NATO] going because of the position of the United States," Macmillan, by 1959, thought it would serve British interests best if "the structure of NATO and its present military organisation [were] altered and reduced in size."[21] The search for savings and markets was of overwhelming importance to Macmillan's views on NATO and, indeed, to much of his entire policy as Prime Minister. "After all," Macmillan told a group of advisers at Chequers in 1959, "nothing else mattered if there were a danger that our whole economy might be imperiled. It was the basis of our national existence."[22]

3.8.2 Another Great Plan

Charles de Gaulle's 1958 memorandum calling for a tripartite directorate was premised largely on strategic designs. But Macmillan's support for the plan, and his hopes of making a deal with de Gaulle and Eisenhower revolved around his economic worries. Still, Eisenhower, Macmillan, and de Gaulle found no acceptable tripartite formula.

De Gaulle did not abandon his idea at the end of Eisenhower's presidency. He tried to convince the next president, John F. Kennedy, that a triumvirate was necessary. In March 1961, de Gaulle, through an emissary, urged Kennedy to agree to consider the "most complete coordination" between Britain, France, and the United States. The three leaders, through their foreign minister and diplomats, could then implement the directorate's policy "through the natural channel of that member of the Big Three which has the most intimate associations with any particular geographic area." For France, this meant Bonn (no doubt standing in for Europe);

---

[20] "Record of a Meeting at Chequers at 12 noon on Sunday, November 29, 1959," November 29, 1959, PREM 11/2679, NAUK.

[21] Ibid. See also Gearson, *Harold Macmillan and the Berlin Wall Crisis*, 158-61.

[22] "Chronological Minute" of a 3 p.m. meeting at Chequers, November 29, 1959.

for the United States, Tokyo (the Pacific), and for the United Kingdom, "its own area of direct association" - meaning the Commonwealth.[23]

De Gaulle's representative left Washington apparently convinced that the Americans' noncommittal response represented private agreement to such consultation.[24] Macmillan, knowing de Gaulle's idea, was more enthusiastic than the Americans, and supported de Gaulle's plan in hopes of ensuring Britain's economic future with Europe. Britain's economy was "faced with long-term difficulties." It needed to reduce its public expenditures, not only by bringing troops home from Europe - for it would be expensive to house them in Britain - but to reduce the size of Britain's defense spending in toto.[25] Beyond the fiscal balance, however, it was essential for this "nation of shopkeepers, traders, industrialists and so on" to ensure they had markets. As Macmillan declared baldly in 1959, "We live by trade."[26] Then, Macmillan had believed that the EEC might come to pose a substantial threat to Britain. By 1961 it was evident that the real peril lay in remaining outside the Common Market. Macmillan's conversion from opponent to proponent of the EEC marked what Gladwyn Jebb believed to be "the most spectacular operation of this kind since the conversion of the Emperor Constantine to the Christian faith."[27]

---

[23] The emissary was Jacques Chaban-Delmas, President of the French National Assembly. Memorandum of Conversation, "Tripartite Consultation between France, the United States and the United Kingdom," March 10, 1961. JFKL, NSF Files, Box 70A.

[24] Paris to SecState, No. 3951, March 22, 1961. JFKL, NSF Files, France-General, 3/16/61-4/21/61 Box 70A.

[25] "United Kingdom International Policies, in the light of the United Kingdom Economic Position," undated memo by Bishop, enclosed with a note from Bishop to the Prime Minister, June 26, 1961, PREM11/3348, NAUK.

[26] "Chronological Minute" of a 3 p.m. meeting at Chequers, November 29, 1959.

[27] Gladwyn Jebb to Patrick Reilly, August 10, 1961, Reilly Papers, MS.ENG.c.6871, Deputy Under Secretary, Foreign Office, correspondence, 1960-1965, BL.

Macmillan's conviction that Britain must gain access to EEC markets was not enough. He needed Britain's application to be approved by the Six, and especially de Gaulle. Macmillan sought to gain de Gaulle's acceptance initially by pressing de Gaulle for a "strong Anglo-French entente."[28] But when Macmillan realized de Gaulle had revived his triumvirate idea, Macmillan seized the opportunity to try to solidify a tripartite agreement.

Macmillan, in correspondence with Kennedy and McGeorge Bundy, became a strident proponent of tripartitism. He told Kennedy that after NATO came into being the Western allies had "failed to maintain a sufficient unity either of purpose or organization." It was time for reform and to ensure that France played a full part, for France "is one of the pillars of the Western Alliance." Macmillan attached a series of memoranda to his letter with ideas for a regular system of tripartite consultation in which France had a "natural place." His calls for tripartite coordination on Africa, South-East Asia, the United Nations, and on the strategic nuclear deterrent echoed de Gaulle's entreaties from the Eisenhower years. He reiterated de Gaulle's suggestion that the three "enter into an agreement for consultation before nuclear weapons are used and for joint arrangements about their use in case of need."[29] Philip de Zulueta, in summarizing Macmillan's arguments, noted that Macmillan's proposal would elevate France to "much the same position over the nuclear as we have today."[30] Macmillan was willing to push these policies, however, because he hoped Kennedy would "offer something on tripartitism and some review of N.A.T.O." to de Gaulle. In exchange, the French President might

---

[28] "Record of a Conversation in the Marble Room at Rambouillet at 2.45 p.m. on Sunday, January 29, 1961," January 29, 1961, PREM 11/3322, NAUK.

[29] "Memorandum" attached to Macmillan's letter to Kennedy, April 22, 1961, PREM 11/3311, NAUK.

[30] "The Nuclear," Philip de Zulueta to the Prime Minister, undated [early May 1961], PREM 11/3311, NUAK.

"act as a good Free World European" and give up his "insular" policies on Congo, Laos, NATO and – most important - "European economic divisions."[31] Although Macmillan listed a range of global problems, his diary suggests he saw the bargain revolving around "Britain's desire to enter Europe on reasonable terms."[32]

Macmillan designed his missives to Kennedy to influence the President before Kennedy met with de Gaulle in June 1961. Perhaps partially because of Macmillan's prodding, Kennedy made a vague offer to implement tripartitism. Kennedy told de Gaulle that Rusk and his French and British counterparts "would develop a mechanism for consultations." He suggested the three countries appoint military representatives who might "meet either with three political representatives or, if need be, separately to study and re-examine the strategic situation of the three nations," and he suggested Berlin and Laos as areas that needed study.[33] On his return from Paris, Kennedy stopped in London and told Macmillan that the foreign ministers should "discuss the creation of a tripartite consultative structure which should include some military element.[34] But again, the United States did not follow up on the President's promises, and in 1962 Rusk convinced Hervé Alphand, the French Ambassador in Washington, to report to Paris a "basic disagreement in outlook" on the issue of "official tripartitism.[35] Macmillan knew that his "great plan has failed – or at least, failed up to now."[36]

---

[31] Foreign Office [Macmillan] to Washington [Bundy], May 9, 1961, PREM 11/3311, NUAK.

[32] Macmillan diary entry for June 11, 1961, *MD:PM*, 391.

[33] "Friday Afternoon Talks," memorandum of conversation, June 2, 1961, DDRS, CK3100133349.

[34] "Note of Points made during the Private Discussion between President Kennedy and Prime Minister Macmillan at Admiralty House from 10:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. on Monday, June 5, 1961," June 8, 1961, DDRS, CK3100165154

[35] Department of State 6631 to Paris, June 9, 1962, NSF, box 71, folder: France General, 6/9/62-6/23/62, JFKL. See also "Pre-September Meeting of the Three Foreign Ministers,"

In their June 1961 meeting, de Gaulle told Kennedy that he would soon "call for a re-examination of NATO." NATO, de Gaulle explained, "was first an alliance and second an organization."[37] While he supported the alliance, France needed a "national defence posture" - that is, for French military forces to be organized nationally rather than part of NATO's integrated organization and command.[38] De Gaulle frequently repeated this distinction between organization and alliance. When, in a conversation with Norstad, an interpreter erred and said the "Alliance could be weakened and jeopardized," de Gaulle corrected him and said "it would be NATO, not the Alliance, that would be weakened and jeopardized; that the U.S. and France had been Allies for a long time and would always remain Allies."[39]

Officials in Washington and London scorned De Gaulle's belief in state-based alliances, without closer military cooperation and integration as hopelessly archaic throwbacks to another century.[40] British and American officials would later complain that de Gaulle did not understand that the alliance and the organization had become inseparable. They pointed to the development of SHAPE and the role of SACEUR and his integrated military forces. But these arguments ignore two important developments during the Kennedy years. First, in 1961 and early 1962, the

---

memorandum of conversation, July 7, 1961, Bohlen Records, box 13, folder: "Tripartitism, 1959-1961," NARA.

[36] Macmillan diary entry for June 11, 1961, *MD:PM*, 391. See also Philip de Zulueta to Prime Minister, November 17, 1971, PREM 11/3338, NAUK.

[37] Paris SECTO 6 to Secretary of State, June 2, 1961, DDRS, CK3100038381.

[38] "Friday Afternoon Talks," June 2, 1961.

[39] "Meeting with President De Gaulle, 23 July 1962," memorandum for the record, July 24, 1962, NSF, box 71A, folder: France General, 7/62, JFKL.

[40] INR argued de Gaulle's worldview was "essentially 'an 18th-century one." "Problems and Prospects of the fight Republic," INR Intelligence Report no. 8374, December 6, 1960, *FRUS, 1958-1960, VII, Pt. 2,* 424. Macmillan also thought de Gaulle "fundamentally an Eighteenth Century figure," though Eisenhower disagreed and said "Early Nineteenth." London to Department of State, March 11, 1959, DDRS, CK3100093498.

Kennedy administration chipped away at the idea that the organization and alliance were one and the same by denigrating SACEUR, refusing to acknowledge a need for unanimity of the NAC over Berlin, and asserting, in the person of Robert McNamara, that singular control of nuclear weapons - which would be national, not NATO's - was the basis of North Atlantic defense.

Second, US officials failed to recognize the connections between de Gaulle's actions and events in France. De Gaulle's opposition to military integration and his continuing withdrawal of elements of the French armed forces from integrated command and control arrangements was a product of his domestic priorities as much as his foreign policy designs. It rested on his belief that the French military, if not entirely responsible only to the French leader, would forget their allegiance to France. This idea might have seemed far-fetched and theoretical until 1961, when French officers staged the failed General's Putsch to take France by force. Some of the putschists, like Maurice Challe, had recently served in NATO commands. In fact, many in Paris assumed American officers in NATO had assured Challe that the US would support the coup.[41] Making matters worse, members of the secret paramilitary group *Organisation de l'Armée Secrète* (OAS) that tried to overthrow de Gaulle, like Georges Bidault, were outspokenly pro-NATO. Rumors that the CIA had encouraged the putsch and encouraged the OAS cropped up in France throughout the 1960s.[42]

---

[41] SSO JCS 539-61, General Norstad SHAPE Paris to Admiral Burke Washington, April 24, 1961, NSF, box 70A, folder: "France-General, 4/22/61-4/30/61," JFKL. This was something of a self-fulfilling prophesy, for the French leadership had a deliberate policy of transferring out of Algeria any officers considered unreliable. Thus "ranking officers in NATO, France and West Germany would be more suspect than those who were based in Algeria."

[42]"Situation Appraisal in France as of 30 January 1964: Indications of Anti-Americanism." CIA Intelligence Information Cable, January 31, 1964, NSF, Country File, box 169, LBJL.

To Kennedy, Adenauer, and Harold Macmillan each, de Gaulle attributed the putschists' actions to the "supranational character" of European defense.[43] Although de Gaulle did not name NATO specifically, this was his implication. French diplomats told US officials de Gaulle believed American officers at SHAPE had encouraged Challe after he told them "a government of pro-American generals would lead to French acceptance of greater NATO integration and other US desires.[44] McGeorge Bundy recognized that pressing domestic concerns motivated de Gaulle's NATO policy. He scribbled on a legal pad: "why de G is holding back in NATO" and "why not subordinate his army to NATO." "De G.," Bundy answered himself, was in "danger of losing control over Army. OAS show how right he was - Bad elements."[45] Bundy might have added that de Gaulle thought these bad elements had rotted from lying to close in the barrel to NATO allies.

For a number of reasons, including the American's hot-and-cold response to his tripartite requests, de Gaulle's desire to exercise French leadership in Europe, the continued American refusal to provide France with the same nuclear support given to Great Britain, and the General's Putsch that revealed the dangers of participation in integrated commands, de Gaulle told Macmillan in a December 1962 at Rambouillet that "France would be less and less in NATO."[46]

---

[43] Paris SECTO 6 to Secretary of State, June 2, 1961; **"**Extract from a Conversation Between the Prime Minister and President de Gaulle which began at 10.30 a.m. on Sunday, June 3.," June 4, 1962, PREM 11/3775, NAUK; "Record of a Meeting at the Palais Schaumberg at 10 a.m., on Tuesday, January 9, 1962," January 9, 1962, PREM 11/3776, NUAK.

[44] "Conversation concerning Alleged US Encouragement of General Challe," Memorandum for Secretary McNamara, Ivan White, Mr. Bohlen, Mr. Dulles, Mr. McGeorge Bundy, from William P. Bundy, May 6, 1951, NSF, box 70A, folder: "France-General, 5/11/61-5/18/61," JFKL.

[45] Handwritten notes, undated, Bundy Papers, Series 4 (White House Subject Files), box 33, folder: European Trip, Sept. 1962 (2 of 3), JFKL.

[46] "Record of a Conversation at Rambouillet at 3.45 pm on Saturday, December 15, 1962," PREM 11/4230, NAUK.

3.8.3 Not Necessarily Wedded to NATO Itself

In April 1962, even in the midst of the Berlin Crisis, Macmillan wrote: "There is only one issue now which dominates everything for the next few months. Shall we or shall we not be able to bring off our entry into the Common Market?"[47] Despite the failure of his plan for a tripartite deal in 1961, Macmillan determined in 1962 to convince de Gaulle it was "politically desirable for France" to help the United Kingdom join the European Economic Community. Macmillan believed it was "defence aspects" - especially de Gaulle's hopes for nuclear cooperation - that were most important to the decision. He planned to entice de Gaulle with "possibilities of Anglo-French arrangements for joint targeting of nuclear forces in a hypothetical situation in which the United States might not be involved."[48] If de Gaulle spurned the British application, however, Macmillan thought Britain's response would be, "at least," to denounce the Brussels Treaty, "and at the most extreme might involve reaching an understanding with the Soviet Union."[49] Such a suggestion, though Macmillan admitted it was extreme, demonstrates the priority he placed on economic survivability over NATO.

Indeed, Macmillan and the British were moving more and more to de Gaulle's conceptions of NATO. De Gaulle's ideas on defense, as the Minister of Defence Harold Watkinson put it, were "not unattractive to us."[50] One British paper argued - making de Gaulle's classic distinction - that the Atlantic Alliance was "essential" but that Britain was "not necessarily wedded to NATO

---

[47] "Foreign Policy," Harold Macmillan to the Foreign Secretary, April 15, 1962. PREM11/3778, NAUK.

[48] Harold Macmillan to Foreign Secretary, May 16, 1962, PREM 11/3775, NAUK.

[49] "Notes of Points Made in Discussion at Chequers on May 19, 1962," May 19, 1962, PREM 11/3775, NAUK.

[50] May 24, 1962. "Arrangements with the French in the defence sphere," Watkinson to Prime Minster, PREM 11/3775, NAUK.

itself … still less to its present organisation."[51] Macmillan took the paper's thesis to de Gaulle, and argued that the Atlantic Alliance could be reinvented as "an alliance of equals" with "two pillars" - European and American - "of approximately equal strength," with the strength resting on Anglo-French nuclear power.[52] This was not mere posturing. Macmillan believed that if Britain "starts to work with Europe very soon special relations will grow up," and Anglo-American cooperation would "extend … to become European links with U.S."[53]

Nonetheless, by the Rambouillet meeting in December, the French President was no longer willing to consider reorganizing NATO. De Gaulle's plans for tripartitism - and thus any deal, were dead. And so too were Macmillan's hopes of easy entry into the Common Market, for de Gaulle exhibited an "almost open opposition to the idea of Britain joining the Common Market."[54] Less than a month later, de Gaulle's refused to allow Britain's entry into the Common Market on British terms.

3.8.4 Politics Without Restrictions

Up until the fateful meeting at Rambouillet, Macmillan and de Gaulle both thought NATO could or should be reformed. This concurrence should not be overdrawn, for the position of the two powers was distinct, and the British maintained their close nuclear connections with the United States. But Macmillan's outbursts against Britain's possible abandonment of NATO were not simply "mania."[55] He believed British membership in the European Economic Community to

---

[51] "Possible British Proposals for a New Order in a Truly United Europe," undated, likely May 1962, PREM 11/3775, NAUK.

[52] June 3, 1962. Record of a Meeting at the Chateau de Champs at 10.30 a.m. on Sunday, June 3, 1962. PREM 11/3775, NAUK.

[53] June 7, 1962. "for Records" [handwritten notes by the Prime Minister], PREM 11/3775, NAUK. Dictated note, December 27, 1962, PREM 11/4230, NAUK.

[54] December 27, 1962, dictated note, PREM 11/4230

[55] Peter Hennessy, *The Prime Minister: The Office and Its Holders since 1945* (London: Penguin, 2001), 268.

be important enough to allow for serious reform or reconsideration of NATO to both reduce British defense expenses and to make a deal for entry into the Common Market.

But the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962 led Macmillan and de Gaulle to diverge sharply. Kennedy's response, and the apparent Soviet capitulation, revealed the massive disparities in power between the United States and the rest of the world, including its European allies. Much of de Gaulle's rhetoric and claims for France's place as spokesman for Europe centered on his claim that the United States needed to heed a rebuilt Europe. Europe was now emerging as a new center of power, part of a larger process American officials at the time called "polycentrism."[56] Chip Bohlen, writing from Paris, observed that the Europeans had made an "economic and financial recovery" and also had recovered their "moral and spiritual vigor."[57] And indeed, Europe had undergone profound transformations in rebuilding from the rubble of 1945. But notably absent from Bohlen's observations was a military recovery. Partly because of the American guarantee provided through NATO, and partly because of the unlikelihood of major Soviet aggression, Europe had not recovered anything approximating its former relative military power, and its strength paled next to the weight of American nuclear armament.

The Cuban Missile Crisis convinced the Europeans of American strength more powerfully than any presentation by McNamara with his figures of missiles and megatonnage. It was, according to European observers like Jean Monnet, a "turning point of history" and revealed American "military superiority."[58] American supremacy, rather than polycentrism or the rise of a new Europe, was the true shape of world affairs in the 1960s. Indeed, a few years after Cuba,

---

[56] "A Reassessment of United States Foreign Policy 1965-70," memorandum for the President from Adlai Stevenson, November 18,1964, WHCF, Confidential File, box 44, LBJL.

[57] Bohlen to Bundy, March 2, 1963, NSF, Bundy Files, box 16, LBJL.

[58] Jean Monnet to Acheson, November 23, 1962, AP Gen. Corr., box 23, folder: 288.

Patrick Dean would look back and write that the only real moral to be drawn from the state of world affairs was that "the United States has so outdistanced its allies in power and resources … that all the rest of us including France have assumed the dimensions of pigmies in American calculation of true power relationships in the world."[59]

It was in this world of overwhelming American power that de Gaulle saw an opportunity. After Cuba, he explained to Pierson Dixon that it was now clear the Americans and "Russians" would not "attack the other" and "it did not seem to him that there was much danger of war."[60] He had told Chip Bohlen something similar enough that Bohlen concluded de Gaulle "tends to regard the Cold War as over."[61] Frederic Bozo has described de Gaulle's policy from 1963 onward as one of "détente, entente and cooperation," designed to break the logic of the Cold War."[62] His goal was a new "Concert of Europe" that ignored the alliance bloc system.[63]

De Gaulle would make much of the argument that France could not rely on the United States for its nuclear protection as his reason for withdrawing from NATO. But this was a clever ruse that left the Americans with no effective response; American officials complained it was not

---

[59] Dean to Gore-Booth, July 8, 1966, FO 371/190723, NAUK.

[60] Paris no. 177 to FO, July 17, 1963, FO 371/173435, NAUK.

[61] Bohlen to Bundy, March 2, 1963, NSF, Bundy Files, box 16, LBJL.

[62] Frédéric Bozo, *Two Strategies for Europe: De Gaulle, the United States, and the Atlantic Alliance* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001), 143-53. Another excellent account is Marie-Pierre Rey, "De Gaulle, French Diplomacy, and Franco-Soviet Relations as Seen from Moscow," in *Globalizing De Gaulle: International Perspectives on French Foreign Policies, 1958-1969*, ed. Anna Locher, Garret Martin, and Christian Nünlist (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010).

[63] Garret Martin, "Towards a New Concert of Europe: De Gaulle's Vision of a Post-Cold War Europe," in *Visions of the End of the Cold War in Europe, 1945-1990*, ed. Frédéric Bozo, et al. (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 94-97. Martin also sees de Gaulle's "clear agenda to overcome the Cold War."

"possible for a woman positively to prove her virtue."[64] Indeed, de Gaulle's policy of withdrawal from the alliance in the 1960s was premised not on a belief that France *could* not rely on the United States, but that war was so unlikely it *need* not. Even by April 1966, when the Quai d'Orsay scrambled to draft a paper providing some policy rationale for de Gaulle's decision to withdraw from NATO's integrated command, French officials argued that the Cold War had "reached climax at Cuba," and after 1962 the Soviets had "abandoned more and more any idea of a military clash with the West or of military blackmail."[65] As British officials recognized in 1964 - too late for Macmillan's hopes – de Gaulle's assumption that "major war can be excluded" meant he was now "free to play politics without restrictions."[66]

This freedom of maneuver allowed de Gaulle to undermine NATO in an effort to reshape European international relations and to elevate France to a leadership role in his new Europe of states. If he had feared Soviet predations this would have been impossible. And it would be deeply complicated by British entry into the Common Market; thus his refusal to agree to the modifications of the European Economic Community that the British had insisted they required for entry. He also rejected overtures to join the Anglo-Americans in the Polaris bargain struck at Nassau.

---

[64] Tyler to Bohlen, September 18, 1964, DDRS, CK3100020950. See also Paris no. 751 to FO, November 23, 1963, FO 371/173437, NAUK; Paris no. 758 to FO, November 25, 1963, FO 371/173437, NAUK; Butler to Barnes, December 10, 1963, FO 371/173437, NAUK.

[65] "Note on Franco-American Relations," [undated; enclosure to Airgram No. 1 from Paris, 1-1920]. JFKL, Yarmolinsky Papers, Subject Files, box 32, folder: "France-NATO, 1963-1967," JFKL.

[66] Paris no. 888 to Foreign Office, December 3, 1964. This British cable is in NSF Country File, box 160, LBJL.

The veto outraged Macmillan. But what of Macmillan's threats to abandon NATO? He did nothing of the sort. Rather than isolate Britain, Macmillan told Kennedy it was de Gaulle who should be isolated.[67]

In early 1963 all British officials involved in formulating Britain's next moves believed that NATO held the answer to British policy. Consequently, NATO's preservation took on new importance in London. Philip de Zulueta, for example, concurred with Macmillan that the UK should act to prevent de Gaulle from consolidating his plans for Europe. But beyond this negative aim, Britain should also seek to "unite a wider Europe and to make her into a powerful and equal partner with the United States in the Atlantic Alliance."[68] Britain needed now, more than ever, to demonstrate a British commitment to Europe in hopes of making another future bid for membership.

The "Post-Brussels Committee" of Cabinet argued the main emphasis of British policy "should surely be here," in NATO.[69] And Pierson Dixon, writing from Paris, urged that institutionalized consultation such as that provided by NATO was "the only certainly effective way of keeping the Five together with us against the French." Dixon could suggest no grand solution, just the "modest plan" of taking their allies more and more into their confidence and undertaking real consultation at NATO. This would "symbolize the opening of a campaign in

---

[67] "Transcript of telephone conversation between President Kennedy and Prime Minister Macmillan," January 19, 1963, POF, folder: United Kingdom: Transcripts of Kennedy-Macmillan phone calls, 1963, JFKLDC.

[68] February 4, 1963. "A Positive Policy after Brussels," February 4, 1963, Philip de Zulueta, PREM 11/4220, NAUK.

[69] Note to the Prime Minister, March 1, 1963, PREM 11/4220, NAUK. See also the telegram FO 2167 to Washington, February 27, 1963, attached to the note as "Annex B."

favour of the British approach to Europe." At NATO, Britain could maintain their links with the Belgians, the Dutch, and especially the Germans - the "ones who really count."[70]

The post-Brussels Committee report pointed out the ongoing tension between joining Europe and British goals of "curtailing our commitments to NATO."[71] But in February and March of 1963 the die was cast. British officials would no longer talk seriously of trading NATO in a bid to join Europe, and NATO instead became an instrument for improving conditions for a future application to join the EEC. "The main effort to thwart General de Gaulle," explained Edward Heath, "must be made in NATO."[72]

3.8.5 "NATO, blah, blah, blah"

In July 1963, de Gaulle told Dixon what, in retrospect, had been obvious at Rambouillet that past December: He "renounced" his plans for tripartitism, for they "no longer represented what he felt."[73] Nassau had demonstrated the unacceptability of tripartitism to the Anglo-Saxons, and Cuba had demonstrated it was now unnecessary. From 1963 through to 1966, de Gaulle withdrew French troops from NATO until his major announcement ending France's participation in the defense aspects of the alliance.

The initial moves against integration in 1963, like those in 1959, began seemingly by accident. In May 1963, Admiral Robert Dennison, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic (SACLANT), met with de Gaulle and "incautiously remarked what a pleasure it had been to have French naval units under his command." Apparently de Gaulle had not realized that French naval

---

[70] "Notes for use at Meeting of Ambassadors in London Monday March 11, 1963," by Pierson Dixon, March 10, 1963. FO 146/4619, NAUK.

[71] Note to the Prime Minister, March 1, 1963 and Annex B. See also Macmillan diary entry for April 1, 1963, *MD:PM*, 557

[72] "Future Policy in Europe," from Lord Privy Seal, Annex A to Note to the Prime Minister, March 1, 1963, PREM 11/4220, NAUK.

[73] Paris no. 177 saving to July 17, 1963, FO 371/173435, NAUK.

units were still under NATO commanders and moved to withdraw them. Like the Mediterranean naval units, the French made arrangements so that their naval forces would be "available to cooperate with NATO forces in case of general war."[74] Earlier, in the 1950s, the European allies had acceded quietly to de Gaulle's withdrawals; now, the French Permanent Representative came "under heavy fire from … Belgian, Dutch and German representatives." The other allies thought the French military explanations "specious," and worried what motives lay behind de Gaulle's maneuvers.[75]

Next, in early 1964, De Gaulle withdrew French naval officers from NATO's naval headquarters. The Americans thought this had a "certain logic" to it, "and was "tidying-up [an] anomalous situation in which French officers but not French ships had been serving in the international chain of command."[76] But this move preceded larger withdrawals from the chain of command. In 1964, de Gaulle began to prohibit French officers seconded to NATO commands from participating in major exercises. Since these exercises tested how well commanders could receive political guidance in case of war, the French absence suggested the "beginning of the break up of integrated staffs."[77] These withdrawals were all carefully choreographed. In November 1964, for instance, the British National Military Representative (NMR) to SHAPE notes his French counterpart had started to make "violent little scenes in public," and even once

---

[74] UKDel no. 220 to FO, June 13, 1963, FO 371/173435, NAUK. Dennison apparently raised the issue with de Gaulle in hopes of gaining the *Legion d'Honneur* for his command of French forces. Dennison did not receive the award. See the account in George Ignatieff, *The Making of a Peacemonger: The Memoirs of George Ignatieff* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 212.

[75] UKDel no. 236 to FO, June 26, 1963, FO 371/173435, NAUK.

[76] Circular Telegram from the Department of State to the Posts in the NATO Capitals, Mar 4, 1964, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII,* doc. 22.

[77] Shuckburgh to Barnes, July 29, 1965, FO 371/184424, NAUK; Paris 1496 to SecState, NSF, Agency File, box 37, folder: "NATO Messages, Volume 1", LBJL.

started shouting at his British colleague about the uselessness of NATO headquarters. But during the French NMR's tirade, the British officer poked his colleague in the chest and asked if he was serious. The Frenchman stopped and grinned before beginning again, making it plain the outburst was put-on and meant to be heard, and reported, by others in the headquarters.[78]

The French coupled their moves in NATO with a publicity campaign. French officials started telling their European colleagues and the press that de Gaulle had never received a reply to his 1958 memorandum. The Johnson administration declined to publish Eisenhower's correspondence, even though European politicians believed de Gaulle.[79] De Gaulle met with his European colleagues and harangued the Americans, claiming he was "violently opposed to the blatant American imperialism now rampant in the world." He told the Italians that he would "continue to 'attack' and to oppose the United States in Latin America, in Asia, and in Africa." He also claimed that France's continued membership in NATO might draw France into Vietnam, though of course he would have known from his own experience over Algeria that this was untrue. All of de Gaulle's efforts were connected to his plans for formal bilateral treaties, rather than an alliance *en bloc*; he told the Italians he wished for a formal Italian-French treaty like the Franco-German treaty. When the Italians asked about the implications for NATO, de Gaulle replied: "NATO, blah, blah, blah…" and changed the subject.[80]

---

[78] C.B.E. Burt-Andrews to Air Marshal J.H. Lapsley, November 25, 1964; Burt-Andrews to Lapsley, December 10, 1964, both in FO 371/179064, NAUK.

[79] "Views of President Charles de Gaulle Regarding the United States, Europe and NATO; and Italian Reaction," memorandum for the Director of Central Intelligence, March 10, 1964, NSF, Country File, box 169, LBJL; "Response to General de Gaulle's Memorandum of September 17, 1958," Tyler to the Under Secretary, February 3, 1964, NSF, Country File, box 169, LBJL; Paris 5263 to SecState, May 6, 1964, NSF Country File, box 169, LBJL; SecState 337 to Paris, June 20, 1964, NSF, Country File, box 170, LBJL.

[80] "Views of President Charles de Gaulle Regarding the United States, Europe and NATO; and Italian Reaction," March 10, 1964.

3.8.6 Political Warfare

De Gaulle had embarked on a campaign against NATO, the United States, and the United Kingdom in a bid to draw European states to his idea of a new Europe. The allies worried that de Gaulle might, through blackmail and propaganda convince the smaller European countries to his vision of Europe based on classical treaties of defense and more open relations to the East.[81]

The Americans and British struggled to find a means to counter de Gaulle's campaign. In 1964, officials in both London and Washington began to speak of de Gaulle as a dictator who oppressed the wishes of a French people. Both the United States and the United Kingdom undertook limited and ineffective covert action to influence French citizens against de Gaulle.

In 1964, Pierson Dixon wrote to the new Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Patrick Gordon Walker that French "propaganda techniques" were particularly effective and "amounted to the equivalent of our wartime P[olitical] W[arfare] E[xecutive]," one of Britain's celebrated anti-Nazi agencies.[82] The Paris Embassy campaigned "for a 'psychological warfare' operation" of their own against de Gaulle, and Walker agreed that the British must find a way to counter the "Goebbels-like" work of de Gaulle's Minister of Information, Alain Peyrefitte.[83]

---

[81] On the smaller European powers being pulled between the US and de Gaulle, see Washington No. 3954 to FO, September 16, 1963, FO 371/173437, NAUK; on the British Embassy in Paris's worry that Spaak might himself make a *volte-face* and go over to de Gaulle's side, see Minute by M.D. Butler, May 19, 1964, December 12, 1964, FO 146/4624, NAUK; for Germany worries that Belgians might support France, see "Military Aspects of NATO-French Problems," memorandum of conversation, December 20, 1965, Bator Papers, box 21; on likelihood that Belgians would blame US, rather the France, for any changes to NATO see memorandum for the President from Bundy, November 16, 1965, WHCF, Confidential File, box 8, LBJL.

[82] Minute by Michael Jenkins, December 16, 1964. On P 1175/3 jacket, FO 953/2215, NAUK. See also "Situation Appraisal in France as of 30 January 1964: Indications of Anti-Americanism," CIA Intelligence Information Cable, January 31, 1964, NSF Country File, box 169, LBJL.

[83] "Anglo/French Relations and Publicity" by E. H. Albert. December 21, 1964, FO 953/2215, NAUK. Not only was Peyrefitte cast as Goebbels, but also de Gaulle's memoirs were

The British worried the French government, through speeches and leaks to the press, were spreading "myths" that would give de Gaulle the public support he needed to continue denying British entry into the Common Market and also to undo NATO. These "myths" - which were not always myths but sometimes matters of opinion and even fact - claimed Britain had failed to enter the Common Market when it had the chance, exaggerated the effectiveness of the emerging French nuclear *force de frappe*, encouraged the idea that de Gaulle was a "Good European," and suggested the Atlantic Alliance could exist even if NATO's integrated command was dismantled.

The British planned to counter what "the French have been putting across to the French people" with a propaganda campaign of their own. They would rely on the secret Information Research Department (IRD), an organization formed to counter Soviet and communist machinations. [84] The IRD's plan was to place "strictly unattributable material through covert channels with publications in Europe with which they have established special contacts." While the terms of reference under which the IRD operated confined them to "anti-communist work" the plan was to use IRD to "do some anti-Gaullist free-lancing."[85]

The British wished to "speak by words and deeds to the French people over the heads of their own leaders," and convince the French public that NATO would serve France "better than [the] pursuit of tinsel grandeur and the self-imposed isolationism" offered by de Gaulle.[86] The plan flopped. Foreign Office officials were only able to convince *Die Welt* to publish a portion of a British diplomat's despatch critical of de Gaulle's policies. Other news organizations

---

his version of *Mein Kampf* - an even more insidious comparison. "Gaullism," including a summary by Cambridge Professor David Thomson, C.P.(64)12, May 12, 1964, CAB 129/118.

[84] "French Propaganda. Should we attempt to counter it?" Undated, FO 953/2215, NAUK.

[85] "France: Contingency Planning Exercise, Minute by E. H. L. Albert, May 25, 1965, FO 953/2216, NAUK.

surreptitiously contacted, such as *Financial Times* and *Neue Zuericher Zeitung,* and *Die Welt* for a follow-up story, simply refused to publish the British material.[87]

It is unclear how much or what actions the British undertook in France itself - some documents are still "retained" by the Foreign Office. The British, however, took their idea to the United States, telling American colleagues they were thinking of a "political warfare campaign" to "convince French public opinion of the unwisdom of a Gaullist policy."[88] In the Anglo-American meeting, the British did all the talking, and the Americans were unresponsive.

But American officials had been planning their own propaganda campaign. An officer of the United States Information Agency (USIA) declared that it was time "for preventive medicine" and strengthened information programs in Europe.[89] A State Department official seized on the idea and wrote to Acheson suggesting that the "French people … might be stimulated" to slow down de Gaulle's plans if they were given the "necessary information."[90] Acheson's office prepared a draft plan to inform "French Government leaders, senior military officers, political party heads and followers, local mayors and businessmen and the public" of the implications for France of de Gaulle's policy."[91] The goal was to either put pressure on de Gaulle to change his

---

[86] "FRANCE AND NATO," Revised version. May 23, 1965. FO 953/2216, NAUK.

[87] Draft Letter from Albert to J.L.W. Price, British Embassy, Bonn, June 3, 1965, FO 953/2216, NAUK.

[88] "FRANCE AND NATO: Discussion on Propaganda Aspects at the End of Anglo-American Information Talks in London on 22 July 1965," FO 953/2216, NAUK.

[89] "Franco-American Relations and the Information Program," U.S. Information Service Airgram to USIA Washington, August 5, 1965. Bator Papers, box 26, LBJL

[90] Phil Claxton to Mr. Acheson, "The General and the French People," March 30, 1966, RG 59, Acheson, box 1, folder: "NATO INFO PAPER - CA-10959 Old Drafts and Final CA-47," NARA.

[91] "Informing the French," draft by Claxton. March 30, 1966, RG 59, Acheson, box 1, folder: "NATO INFO PAPER - CA-10959 Old Drafts and Final CA-47," NARA.

policies, or, failing that, to encourage the French people "to elect an Assembly that would not support him."

The State Department, in conjunction with Leonard Marks and Richard Helms, Directors of the United States Information Agency and the Central Intelligence Agency, respectively, organized an extensive "Plan for Political/Psychological Activities … in France" for a propaganda blitz against de Gaulle. On Lyndon Johnson's approval, the plan was sent to the field for action.[92]

The real threat in de Gaulle's actions against NATO was that he might undermine the structures containing Germany. As the British and Americans brainstormed for propaganda lines, they hit upon the same argument. Evelyn Shuckburgh, a British official, suggested that covert propaganda "play on French fears" that de Gaulle's nationalism was stirring the "latent nuclear ambitions of the Germans." He knew that many "unconditionally Gaullist" Frenchmen were "disconcerted and uncomfortable" about Germany's increasing power, and that de Gaulle's NATO policy was "removing [Bonn's] voluntary restraints and leaving France to face again a more powerful Germany intent on pursuing purely nationalist interests."[93] Acheson, for his part, called for the same argument to be made in France: one of the "Supporting Themes" of the American propaganda campaign was that French damage to NATO "will leave a vacuum of power and influence which Germany will promptly fill."[94]

---

[92] For Helms association, see Claxton to Acheson, "Plans for Political/Psychological Activities in NATO Crisis," May 2, 1966. RG 59, Acheson, box 1, folder: "NATO INFO PAPER - CA-10959 Old Drafts and Final CA-47," NARA. The actions remain classified. Classified documents are in Box 2 and are the subject of a pending Mandatory Declassification Request.

[93] H. A. F. Hohler to Cecil King, August 13, 1965, FO 953/2216, NAUK.

[94] "Plan for Political/Psychological Activities in Connection with NATO Crisis in France."

There was "no doubt" that this argument was a "weak point for de Gaulle." But, one Foreign Office wrote with classic British understatement, it "might not, I suppose, be very welcome in Bonn."[95] On further reflection, Foreign Office officials agreed that while de Gaulle was "stirring up the worst elements in the German soul + reviving the wrong kind of German nationalism," it would be "fatal to make innuendos about a "German danger." German resurgence offered "a case of *toujours y penser, jamais en parlez*" - something always to be kept in mind, but never spoken aloud.[96] The Americans, despite warnings from officials in the German Affairs section of the Department of State, did not remove the German bogeyman from their psychological action plan.[97]

3.8.7 A Wild Idea

The German problem identified by Shuckburgh loomed over all of considerations of France's future role in NATO. But another argument against a full-fledged propaganda war with France was Britain's own record as a NATO ally. Britain had reduced its troop commitment to NATO, opposed MLF, done away with conscription, and disagreed with a number of American proposals for NATO-wide economic sanctions against the Soviet Union. One Foreign Office official, E.J.W. Barnes, did not even need to finish the phrase: "People in glass houses…"[98]

Barnes saw another opportunity to benefit from de Gaulle's campaign against NATO. It had occurred to him in 1963 that Britain "may be able to exploit" de Gaulle's actions "as a further

---

[95] H. A. F. Hohler to Cecil King, August 13, 1965.

[96] Undated minute by E. H. Albert on P1175/20 jacket, FO 953/2216, NAUK.

[97] Alfred Puhan of GER complained that these "statements are so exaggerated that they raise the specter of a dangerous Germany and thus strike at one of our most steadfast allies, the FRG." "Political/Psychological Activities in Connection with NATO-France," Alfred Puhan (GER) to Claxton (E), May 4, 1966. RG 59, Acheson, Box 1, NATO Ministerial Meeting June 6-8, 1966. NARA.

[98] "France and NATO," minute by Barnes, February 17, 1964, FO 371/179064, NAUK.

sign that France is a bad ally."[99] Denis Healey, the Minister of Defense, even took up this language in public, branding France a "bad ally."[100] Britain, despite its record, could now present itself to the United States, and especially to the European allies, as a good ally.

The idea took on import when de Gaulle appeared ready to challenge NATO directly. In May 1965, the French Permanent Representative at NATO warned of "stormy weather ahead." He claimed that de Gaulle did not want any trouble before the December French presidential election, but after that the he would move for the "complete elimination of NATO."[101] The French Defense Minister, Pierre Messmer, told his British colleague that in the spring France intended to "propose [the] abolition of NATO for which they would like to substitute loose alliances."[102] Pro-NATO French officials warned the allies to "consider the contingency of a NATO without France."[103]

At the same time, de Gaulle waged a battle in the European Economic Community against plans for greater economic integration. Observers on both sides of the Atlantic worried de Gaulle was seeking to generate crises, in both NATO and the EEC, to force the European allies to accept his plans. John Tuthill, the American ambassador in Brussels, worried that de Gaulle

---

[99] "Withdrawal of French Naval Forces from NATO," E.J.W. Barnes, June 18, 1963, FO 371/173435, NAUK.

[100] Healey would have to withdraw these remarks in the House of Commons. Harold Wilson, *The Labour Government, 1964-1970: A Personal Record* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), 244.

[101] Paris POLTO 1701 to SecState, May 25, 1965, NSF, Country File, box 171, LBJL. For more connections to French elections, see Ramsbotham to Barnes, March 29, 1965, FO 371/184420, NAUK.

[102] London 5571 to SecState, May 18, 1965, NSF Country File, box 207, LBJL. For more warnings see Circular Telegram from the Department of State to the Posts in the NATO Capitals, June 10, 1965, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII,* doc. 89.

[103] "France and NATO," memorandum of conversation, May 13, 1965, EUR, DAS, Schaetzel Files, box 1, folder: "Britain," NARA.

would condition "Europeans, like Pavlov's dogs to follow his will," and that if the EEC fell apart, so would NATO.[104] The other five members of the Six had similar fears, and they believed the corollary of Tuthill's prediction, too: If France withdrew from NATO, the EEC could not survive. The Belgians, in particular, were desperate to maintain the access to European markets provided by the EEC. All of a sudden, the Americans noticed, de Gaulle had put some "starch" in the back of the Five.[105]

In June 1965, a number of Permanent Representatives - the American, Belgian, British, Dutch and German ambassadors - met in private to hear a remarkable suggestion. De Staercke, the Belgian representative and a close associate of Belgian Foreign Minister Spaak, urged the allies to "get together in secret to formulate contingency plans for facing up to the challenge from de Gaulle." The Europeans were worried that de Gaulle would soon begin to blackmail the European allies. According to Spaak, the "only effective means which the five would possess for calling the General's bluff would be to able to show that Britain was ready 'to take France's place in the E.E.C.'" Boon, the Dutch representative, agreed, and suggested that a renewed British commitment to joining the EEC would be a means "not only of frustrating General de Gaulle's destructive purposes towards Europe and NATO but also as a means of bringing Britain

---

[104] "The EEC and the NATO Crises," Tuthill to Francis Bator, October 19, 1965, DDRS, CK3100489563. See also Telegram from the Mission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and European Regional Organizations to the Department of State, November 16, 1965, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII*, doc. 110; Telegram from the Department of State to the Mission to the European Communities. November 24, 1965, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII*, doc.112; Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Belgium, January 29, 1966, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII*, doc. 127.

[105] Barclay to Hood, June 25, 1965, FO 115/4628, NAUK; "U.S. NATO Ambassadors' Conference in The Hague," memorandum for the record, October 27, 1965, NSF, Agency File, box 35, folder: NATO General, Volume 2, LBJL.

into the Common Market." Shuckburgh pointed out that the reality might be more complicated, but the conversation marked "quite a significant development."[106]

In London, senior Foreign Office officials like Lord Hood thought the idea of Britain replacing France was "a bit wild" but worth considering.[107] Even if the idea was a "scarecrow" to ward off French moves, there was "an obvious attraction in profiting by the upheaval caused by de Gaulle to re-establish our political position in Europe." It was not yet time, perhaps, to reapply to the Common Market, but Britain could bide its time in the "defense field." They would become the "pivot around which the other European allies rally" in their opposition to de Gaulle, and "step in to take a lead in the rescue of NATO from the shambles which will occur" if de Gaulle withdraws from NATO and forces alliance troops and institutions from France.[108]

The Americans, like their allies, had been expecting de Gaulle to make a spectacular move against NATO. Rusk had not wanted to undertake any multilateral or bilateral planning for a French withdrawal, hoping that by not antagonizing de Gaulle he might not act. But when French officials started indicating de Gaulle might withdraw from NATO anyway, Rusk lost his cool. He told allied officials that if de Gaulle started "waltzing around" then the United States would have to apply "some very strong medicine." The United States, he warned, "too could develop alternative defence policies," such as "retargeting [Strategic Air Command] to cover Western

---

[106] Shuckburgh to Hood, June 18, 1965, FO 115/4628, NAUK. There is little wonder why the Belgians and Dutch led the charge; the importance of the common market to both Belgium's and the Netherland's national economy was tremendous, and had been so for at least a decade. Milward, Brennan, and Romero, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State*, 7.

[107] Hood to Shuckburgh, June 22, 1965, FO 115/4628, NAUK.

[108] "Sir E. Shuckburgh's Report on Conversation about U.K. and Future of NATO," D. V. Bendall, June 25, 1965, FO 115/4628, NAUK.

Europe as well as the Satellites in the Soviet Union!"[109] This was a toxic argument. If the United States were to keep it up, it would undo all of the assurances made about nuclear defense in the past decade. British officials worried the United States was "falling into the trap that General de Gaulle has prepared for them."[110]

Rusk represented an emerging strain of thought in the US Department of State that wished to force a confrontation with de Gaulle, perhaps even before the French elections, in a bid to have French voters turn him out.[111] The British and Europeans, however, wanted no such showdown. Instead, the British suggested the other allies "should go ahead with what was essentially a public relations exercise, as if we were sure that NATO would continue to exist."[112] David Klein, in the NSC, told Bundy this "view sounds so sensible one wonders why we do not do as well." [113] Lyndon Johnson would ultimately agree and settle on this approach.

The British repeated their mantra and tried to convince the State Department to maintain the "calm assumption that whatever France does, NATO will continue."[114] The State Department was anything but calm. Officials feared they could not sit back while "the Alliance is sliced up like salami." Dean Acheson, one again invited to take a lead role in providing policy recommendations to the President, planned an offense against de Gaulle.

---

[109] Patrick Dean to Harold Caccia, April 24, 1965, FO 115/4628, NAUK. Note that this is repetition of Rusk's earlier comments in Minute by M. N. F. Stewart, April 23, 1965, FO 115/4628, NAUK.

[110] Reilly to Sir Paul Gore-Booth, May 8, 1965 FO 115/4628, NAUK.

[111] Minute by J.B.S. Pedler, May 24, 1965, FO 146/4625, NAUK.

[112] "France and NATO," June 5, 1965, NSF, Country File, box 208, LBJL.

[113] "France and NATO," Klein to Bundy, June 10, 1965, NSF, Name File, box 4, LBJL.

Acheson prepared a draft National Security Action Memorandum for Johnson that would strip France of the US security guarantee provided for in Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, even if de Gaulle did not renounce the alliance.[115] Ball and Rusk saw the Article 5 commitment as another way of uniting the "French people" against de Gaulle.[116] Bundy and NSC officials opposed this approach. He told Johnson that the United States had only "a very skimpy bag of assets with which to threaten or bargain with the French," and that removing the Article 5 protection would do nothing to shift de Gaulle's policy.[117] Bundy's thinking clearly held sway over the president, who avoided making a decision, but the disagreement smoldered.

The one thing the advisers did agree on was the importance of the German position. Bundy worried that de Gaulle would try to blackmail the Germans, or offer them terms to resolve the EEC crisis, if Bonn agreed to "diminish" its relationship with NATO. The "best hope" to avoiding a total collapse in NATO was "to stiffen Erhard's spine."[118] Already, before this meeting, Klein had observed a "growing tendency to think in terms of a tripartite directorate of Washington, London and Bonn."[119] In March, George Ball had travelled to

---

[114] "France and NATO, by Hood, June 22, 1965, FO 115/4628, NAUK; Minute by P.E. Ramsbotham, July 9, 1965, FO 146/4625, NAUK; Memorandum of Conversation. June 16, 1965, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII,* doc. 90.

[115] "France and NATO," draft NSAM September 25, 1965, DDRS, CK3100313726; "U.S. Policy on the Problem of France and NATO," Memorandum for Bundy from Ball, October 4, 1965, DDRS, CK3100277964.

[116] "France and NATO," Memorandum of Conversation, October 8, 1965, 11 am, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII,* doc. 106.

[117] Ibid. The Bureau of Intelligence and Research supported Bundy's argument. See INR supported Bundy's reasoning. See INR Memo. "De Gaulle's "Attack" on the Atlantic Alliance," REU 41.1, September 30, 1965, DDRS, CK3100422958.

[118] "France and NATO," October 8, 1965.

[119] "Ferguson Report," Klein to Bundy, July 8, 1965, NSF Country File, box 163, LBJL.

Paris ostensibly to hold a NAC meeting on US policy in Viet Nam and Santo Domingo, but really to meet secretly with the British and Germans.[120] Like the Anglo-American relationship after Suez, the Americans were now planning to build an Anglo-German-American understanding "to which other NATO members could subscribe."[121] Still, none of the NATO allies, separately or together, had any plans for what to do if de Gaulle either renounced the Treaty or withdrew the rest of French troops from NATO commands.

On March 7, 1966, de Gaulle penned letters to all of the NATO countries announcing that France would no longer "places her forces at the disposal of NATO."[122] Soldiers in France not under French command would have to leave; this meant that US bases would have to go. In the letter to Germany, he informed Bonn that the French troops in Germany, currently there under NATO auspices, would remain under "residual occupation rights."[123]

Acheson, supported by the Paris and Bonn embassies, urged Johnson to lead a public propaganda battle against de Gaulle. Bohlen thought that if the United States were to "accede gracefully" to de Gaulle's request, it would have "a very chilling effect upon the opposition in France." He wanted the American reaction to consider French domestic opinion and the upcoming 1967 parliamentary elections.[124] Like McNamara, Rusk, and

---

[120] Washington no. 1620 to FO, June 21, 1965, FO 371/184376, NAUK; "North Atlantic Council Meeting 31 March," minute by W. N. Hugh-Jones, March 19, 1965, FO 371/184376, NAUK.

[121] "France and NATO," Memorandum of Conversation, October 8, 1965.

[122] Letter from President de Gaulle to President Johnson, March 7, 1966, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII,* doc. 137.

[123] Telegram Paris to SecState 5382, March 2, 1966, DDRS, CK3100491992

[124] Telegram from Bohlen to the Secretary of State, March 3, 1966, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII,* doc. 56.

Acheson, the hard-liners wanted to withdraw the Article 5 provision so as to expose the "French people" to the consequences of de Gaulle's actions.[125]

Those who wanted to threaten the treaty protection were thinking of ways to challenge de Gaulle's standing in France. It also fulfilled an elementary sense of justice against the frustrating Frenchmen, and would grant the Americans a "private glee that sin had drawn its just reward."[126] For these two reasons, Acheson drafted a letter "fling[ing] down the gauntlet to de Gaulle."[127]

Acheson's letter raised hackles from officials in the NSC and Department of Defense, who thought the hardline approach "legally questionable and military meaningless" - even "plain silly."[128] The other allies, too, wanted the Americans to do nothing "unnecessarily nasty to the French." The Italians wanted to "make sure at each step that a candle is left in the window for the return of the prodigal son."[129] The Europeans worried what France might do in retaliation on European issues. Francis Bator advised Johnson that if the situation escalated America might be "blamed by some Europeans for splitting Europe." Johnson ultimately accepted the advice of Francis Bator and Robert Komer to write de Gaulle a

---

[125] Bonn to SecState 2925, March 21, 1966, DDRS, CK3100068055; "France-NATO," memorandum of conversation, March 6, 1966, DDRS, CK3100046869.

[126] "NATO and France," Department of State Policy Planning Council, May 6, 1964, DDRS, CK3100009269.

[127] "NATO Session," Notes of a meeting, March 17, 1966, NSF, Komer Files, box 1, LBJL.

[128] Memorandum from the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bator) to President Johnson, March 7, 1966, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII,* doc. 138. See also Memorandum from the President's Acting Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Komer) to President Johnson, March 16, 1966, 6:30 pm, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII,* doc. 143.

[129] Paris to SecState 5048, March 20, 1966, DDRS, CK3100161246.

softer letter with a "golden bridge" making clear France was welcome back in the integrated command at anytime.[130]

Johnson explained his method for handling de Gaulle with a baseball analogy: "I get out of the box when he starts winding up."[131] Johnson's policy was surely a wise one. He avoided falling into the trap, as Rusk had nearly done, of a hysterical Franco-American showdown that would only have suited de Gaulle's hand in Europe and in France. It is too much, however, to argue that Johnson himself was seizing on a chance to reorganize NATO, especially in the spring of 1966.[132] Given his preoccupation with Vietnam and domestic politics, Johnson was wisely avoiding a showdown because there was no way to win, rather than thinking he was winning by avoiding a showdown. But many in the State Department thought Johnson was erring by not opposing de Gaulle more openly, and that only American leadership could bring the allies together.[133]

3.8.8 Conclusion

Johnson's decisions effectively allowed the British to step up to the plate. This was not London's first choice of options. The British Cabinet was not happy with de Gaulle's decision. They met after de Gaulle had sent his letter and worried the results would be "expensive" and have "a disquieting increase in the relative importance and standing of Germany within the

---

[130] Memorandum for the President (from Bator). "Your letter to DeGaulle," from Bator to the President, March 18, 1966, 9 am, DDRS, CK3100023835.

[131] Memorandum of Conversation, August 21, 1966, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII,* doc, 196.

[132] Schwartz, for instance, is right to put the emphasis on Johnson's aides rather than the President himself. Thomas Alan Schwartz, *Lyndon Johnson and Europe: In the Shadow of Vietnam* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003), 110.

[133] Schaetzel to Acheson, December 11, 1967, and Schaetzel to Acheson, May 22, 1967, both in AP, Gen. Corr., box 28, folder: 357; Paris to SecState 6078, March 21, 1966, DDRS, CK3100486192.

Alliance."[134] Nonetheless, at NATO, British officials took charge in a bid to maintain solidarity of the NATO allies. This was crucial, for there was "softness under the surface" of the 14 other allies. The Benelux countries worried about the Common Market, Germany was concerned about its relations with France and East Germany, and the Canadians were focused on Quebec.[135] But the British drafted a "Fourteen Power Declaration" of unity that they convinced all of the allies to agree, committing the allies to work together to maintain NATO's operations.

The Americans were hesitant about this strong British lead, but ultimately accepted the British statement verbatim.[136] The British declaration served as the rallying point for the tedious negotiations that resulted in the new committee structure that allowed NATO's work to go forward.[137] By the end of 1966, the NAC officially agreed to implement the new "constitutional" arrangements: The 14 would sit together as the Defense Planning Committee, and discuss military issues, and the full 15 members, with France, would sit as the NAC to discuss non-military issues.[138]

The American Embassy in London reported with surprise that the British were "so militant and so energetic about NATO at this time."[139] British officials, they reported, were

---

[134] Cabinet Conclusions, CC(66)17, March 10, 1966, CAB 128/41, NAUK.

[135] Memorandum by Schaetzel, sent to Acheson. "Closer European Collaboration as one Objective of the France/NATO Crisis." April 11, 1966, EUR, DAS, Schaetzel Files, box 3, folder: "Acheson," NARA.

[136]"France-NATO," Bruce to the Secretary of State, March 8, 1966, Bator Papers, box 27, LBJL; London to SecState 4437, March 19, 1966, DDRS, CK3100075523; Paris to SecState 6407, March 10, 1966, DDRS, CK3100070888.

[137] Paris to SecState 6078, March 21, 1966.

[138] "The Political Atmosphere," NATO/G-3, scope paper, December 7, 1966 *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII,* doc. 223.

[139] London to SecState 4437, March 19, 1966, DDRS, CK3100075523.

engaging in an "atypical display of 'hawkism' in defence of the alliance" that caused amazement from the other allies. The Americans concluded that the British were "'stand-patters' par excellence so far as the Alliance is concerned – they do not want it to change."[140]

This analysis missed the mark. The British had been looking to modify NATO for years. They were still desperate to achieve some saving on defense expenditures, but they also recognized that Britain needed free access to European markets. Although the Wilson government had entered office in 1964 with few European sensibilities, a number of economic difficulties in 1965 conspired to revive British interest in the Common Market.[141] The CIA observed in 1965 observed that Britain was focused again on its relations with Europe, and London was hoping "a place can be found for Britain in a strong European union."[142]

Some in the Cabinet, including Wilson, initially preferred a different policy in response to de Gaulle's withdrawal. They hoped to take advantage of the crisis to refashion the alliance on a "more economical basis" - that is, to achieve the further withdrawal of BAOR troops from the continent.[143] But Denis Healey, the Minister of Defence, warned Wilson that

---

[140] "The NATO Crisis in its Political Setting," CIA Intelligence Memorandum, April 2, 1966, NSF Country File, box 178, LBJL.

[141] Miriam Camps, *European Unification in the Sixties: From Veto to the Crisis* (New York: Published for the Council on Foreign Relations by McGraw-Hill, 1966), 141-42, 57-61; Helen Parr, "Anglo-French Relations, Détente and Britain's Second Application for Membership of the EEC, 1964 to 1967," in *European Integration and the Cold War: Ostpolitik-Westpolitik, 1965-1973*, ed. N. Piers Ludlow (London: Routledge, 2007), 82.

[142] "Britain and Europe," CIA Special Report, June 11, 1965, DDRS, CK3100365333

[143] "The International Consequences of General de Gaulle's Policy," attached to Letter no. 59 from the Secretary of State to Evelyn Shuckburgh, April 13, 1966, FO 146/4632, NAUK. See also Cabinet Conclusions, CC(66)17, March 10, 1966, CAB 128/41, NAUK; "France and NATO," note to the Prime Minister, March 11, 1966, PREM 13/1043, NAUK.

the British should not immediately consider major reductions of forces on the continent, for this would be a "body blow which might complete the work of destruction begun by de Gaulle."[144] Other officials warned, too, that Britain needed to "consider our attitude to NATO" carefully, for it would be interpreted by the Europeans "in close relation to our future attitude to the EEC."[145]

The connection was apparent to the Europeans just as it was to the British. Indeed, Spaak and a number of European officials told the British that after de Gaulle's actions, "if the political will in Europe to have us in had not been very strong before, it certainly was now."[146] The Foreign Secretary and George Thomson, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, both wished to use the crisis to press the Five to invite Britain to join the EEC. Wilson avoided making a direct link between the issues.[147] But Britain's defense of NATO allowed London to play the role of good ally the Five wished to see.[148]

---

[144] "France and NATO," Healey to the Prime Minister, March 23, 1966, PREM 13/1043, NAUK.

[145] "France and NATO," note to the Prime Minister, April 4, 1966, PREM 13/1043, NAUK.

[146] "Britain and Europe and the NATO Crisis," May 31, 1966, PREM 13/1044, NAUK.

[147] Note for the Record, May 6, 1966, PREM 13/1044, NAUK.

[148] See Belgian wishes for Britain to take the lead in NATO, reported London 5028 to SecState, April 26, 1966, NSF, box 177, folder: "France-NATO Dispute, Volume 2, 3/66-4/66," LBJL.

CHAPTER 9: THE NEW TRIPARTITISM:

THE FRG AND THE ANGLO-AMERICAN CONTINENTAL COMMITMENT

"[T]he tripartite exercise may prove to be a last fling on the American part to breathe new life into the Alliance. If it ends in failure … to put it bluntly, they will come to regard NATO, at least in its present form, as expendable."

- Patrick Dean to Lord (Sammy) Hood, November 1966[1]

3.9.1 The Clear Outline of a US-UK-German Deal

Out of power in November 1948, Charles de Gaulle did not like France's new postwar policy. He lashed out particularly against the new Western European Union defense organization. It was "fundamentally unacceptable," he said, for the defense of France to be the responsibility of anyone but Frenchmen. He also blasted British and American policy in occupied Germany, claiming Washington and London sought "to remake the German Empire."[2] Afterwards, Joseph Alsop, an influential American columnist, warned de Gaulle's closest advisers that if de Gaulle were to return to power and keeping talking like this, "the United States would abandon France and center its policy on building up Germany."[3]

It took almost two decades, and much change from 1948 to 1966, but Alsop's prediction came true. De Gaulle's opposition to integrated defense and his propensity to oppose his British and American allies pushed London and Washington into a triangular relationship with Bonn in NATO. In fact, in the early 1960s, the triangle was lopsided along the Bonn-Washington axis. In

---

[1] Dean to Hood, November 16, 1966, FO 1042/156, NAUK.

[2] "De Gaulle Assails U.S. Policy on Ruhr: Also Condemns Western Union Defense Plan, Paris Regime - Cool on Marshall Aid," Harold Callender, *New York Times*, November 18, 1948, p. 1.

[3] Joseph W. Alsop to Dean Acheson, January 9, [1949], AP, Gen. Corr., box 1, folder: 8.

1964, the Americans believed that "along with ourselves the Germans are the most devoted to the Alliance."[4]

This growing American-German relationship suited Washington and Bonn. Still, both sides were careful to avoid alarming Western Europe or the Soviet Union by creating anything like an exclusive Bonn-Washington condominium, and the United States thought these close bilateral relations part of a larger project. Since the end of the Second World War, wrote John Tuthill, the American ambassador to the EEC, "our goal has been to engage and knit Germany more closely with the West and to channel German strength and dynamism into peaceful and constructive channels." But German-American cooperation alone was not enough. The key instruments for containing Germany were NATO and the Common Market, and the transatlantic nature of these institutions required British participation. The "major problem," wrote Tuthill, "has been British unwillingness to accept Germany on a basis of equality."

The British view changed in the mid-1960s, especially once it was clear that a London-Paris entente could not exist during de Gaulle's reign. The CIA called this London's "sudden awareness" of the importance of the rest of Europe. [5] The British accepted the German role in the nuclear "Dinner Club," and courted the Germans and other Europeans to improve their chances of joining the Common Market. There was emerging, by 1965, the "clear outlines of a US-UK-German deal" that would resolve a number of problems in European affairs.[6]

---

[4] "Proceedings of the Atlantic Affairs Conference, American Embassy, Luxembourg, November 29-30, 1964," RG59, EUR, DAS, Schaetzel Files, box 1, folder: "Atlantic Affairs Conference, Luxembourg 11/29-30/64," NARA.

[5] "Britain and Europe," CIA Special Report, June 11, 1965, DDRS, CK3100365333

[6] "The EEC and the NATO Crises," Tuthill to Francis Bator, October 19, 1965, DDRS, CK3100489563.

The wise men of the American foreign policy establishment, including men like Dean Acheson, Robert Bowie, Richard Neustadt, and John McCloy, agreed with Tuthill. They argued that solutions to the "political-military problems" facing the United States - nuclear policy, troop levels in NATO, the economic costs of troop deployments, and de Gaulle's challenge – all "seemed to hinge" on tripartite agreement. State Department officials also called for "an informal trilateral US-UK-FRG review of military priorities and related financial problems."[7] The Special Committee and later the NPG were a part of this informal pattern of cooperation. So too was behind-the-scenes coordination during the negotiations with France on maintaining French troops in Germany after de Gaulle's withdrawal from the military command. The Germans were willing participants in this approach to NATO affairs. If the French departure from the military commands had meant "that the fifteen must become fourteen," said Gerhard Schroeder, so to would "the four became three."[8] Still, there was no grand tripartite bargain entrenching Washington-London-Bonn co-operation by the summer of 1966, even after the Gaullist challenge.

The Americans worried that time was running out for such a deal. If the United States did not pull London and Bonn together, NATO might unravel. Britain might "well drift off into becoming … a bigger Sweden" while the Germans would "succumb to melancholy absorption in their own concerns which would alienate them, in some degree, from the rest of the Western community."[9] Like many of NATO's achievements, problems had to reach a dangerous size to force a solution. It would take NATO's most severe crisis – the near breakdown of the domestic

---

[7] "Atlantic Policy After the German Election," June 25, 1965, NSF, Agency File, box 52, LBJL. Note the document is alternatively titled "NATO Policy After the German Election.'

[8] Bonn no. 434 to FO, April 6, 1966, PREM 13/1043, NAUK.

[9] "S/P Consultants' Discussion of Atlantic Affairs," undated [under a buckslip dated July 9, 1965], NSF, Country File, box 163, LBJL.

consensus in Bonn, London and Washington to support the Anglo-American continental commitment – to pull the allies together and create a sustainable economic base for NATO's continued existence.

***

One month into his presidency, Lyndon Johnson announced that the United States would keep its troops in Europe "so long as they are needed." This was nothing new; John F. Kennedy had made the same pledge. But Johnson added a proviso that Kennedy had been cautioned against making: Johnson said "under present circumstances there is no doubt that they will continue to be needed." Douglas Dillon, the Secretary of the Treasury, wrote to Johnson immediately. He understood that Johnson needed to reassure the Europeans of America's commitment to NATO. But "it would be most difficult, and probably impossible" to keep the six U.S. divisions in Europe "if it were not for the fact that Germany is currently fully offsetting the balance of payment costs of these divisions."[10] Through a patchwork of rolling agreements, Bonn had committed to buy military equipment in the United States to make up – or "offset" - the balance of payments loss incurred by the stationing of US troops abroad.[11] In late 1963 Dillon worried the Germans would halt making such commitments, leading both to increased balance of payments costs for the United States and a "significant domestic political issue" for the President in the 1964 election.[12]

---

[10] "The Balance of Payments and Your Message to NATO," memorandum to the President, December 18, 1963.

[11] For a history of these agreements see David Wightman, "Money and Security: Financing American Troops in Germany and the Trilateral Negotiations of 1966-67," *Rivista Di Storia Economica* 5, no. 1 (February 1988).

[12] "The Balance of Payments and Your Message to NATO," December 18, 1963.

The offset agreements limped along until 1966. But in the months after de Gaulle's withdrawal from the NATO command, a British financial crisis and a German political crisis threatened to undo the whole agreement that underpinned the stationing of British and American troops in Germany. The offset crisis, by challenging the very basis of the defense of Europe – the Anglo-American continental commitment –was a greater threat to NATO than de Gaulle's withdrawal. [13]

Historians have hailed the trilateral negotiations that resolved the crisis as "an example of successful intra-Alliance crisis management."[14] But it was only the three largest allies who were party to the negotiations. Paradoxically, the negotiations that prevented NATO from unraveling were deeply upsetting for the other NATO allies, who believed that de Gaulle's directory – with Bonn standing in for Paris – had finally been established.

Yet the crisis and its resolution exposed changes in how the alliances viewed NATO and how they used it to achieve national goals. The roots of the crisis lay largely in domestic political problems: Pressure from the Senate in the United States to reduce expenditures and balance of payments costs in Europe, difficult choices in the United Kingdom over how to justify defense costs in an era of financial strain, and political constraints on German politicians to spend more

---

[13] Historians have examined the economic component of the crisis, but few have considered the crisis in the larger scope of NATO's history. The most thorough account of the offset crisis and the trilateral negotiations is Gregory F. Treverton, *The Dollar Drain and American Forces in Germany: Managing the Political Economics of Alliance* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1978). For a shorter but excellent examination, especially on the background of the offset issue, see Wightman, "Money and Security." See also Hubert Zimmermann, *Money and Security: Troops, Monetary Policy and West Germany's Relations with the United States and Britain, 1950-1971* (Washington, D.C.: German Historical Institute and Cambridge University Press, 2002), 209-38; Schwartz, *Lyndon Johnson and Europe*, 115-32, 43-59; Haftendorn, *NATO and the Nuclear Revolution*, 239-90. Gavin puts the crisis in larger perspective of American financial and economic policy. Francis J. Gavin, *Gold, Dollars, and Power: The Politics of International Monetary Relations, 1958-1971* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

on social services and avoid defense spending increases. This coincidence of events challenged the domestic consensus in Washington that the United States should maintain a large continental commitment to Europe indefinitely. Lyndon Johnson, however, made the case to Congressional leaders that NATO was important not in principle but because it helped secure the United States. And at the heart of the solution was a three-way bargain in which the United States used its continued continental commitment to gain British and German acceptance of a larger financial scheme that benefited the United States. The American commitment to see the trilateral negotiations prevail, like the British commitment to rally the allies together in the wake of de Gaulle's withdrawal, rested on an opportunity to use NATO to achieve other goals.

3.9.2 The Crisis Breaks

NATO was expensive, especially for the British and the Americans who deployed large troop formations outside their borders. Britain had sought since the 1950s to reduce the number of troops it committed to the continent in an effort to keep down its real costs. The allies did not measure the price of NATO only in budgetary terms but also the foreign exchange costs and a drain on the balance of payments. Up until 1954, the American and British troops in Germany had officially been armies of occupation, and Bonn had paid their costs. After the 1954 agreements and Germany's accession to NATO, Washington and London paid. The Germans had since offset some of the British and all of the American balance of payments costs by purchasing arms from both countries. The agreements, always under stress and constantly renegotiated, finally broke down in 1966. [15]

---

[14] Haftendorn, *NATO and the Nuclear Revolution*, 203.

[15] This crisis had developed over a number of years and American officials had consistently urged a tripartite solution. "First Things First," Owen to Ball, December 7, 1964, RG 59, Ball Records, box 27, folder: "MLF #4," NARA; Bonn 2534 to SecState, January 18, 1964, NSF, Country File, box 183, LBJL. The best history of the offsets agreement is Wightman, "Money and Security," 30-39.

But Britain had been "the sick man of Europe" since 1945, subject to repeated financial crises.[16] The British economy, the Americans worried, was like "a chained Samson, who may be capable of bringing down the temple of the money-changers." [17] The biblical parallel applied equally to Britain's place in NATO. For Britain served as the linchpin of the transatlantic organization. In 1967 they threatened to pull down the temple of NATO on themselves and their allies.

In 1965 and early 1966, British economic problems were acute, but not in deep crisis. Whitehall undertook a defense review in 1965 and early 1966 in an effort to gain some savings. Michael Stewart, the British foreign secretary, explained to the Americans that the obvious place for Britain to save money was in Germany, but that the British saw a political point to keeping the troops there: they wanted a "link with the Common Market."[18] The British hoped that the UK and US could, together, engage in a "direct exercise of pressure" on the Germans to continue guaranteed offset purchases. Rusk told Stewart that he would press the Germans on the British behalf, but in no way could he "equate the U.S. interests with those of the U.K. as the U.S. had their own axe to grind in this matter."[19] The final White Paper included the proviso that Britain

---

[16] "Notes on U.K.-U.S. Negotiating Postures and Problems," undated [summer 1965], Bator Papers, box 23, LBJL.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Handwritten notes re: UK Defense Review, January 27, 1966, Bator Papers, box 25, folder: "Europe," LBJL; see also London 2886 to SecState, December 21, 1965, NLJ 99-293.

[19] Memorandum of Conversation with Stewart, Rusk and others, dated January 27, 1961. [British record], Bator Papers, box 25, folder: "Europe," LBJL. See also "UK Defense Review," Leddy to the Secretary, undated [1966], Bator Papers, box 24, folder: "US-UK Defense Review 1/27/66," LBJL; Handwritten notes re: UK Defense Review, January 27, 1966.

would maintain its forces in the BAOR as long as they could "find some further means of lightening" the balance of payments burden.[20]

The White Paper, however, was too optimistic. British ministers took a harder and harder line as to what they required from the Germans to maintain the BAOR in Germany. In Chancellor of the Exchequer James Callaghan's spring budget speech, he committed the UK to seek a 100% offset agreement with the Germans, meaning Bonn would need to make arms purchases from Britain totaling the full amount of foreign exchange. In July, Prime Minister Harold Wilson upped the ante insisting that Britain would withdraw troops from the continent to make-up any gap between British costs and German purchases. This set the stage for an economic tug-of-war between London and Bonn, with NATO forces as the rope.

In July Britain faced another currency crisis, no less disastrous for being a regular occurrence in the postwar era. Callaghan took severe domestic measures to protect the pound, but the crisis divided the Cabinet over whether to cut overseas spending – both defense and foreign aid – to bring payments into balance.

American officials, including Secretary of the Treasury Henry Fowler, worried that the Wilson government would cut "back on defense East of Suez <u>and</u> in Germany." British bases in the East, like the enormous naval base in Singapore, and British troops and ships in the region all allowed the United States to focus its efforts on Vietnam. Just as important, the British presence "East of Suez" helped maintain the Johnson administration's argument the Far East was an important geopolitical concern for the West. McNamara considered the British presence their "absolutely essential" and worried that "anything which will smell of a British pull out will

[20] "The United Kingdom Defence Review: Aide Memoire by Her Majesty's Government," undated [1966], Bator Papers, box 24, folder: "US-UK Defense Review 1/27/66," LBJL.

fatally undermine our domestic base on Viet Nam." McNamara's preference was for the British to substantially cut back their troops in Europe and spend the money on Asia.[21]

Minister of Defence Healey wanted British troops to stay in Germany. Otherwise, the inroads made by the British performance as the good ally during the "French defection" would dissipate and thus "jeopardize support for UK European policy." Healey warned his Cabinet colleagues that even a "Dunkirk-type evacuation" of troops from the continent - certainly a dramatic image - would take too long and be expensive. Barracks space was scarce and of poor quality and new facilities for the troops and their families would have to be built in the UK. Healey hoped the British troops, if returned to the UK, would still be assigned to NATO. But they would need to maintain logistics, port facilities and lines of communications to return to Europe in a time of need, all of which would be expensive. He knew the likely result of such a withdrawal would be Callaghan's insistence that Britain demobilize the troops. Leaving Germany would mean reducing British, and thus NATO, total troop strength.[22]

As domestic pressure built in London for a reduction in troops in Germany, Washington followed suit. In August, United States Senator Mike Mansfield introduced a resolution calling for a reduction of US forces in Europe. Mansfield and other American senators, for a host of reasons, which included the balance of payments problems, the growing costs of war in Vietnam and the belief that Europe - especially de Gaulle - was not playing a full role in the defense of Europe, wished to reduce American deployments to Europe.[23] The White

---

[21] Bator to the President, July 18, 1966, Bator Papers, box 17, LBJL.

[22] "The Economic Situation," Memorandum to Cabinet, July 18, 1966, and Memorandum for the President from McNamara, NSF, Country File, box 209, LBJL.

[23] "Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations (MacArthur) to Secretary of State Rusk, September 1, 1966, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII,* doc. 199; Phil Williams, *The Senate and US Troops in Europe* (London: Macmillan, 1985), 139-48.

House feared that Mansfield's resolution represented the opening wedge in a split between Europe and the United States. Any sign that America's NATO partners would reduce their efforts in Europe - as the British were threatening - would drive this wedge deeper. The pressure from Mansfield continued throughout the year and picked up again in January 1967.[24]

When the Germans learned the British would press hard for a full offset, they got their backs up against the wall. Von Hassel complained to McNamara that the British hired "excess civilians" and incurred "excess [headquarters] expenses and Air Forces." Furthermore, the British were paying each of their soldiers too much because they refused to rely on conscription. Moreover, the Germans had their own troubles. There were still 14 million West German refugees displaced by the war, many of whom had been disabled and now relied on government assistance. German social legislation linked pension payouts to cost of living increases, and there was nothing that could be done, so von Hassel claimed, to keep those costs down. Meanwhile the Italians were underselling the Germans' coal and steel. For all these reasons, the Germans refused to meet the British offset gap, especially not at the level of 100%. If the British could reduce the costs of their current troop deployments by a third, the Germans would pay for half; but the fewer British troops in Germany, the less Germany would pay.[25] The British wanted the Germans to purchase more arms – and increase their offset coverage – even if the BAOR was going to shrink somewhat. Possibilities of a straight Anglo-German agreement were nil.

---

[24] "The Mansfield Resolution," memorandum for Mr. Rostow, January 26, 1967, NSF, Name File, box 6, LBJL; Cleveland to Rostow, February 8, 1967, DDRS, CK3100083689.

[25] "McNamara-von Hassel Conversation No. 2 in Paris, 26 July 1966," Bator Papers, Box 20, LBJL.

But the Germans were also going to be unable to meet their offset agreements with the US. McNamara reported to Johnson that the Germans would maintain only an "austere" defense budget and would devote more expenditure to social welfare. This left a budget "totally inadequate to finance the qualitative improvements in the German forces which are required to fight alongside us" and not nearly enough money to cover the offset costs owed to Britain and the United States.[26]

Rusk was unwilling to join forces with the British to put pressure on the Germans over offsets. And the Germans continued to ignore the connection between the British threats and possible ramifications for Johnson. Ball found the German government, even Schroeder, to have an "appalling lack of understanding of problems raised by proposed British action," especially but not exclusively potentially eroding the American commitment.[27] Although officials in Washington had, for years, pointed to the need for a three-way solution to the problems plaguing NATO, the allies did not take proactive trilateral efforts to solve the possible collapse of the Anglo-American continental commitment in spring and summer 1966 because the stakes were not yet high enough.[28]

3.9.3 Ripeness for Disintegration

American officials urged Bonn to solve the offset problem on their own. They hoped, unrealistically, that Bonn would impose a new tax and use the income to buy more American arms. Johnson's advisers agreed that the President should give Erhard a "hard

---

[26] Memorandum for the President from McNamara, July 27, 1966, Bator Papers, box 20, LBJL.

[27] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Germany, September 8, 1966, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII,* doc. 203.

[28] Treverton, *The Dollar Drain and American Forces in Germany*, 171.

push on offset," with troop reductions as an implied threat.[29] George Ball dissented, warning that Erhard had little room to operate. And throughout the summer, American cajoling had frustrated Bonn. German diplomats urged the Americans to stop "stop linking money and troops."[30] McNamara, however, wanted Johnson to insist on the Germans meeting the total offset with weapons purchases in the U.S. This was so unlikely that many in the State Department assumed McNamara was setting the Germans up to fail so he could reduce the American "big, unnecessary troop commitments in Europe."

By the end of August, nobody thought Erhard could meet the offset, and Americans worried that the economic strain was giving "the impression that NATO is falling apart." Johnson's advisor, Francis Bator, thought it a "poor trade … to take serious risks with stability of German and alliance politics, and hence with our security position in Europe, in order to make marginal gains on our balance of payments." By the end of the crisis Bator had developed a strategy to gain important economic concessions from Germany. Still, he and Johnson believed it essential to avoid the appearance of "the financial tail wagging the security dog."[31]

American insistence achieved little in Bonn, and Erhard did not offer a plan to satisfy either Washington or London. The British were still signaling they would cut back some troops. The Americans sought to keep the British from going to the North Atlantic Council and winning agreement on a BAOR reduction like they had done in the past. If the British

---

[29] "Full Reply to Chancellor Erhard's Last Letter," memorandum for the President from Bator, August 4, 1966, Bator Papers, box 17, LBJL.

[30] "Lunch Conversation with German Minister Georg von Lilienfeld," memorandum for the record, August 4, 1966, NSF, Country File, box 186, LBJL

[31] "Further Reply to Erhard Letter of July 5: Two Major Decisions," memorandum for the President, August 12, 1966, Bator Papers, box 20, LBJL.

troops returned to the UK and were demobilized, there would a "progressive unraveling of other NATO ready forces as Belgium and Holland follow the example of the British."[32] The domestic pressure on Johnson after such a withdrawal would trigger a "whole series of adverse reactions."[33] This would have grievous implications for NATO itself, but also for Western security. Officials who, during the MLF crisis, had argued that Germany would not seek nuclear weapons or an agreement with Moscow had rested their case on the strength of NATO. But if NATO were to unravel, the Germans would have a "far greater interest in national nuclear weapons to secure themselves" than before.[34]

There had been never-ending talk of crisis in NATO before. But the offset crisis raised the possibility that the leaders of NATO states would find the continental commitment unserviceable in light of their domestic politics. NSC staffer Edward Hamilton wrote a memorandum about this "ripeness for disintegration." He could picture, in 1968, the United States and Europe politically and economically isolated from each other, Britain weak and bankrupt, and the Germans "dangerously unsettled, with a strong anti-American flavor." The North Atlantic Treaty might remain in effect, the North Atlantic Council might continue to meet, but the "de facto collapse of NATO is not at all inconceivable."[35] Bator,

---

[32] "Elements of a Proposal to Prevent BAOR Drawdowns in Germany and Europe," memorandum for the deputy secretary of defense, August 18, 1966, Bator Papers, box 17, LBJL.

[33] "British Plans for Military Cutbacks in Europe," August 17, 1966, NSF, Country File, box 210, LBJL.

[34] "Elements of a Proposal to Prevent BAOR Drawdowns in Germany and Europe," August 18, 1966.

[35] "The Choices in Europe," memorandum by E. Hamilton, August 19, 1966, Bator Papers, box 20, LBJL.

too, warned Johnson that taking a hardline with Erhard could lead, in only a few years, to a "disintegration of our postwar security arrangements in Europe."[36]

Bator and Hamilton both believed the solution to the economic and troop problem in Europe had to be achieved by the three powers, working together and by consensus.[37] McGhee advised from Bonn that continuing on the "present track" of bilateral negotiations would allow for no solution but instead "endanger the whole basis of our military cooperation with Germany." A trilateral negotiation, on the other hand, would have the advantage of "fuzzing up and rendering more palatable" any reductions that had to be made, while - critically - wrapping the reductions in the robe of consensus and allowing each capital to point to multilateral agreement, Johnson, Wilson, and Erhard could argue that the other allies were doing their part, and that they, in turn, should reciprocate.[38]

Johnson agreed with his advisers and sent letters to Wilson and Erhard warning of the potential "unraveling NATO" and the need for tripartite agreement.[39] The British, who had initially wanted American support in their negotiations with Bonn, were now wary. Because the British had, up until now, been getting only as much as 50% of their foreign exchange costs covered by German purchases, and the Americans had bargained for 100%, London feared any tripartite deal would leave peanuts for the UK. Still, the British – especially Sir John Hackett, the Commanding Officer of the BAOR, and Frank Roberts, worried that reducing

---

[36] "Last Minute Information for your European Policy Meeting at 6:30 this Afternoon," memorandum for the President, 4:15 pm, August 24, 1966, Bator Papers, box 17, LBJL.

[37] "The Choices in Europe," August 19, 1966; "Last Minute Information for your European Policy Meeting at 6:30 this Afternoon," memorandum for the President, 4:15 pm, August 24, 1966, Bator Papers, box 17, LBJL; "UK Financial Problem with BAOR. Action Memorandum," Leddy to the Secretary, August 23, 1966, DDRS, CK3100521078.

[38] Bonn 2368 to SecState, NSF, Country File, box 186, LBJL.

British troops would be disastrous for British policy. The British might lose their positions in the NATO command structure, which mattered for prestige but also containing the Germans. Both men worried that if the Germans commanded the Northern Front, the Germans might, "for some nationalistic reason or in support of German reunification, create a NATO-Bloc confrontation which might not otherwise arise."[40]

The British Cabinet, less concerned with the situation in Europe than with their immediate financial problems, worried that the Americans were trying to team up with the Germans to prevent British withdrawals.[41] The Germans thought the British and Americans were ganging up on them.[42] The British ultimately agreed to talks, and a resistant Erhard, after an hour and a half of convincing by McGhee, conceded they were necessary.[43] But Erhard was so "lukewarm" the Americans reconsidered and decided not to press until Erhard visited Washington at the beginning of October. British officials accepted the delay but warned that negotiations of some sort needed to get underway quickly to give the Prime Minister a credible excuse in Parliament to prevent an immediate announcement of troop withdrawals.[44] The "clock," warned the British, "is ticking."[45]

---

[39] Johnson to Wilson, [August 26, 1966], *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII,* doc. 198.

[40] Bonn 2423 to SecState, August 27, 1966, Bator Papers, box 20, LBJL.

[41] Cabinet Conclusions, CC(66)44, September 1, 1966, CAB 128/41/44, NAUK.

[42] Bator to the President, September 8, 1966, Bator Papers, box 20, LBJL.

[43] "Copy of LONDON 1924, Sept. 7, 1966," September 7, 1966, NSF Country File, box 210, LBJL; Bonn 2951 to SecState, September 9, 1966, Bator Papers, box 17, LBJL; Bator to the President, September 9, 1966, Bator Papers, box 20, LBJL.

[44] "Memorandum for the Record," by Walt Rostow, September 29, 1966, NSF, Country File, box 210, LBJL.

[45] Department of State 44741 to London, Bonn, and Paris, September 10, 1966, NSF Country File, box 210, LBJL.

Erhard's visit to Washington revolved around the offset issue. John Leddy told the President that the meeting might determine the "political future" of not only Erhard but also "that of German-American relations and NATO itself."[46] But before Erhard arrived, American intelligence officials obtained a record of Erhard speaking, likely to his caucus, about his upcoming visit. The Chancellor "evinced a degree of firmness bordering on the belligerent;" he had called McNamara's "demands" for offset payments "completely arbitrary." He said they would be categorically rejected. When asked if he would make this point in Washington, Erhard told his audience: "You can bet on that."[47]

But Erhard was not coming to Washington only to reject McNamara's "demands" for future offsets. His purpose was to renege on previous German agreements. The FRG could not meet its 1965 or 1966 year promises to place $1.35 billion in military orders, to be paid by the end of 1967. Erhard wanted to stretch out those payments. What would happen after the current agreement expired at the end of June 30, 1967, was anyone's guess.

Ambassador McGhee warned that Erhard's inability to pay was not a bluff but the product of a genuine political bind. Somehow, the United States and the Germans had to find an agreement whereby US combat forces would not leave Europe in significant numbers. Otherwise, McGhee provided a list of fourteen negative domino effects, including the unraveling of NATO and the disintegration of American influence in Europe and a return to isolationism. "History would record it as the ebb point - the beginning of an American withdrawal from Europe."[48]

---

[46] "Erhard Visit: Offset and troop levels," Memorandum for the President from Leddy, September 19, 1966, Bator Papers, box 20, folder: "Offset(US/UK/FRG)," LBJL; see also Rostow to the President, September 2, 1966, buckslip on undated letter from Birrenbach to Kissinger sent August-September 1966, NSF, Country File, box 187, LBJL.

[47] [Title and author sanitized], September 16, 1966, NSF, Country File, box 187, LBJL.

[48] Bonn 965 to SecState, September 19, 1966, Bator Papers, box 20, LBJL.

The Americans looked for ways to "bolster" Erhard's "shaky political position."[49] Johnson would offer assurances like those Presidents had in the past made to British Prime Ministers, but not to Adenauer, that he would "not fire nuclear weapons from German soil without German consent."[50] They would agree to make the McNamara Nuclear Committee permanent and Defense officials floated plans for a political, military or nuclear planning staff in Washington, either made up of Nuclear Planning Group members or only the new tripartite powers.[51] But on the issue that mattered the most - offset - the Americans maintained their hard line that the shortfall must be met, in full, by weapons purchases.

Some Americans wanted Johnson to allow Germany to meet its offsets in other ways, including buying bonds.[52] Johnson, who appeared to hold Erhard over a barrel, did not relent. State Department officials were bitter that Johnson had taken the McNamara line, based on the Secretary of Defense's machinations to reduce American commitment in Europe.[53]

Still, in Washington, Erhard did agree to trilateral meetings. The communiqué released after the visit proclaimed a "searching reappraisal to be undertaken by US, UK and FRG of the threat, force levels, burden sharing, and financial problems results from troop deployment in FRG."[54] Johnson wrote to Wilson explaining that these trilaterals could "help us hold off the pressures on

---

[49] "Johnson-Erhard Meeting: Presidential Visit to Europe," Leddy to the Secretary, September 12, 1966, Bator Papers, box 21, LBJL.

[50] "Erhard Visit: Offset and troop levels," September 19, 1966.

[51] "Erhard Visit. Scope Paper," from Wyle, September 20, 1966, Bator Papers, box 21, LBJL.

[52] "Your 10:00 AM Meeting on the Erhard Visit," memorandum for the President from Bator, September 21, 1966 – 9:30 p.m., Bator Papers, box 21, LBJL.

[53] "Action to Forestall Precipitate British Action on Forces in Europe," Leddy to the Secretary, September 25, 1966, Bator Papers, Box 20, LBJL.

[54] Circular Telegram 5292 to all NATO Capitals from the Department of State, October 4, 1966, DDRS, CK3100190666.

each of us … to do things which would badly damage and NATO and the Western position in Europe." The three powers would put NATO "on a more sustainable basis."[55]

This was a broad scope. The communiqué claimed the three were not embarking on a "political stranding group" or a "directorate," but this sounded like too much protestation. The Americans, to avoid unfortunate echoes with de Gaulle's memorandum, referred to the planned discussions as trilaterals. The British, less concerned about the optics, had no problem calling the group what it was: tripartite. Immediately after the press officers issued the communiqué, diplomats from the NATO ally's embassies started visiting the State Department asking if it represented "something along [the] lines of [the] *directoire* proposed by Gen[eral] de Gaulle some years ago."[56]

Bonn did not, *pace* de Gaulle, wish to be elevated into what other NATO capitals complained was "a new tripartite 'directorate'." They did not wish to worry their European neighbors by seeking aggrandizement. United States efforts to pursue a non-proliferation deal with the Soviets worried them, and they feared Washington was focusing too much on Asia. Added to Erhard's rough treatment over offset, "it was now unmistakable," reported American diplomats, "that Erhard's recent Washington visit is widely interpreted as marking the beginning of a period of increased divergence in German-American interests."[57] This nadir, and the possibility of a de facto collapse of NATO, was not a propitious atmosphere to try to achieve consensus. But it took such fear to bring the three to the negotiating table.

---

[55] Message from President Johnson to Prime Minister Wilson, undated [sent October 1, 1966], *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII,* doc. 208.

[56] Washington DC to External 3002, October 5, 1966, S-2-5102-2, v1, LAC.

[57] Bonn 3944 to SecState, October 3, 1966, Bator Papers, box 21, LBJL.

3.9.4 A New Foundation for the Alliance

Walt Rostow told a German colleague that the three powers would together study and agree on questions about the Soviet threat, the strategy to deter it, how to share the burden, and how to alleviate pressures on the allies' balance of payments. The three powers would then take their report to NATO and get approval from the allies. This task was no less then to give "the Alliance a new foundation for the next decade."[58]

That the three powers were going to examine NATO's premises so closely shocked the other allies. Brosio himself was surprised that "the responsibilities of NATO … would now be subject of a tripartite reappraisal outside the NATO framework."[59] The British, American and German Permanent Representatives briefed the North Atlantic Council on their proposed exercise. In the North Atlantic Council, the allies handled the plan with "kid gloves" that they quickly discarded in private meetings. The Dutch, Canadians, and Italians complained the larger powers had presented them with another *fait accompli*. Press reports that NATO was now going to be restructured along tripartite lines were both embarrassing and worrying to the other allies. The British, eager to get some satisfaction on offset but also not wishing to offend the members of the EEC, sought to appear like good allies and finish the trilateral talks before the December ministerial.[60]

---

[58] Walt Rostow to Rainer Barzel, October 16, 1966, Bator Papers, box 17, LBJL.

[59] NATOParis to External 2133, October 6, 1966, S-2-5102-2, v1, LAC.

[60] "Trilateral Talks; NATO," memorandum of conversation, October 14, 1966, DDRS, CK3100002203; "Foreign Exchange Cost of British Forces in Germany," from Gore-Booth to the Earl of Longford, February 1, 1967, FCO 41/117, NAUK; NATO Paris to External 2133, October 6, 1966, B.N.W. to Dr. Arnold, undated, NATOParis to External 2172, October 11, 1966, and NATOParis to External 2211, October 14, 1966, all in S-2-5102-2, v1, LAC.

The other allies wished to avoid any step that might appear to "give NATO blessing to tripartitism."[61] While Rostow might have thought the United States was laying the foundation, others thought the tripartite efforts signaled "rather bleak" prospects for NATO, and was perhaps the alliance's "valedictory" effort or its "requiem."[62] Dirk Stikker, the former Secretary General, regretted that the "original principle that NATO is an alliance of fifteen equal and sovereign states has been discarded" and warned the Americans this "Committee of Three … will certainly lead to further disintegration."[63]

Johnson chose John J. McCloy, the "chairman" of America's fabled "wise men," a financier who had served as the High Commissioner in postwar Germany and an influential advisor, as the lead American negotiator for the trilateral talks.[64] He proved to be an excellent choice when he brought Germany back to the negotiating table after a political crisis in Bonn. But his appointment was controversial; both McNamara and the British would try and have him removed because they feared he would be too soft on the Germans.[65]

---

[61] "Tripartite Talks; NATO; French Troops in Germany," memorandum of conversation, October 12, 1966, EUR, GER, FRG Records, box 1, folder: "Negotiations with the French, 1966. POL 3," NARA; Cabinet Conclusions, CC(66)50, October 13, 1966, CAB 128/41/50, NAUK; "Minute by State Secretary Carstens," October 19, 1966, *AAPD, 1966, 2: 1402-1403.* See also NATOParis to External 2172, October 11, 1966, S-2-5102-2, v1, LAC.

[62] "Tripartite Talks; NATO; French Troops in Germany," October 12, 1966; NATOParis to External 2344, October 24, 1966, S-2-5102-2, v1, LAC; Schwartz, *Lyndon Johnson and Europe*, 145.

[63] Dirk Stikker to Jack McCloy, October 11, 1966, AP, Gen. Corr., box 29, folder: 375.

[64] Kai Bird, *The Chairman: John J. McCloy, the Making of the American Establishment* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992); Walter Isaacson and Evan Thomas, *The Wise Men: Six Friends and the World They Made: Acheson, Bohlen, Harriman, Kennan, Lovett, McCloy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986); Schwartz, *America's Germany*.

[65] On the implications of McCloy's appointment see *Lyndon Johnson and Europe*, 144. For efforts to move against him, see George Thomson to Sir Patrick Dean, February 1, 1967, FCO 41/117, NAUK; Eugene Rostow Oral History, LBJL, 29.

McCloy's first task was to determine just what America's continental commitment should be. He did this by interviewing key administration officials. Since McCloy had strong opinions about the importance of Germany to the United States and the importance of NATO to the West, he was not likely to recommend doing away with the alliance or the organization. Still, his preparations for the trilaterals were one of the few concerted efforts to think through the American commitment to the North Atlantic Treaty after nearly two decades of change.

Tommy Thompson, one of America's foremost Sovietologists, told McCloy that if the Soviets "ever had a chance safely to destroy us, I have little doubt but that they would do so." Still, ever since the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Soviets had opted for defense rather than offense in their military strategy, and would probably like to reduce their own troop strength in Europe. Thus the Soviet threat "is not such as to require large American forces in Europe from a strictly military point of view." In fact, the Soviets might respond to a small American withdrawal with a troop drawdown of their own. Nonetheless, the United States must take into account two intertwined risks: The troop reductions would have a psychological impact on the Europeans who might weaken their own commitments. This would tempt the Soviets "into some dangerous venture."[66]

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Earle Wheeler offered McCloy a similar diagnosis. Wheeler argued that without NATO, Europe would be "too tempting" for the Soviets. But containing Germany was just as important. A Germany not tied to the West, Wheeler warned, might attach itself to the Soviet Union, creating a duo that could overwhelm the West. Or, if Germany were to set out on its own, it would be "putting us back where we were in 1913 and

[66] Memorandum from Llewellyn E. Thompson to McCloy, October 24, 1966, RG59, EUR, RPM, Trilateral Records, box 1, folder: "Assessment Sov. Threat to We. Europe by Ambassador Thompson. EVMcAullife - 1966," NARA.

1939." Wheeler urged against significant withdrawals that would undermine NATO, since the West must have some way of deterring the Soviets and containing Germany. If NATO, as a means of dual containment, were to disappear the United States would, "like Voltaire's God immediately have to invent another."[67]

McCloy opened the first meeting on October 18 declaring that the trilateral "group is not a creation of nor is it intended to lead to the creation of a new form or agency of NATO." The three allies would "consult fully" with their NATO partners before taking any decisions that might affect the alliance and planned to report to the December Ministerial. But contradictorily, McCloy said also that the "trilateral discussion" was "intended to center the attention of NATO on the present military and political situation." "NATO," in McCloy's usage, really meant the three. And the trilateral powers formed working groups on "Warsaw Pact Capabilities," "NATO Capabilities," and the "B[alance] O[f] P[ayment] Impact of Stationing Troops," all areas that had ostensibly been NATO's domain in the past.[68] After the meeting, McCloy would visit the North Atlantic Council to try and exorcise "the ghost

---

[67] "Conference with General Wheeler at State Department - October 25, 1966," October 25, 1966, RG59, EUR, RPM, Trilateral Records, box 1, folder: "Conversation Bet. Gen. Wheeler & Mr. McCloy. 10/25/66," NARA.

[68] "Trilateral Talks. (US-UK-FRG), McCloy Memo 6," October 18, 1966, DDRS, CK3100192838; "Trilateral Talks," memorandum for the Secretaries of State, Treasury and Defense, the Director Central Intelligence, and Walt Rostow, October 27, 1966, Bator Papers, box 17, LBJL. For the outline of issues and fundamental questions McCloy wished to discuss, see "Issues for Tripartite Talks," October 19, 1966, RG59, EUR, RPM, Trilateral Records, box 1, folder: "Issues, 1966," NARA. Morton Halperin prepared the American answers to these questions for McCloy. See October 24, 1966. "Answers to Questions Posed by United States in Trilateral Talks," October 24, 1966, Bator Papers, box 17, LBJL.

of tripartite directorate," but this did little to calm concerns of other allies that a new tripartite axis had replaced NATO as the nerve center of Western defense.[69]

Karl Carstens, the German negotiator, left the meeting knowing the Germans were in a difficult situation. He and McCloy had agreed that the issue of NATO's future and the trilateral negotiations were primarily political, rather than military. If there were withdrawals, and "the European people's confidence in the alliance's protection should be shaken, there would be severe repercussions." Carstens told Erhard he would seek to keep Americans troops in Germany. Still, he knew that "Germany can offer only a little" on the issue of foreign exchange. He knew failure to support the US would only bolster those, like Senator Mansfield, calling for reductions. Carstens "strongly advocate[d]" Erhard find a solution "to compensate for the ongoing exchange agreement with the U.S.," but Carstens advice focused on the German-American offset and all but ignored the British dimension.[70]

At the next meetings, on November 9 and 10, the three disagreed whether NATO's force posture should be based on an assessment of the Warsaw Pact's intentions or their capabilities. George Thomson, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster who represented the British in the trilaterals, argued that the Soviets had fundamentally changed their purposes and objectives. The Germans thought that if the Soviets did pursue an aggressive policy, the "NATO countries would hardly be willing and able to step up their forces in the short term." McCloy supported the

---

[69] "Telegram from the Mission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and European Regional Organizations to the Department of State," October 22, 1966, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII,* doc. 213. See also Schwartz, *Lyndon Johnson and Europe*, 145.

[70] Carstens to Erhard, October 21, 1966, *AAPD, 1966, 2:* 1427.

Germans, arguing that the "change in Soviet policy was largely a result of the military strength of NATO."[71]

Despite these disagreements about Soviet intentions, the three powers did initial a six-point agreed minute that laid out a fundamental basis for NATO troop strength going forward.[72] They agreed that NATO needed to maintain both nuclear and conventional forces, including tactical nuclear weapons to deter Soviet aggression, but that strategic nuclear forces constituted the "backbone" of NATO's military capabilities. On foreign exchange issues, however, they remained in deep disagreement on even the basic math of how much the troop deployments cost.[73]

In between the first and second meeting, political crisis struck in Bonn. Erhard's governing coalition broke apart. Carstens told McCloy that the Germans could not now agree to a package by the December ministerial, and probably not even in January, since it was uncertain what new coalition would emerge in Bonn. The clock in London was still ticking, however, and without some assistance, Wilson's position would fall apart and the pressure to unilaterally withdraw troops would be unbearable. McCloy, with the support of Rusk, McNamara, and Fowler, told Johnson that the British presence in Germany was the "symbol and rallying point around which we can hope to rebuild a genuinely collective security system, and achieve a more equitable

---

[71] Department of State 83122 to London, Bonn, Paris, November 10, 1966, DDRS, CK3100521713; Minute by Carstens, November 14, 1966, *AAPD, 1966, 2:* 1516.

[72] CAP 66982 [Rostow to the President], November 13, 1966, Bator Papers, box 19, LBJL.

[73] Minute by Carstens, November 14, 1966, *AAPD, 1966, 2:* 1516**;** "Statement made by State Secretary CARSTENS on foreign exchange offset problem (unofficial text)," November 9, 1966, Bator Papers, Box 17, LBJL.

pattern of burden-sharing."[74] White House officials looked for a way to "permit Wilson to hold his cabinet together and to unhook him from his deadline for the announcement of troop withdrawals from Germany."[75] This would buy time to get a "German government with its feet under the table" and the Americans would give Bonn a break by allowing them to stretch out their offset obligations. The White House staff drafted a letter for Johnson to send to Wilson: "[W]ould it help if I placed in the United Kingdom in the near future £35 million in orders?" It would and did; Wilson committed to a delay of six months.[76]

The Americans had bought time but no solution. Because of the collapse of the German government, there was little hope of making any progress at the third meeting on November 25. In fact, the three powers were able to reach further agreement on military strategy, and to agree to a number of common appreciations of Soviet intentions that stressed the unlikelihood of general war but the need to maintain allied military power to prevent Soviet blackmail.[77]

There remained no agreement on the more critical issue of foreign exchange.[78] McCloy, trying to get the others to think about alternative solutions, laid "on the table for discussion an outline of a possible approach" to offset that went beyond arms purchase to include central bank cooperation.[79] Already, McCloy and the Americans were trying to find a way to adjust

---

[74] "Draft Memorandum to the President from Mr. McCloy, with the support of the Secretaries of State, Treasury and Defense," November 9, 1966, Bator Papers, box 19, LBJL.

[75] CAP 66982, November 13, 1966.

[76] Ibid.; "Draft Memorandum to the President from Mr. McCloy, with the support of the Secretaries of State, Treasury and Defense," November 9, 1966.

[77] Circular From Reute, December 5, 1966, *AAPD, 1966, 2: 1583;* Minute by Ambassador Schnippenötter, January 4, 1967, *AAPD, 1967,* 1: 23.

[78] Circular From Reute, December 5, 1966.

[79] "Guidance for Tripartite Meeting on November 25, 1966," undated, late November 1966, Bator Papers, box 17, LBJL. See also CAP 66982, November 13, 1966.

the "over-all international financial system" to help maintain American troops in Germany.[80] These were the seeds of the solution to the trilateral negotiations, but agreement was a long way off.

It was impossible to move forward while Erhard struggled to rebuild his coalition. On December 1, he resigned.[81] McCloy's responsibility was now to convince the new German government to continue the talks. In mid-December he met with the new Chancellor, Kurt George Kiesinger. Kiesinger was now the CDU/CSU leader, and he had built a "Grand Coalition" with the SPD. McCloy assured Kiesinger that Johnson was committed to the defense of Europe, but the Chancellor could promise nothing so early in his tenure.[82]

Kiesinger had a reputation for brilliance, but also "procrastination, indecision, avoidance of paper work and bureaucratic routine" - hardly the desirable choice to ensure the trilaterals ran quickly and smoothly.[83] The new government also contained several "ambitious prima donnas," all of whom needed special attention. Among them was Franz Josef-Strauss, Kiesinger's new finance minister.

---

[80] CAP 66982, November 13, 1966.

[81] Was it American pressure that caused Erhard's downfall? McNamara would later admit that the United States had been clumsy in their handling of Erhard, but that this was "exceeded only by German clumsiness." Robert McNamara Oral History, LBJL, p. 42. Still, there was a widely held feeling in Bonn, London, and other capitals American pressure over the offset had broken the coalition and Erhard's Chancellorship. Rostow to the President, December 2, 1966, Bator Papers, box 17, LBJL; Roberts to Hood, November 26, 1966, FO 1042/156, NAUK.

[82] Record of a meeting between Kiesinger and McCloy, December 16, 1966, *AAPD, 1966, 2:* 1650.

[83] CAP 66974 [Rostow to the President], White House Central File, Confidential, box 8, LBJL.

Strauss resented the American pressure for offset, claiming that all he heard from the United States was, "Unless we get our offsets, we will go home and sacrifice you to the Russians."[84] This stood in for only part of the growing bitterness of some of Kiesinger's Cabinet toward the United States. Strauss especially, but also the new Chancellor, were growing more and more worried that American efforts to achieve a nuclear non-proliferation treaty was "a sign of a new pattern of world organization being worked out secretly together - and imposed - by the two super powers."[85] Although Willy Brandt, the new Foreign Minister, was more pro-British than Strauss, within the first months of the government the former mayor of Berlin "had not yet a got a grip" on his portfolio while the seasoned Strauss certainly had, and so Strauss set the tone in the early going.[86]

In bilateral Anglo-German meetings in the autumn, Bonn had offered London a provisional, one-time offer to offset some costs. The British had not agreed immediately to the terms, for it was only a fraction of the full offset the government had insisted upon. Now, in January 1966, Strauss hinted to Roberts that he would rescind the offer, for the "excessive goodwill of Erhard and von Hassel" had bound the FRG to an "unqualified commitment to make Offset payments which far exceeded the practical possibilities." Strauss also blamed the Americans, who, by demanding so much in offset, left little for the British. Strauss asked Roberts what level of offset

---

[84] "Memorandum of meeting with Strauss, the German Finance Minister, December 17, 1966 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in Dusseldorf," by McCloy, December 22, 1966, DDRS, CK3100470070.

[85] Ibid.; Bonn 9959 to SecState, February 25, 1967, NSF, Country File, box 188, LBJL; "Chancellor Kiesinger's Remarks on American Policy," [source sanitized], April 21, 1967, NSF, Country File, box 199, LBJL; Walt Rostow to the President, April 25, 1967, DDRS, CK3100117579.

[86] "Record of Conversation between the Minister of State and Mr. Francis Bator at the Foreign Office on Tuesday, 24th January at 10.15 a.m.," undated, FCO 41/117, NAUK.

the United Kingdom wanted. Roberts, bound by the public declarations of his ministers, could only say that Britain expected 100%. This was beyond Strauss's "practical possibilities."[87]

The British Foreign Office considered Strauss's denial of full offset a "diplomatic development of major importance."[88] The Germans agreed. Gunter Harkort, a German official, believed the "moment of truth seems to have come for the foreign exchange part of the tripartite talks." Before Erhard's fall, there had still been hope of meeting American and British desires "to some extent," though full compensation had never been possible. Now, there was "every reason to fear that the trilateral talks will come to an abrupt end when our financial cards are laid on the table."[89]

On January 23, German officials told the British that Bonn would not pay "'a cent more' by way offset." This was disturbing for the British, and made worse by what they the news of the next day. Now the German government "felt obliged in view of their economic situation, to start the negotiations all over again" and that the provisional agreement to meet some of the British offset no longer stood.[90]

If the German Cabinet took an explicit decision that they would pay no offset whatsoever, the British Cabinet would have no reason to wait for the conclusion of trilateral talks before deciding on withdrawals.[91] Roberts took "urgent action" in Bonn by meeting with German politicians in

---

[87] Bonn no. 4 Saving to FO, January 10, 1967. FCO 41/117, NAUK.

[88] Gore-Booth to Hood, January 12, 1967, FCO 41/117, NAUK.

[89] Minute by Ministerial Director Harkort, January 17, 1967, *AAPD, 1967, 1:* 133.

[90] "Record of a Meeting Between Dr. Schultz and Mr. Thomson on Tuesday, 24 January, at 9.45 a.m. First Record: Offset," undated, FCO 41/117, NAUK; "Notes for Meeting with Secretary of State for Defence: Implications of the Withdrawal of British Troops from the Continent," undated [late January, 1966], FCO 41/117, NAUK.

[91] On the row in the British Cabinet over the extension, see memorandum of conversation December 14, 1966, London 5885 to SecState, January 24, 1967, NSF, Country File, box 210, LBJL.

an effort to prevent the German cabinet from "taking a decision which could precipitate dangerous consequences," and the Americans agreed to take similar steps.[92]

The Foreign Office knew that if Britain made a full withdrawal, it would "reverse [British] policy since [Ernest] Bevin," and "destroy NATO and thus prejudice the defence of Western Europe and the British Isles." A partial withdraw would lead to the "same consequences, but in lesser measure." In various reports and briefings the British officials warned that full withdrawal would be "fatal for our move to join the E.E.C.," and that even partial withdrawal would "antagonize … E.E.C. members."[93]

Under pressure from both the British and the Americans, the Germans announced they would continue the tripartite talks. The trilateral talks were out of limbo but seemed nowhere close to producing agreement.

3.9.5 The Breakfast Position

Erhard's fall had put off a major showdown between McCloy and McNamara in late 1966, but the showdown came early in the next year. McCloy wanted the US to get what they could from the Germans in terms of offset but "eat the difference" and not make significant troops cuts. McNamara thought any gap would be unacceptable to Congress, and so recommended "preventive surgery" of cutting more than a division from Europe.[94]

In mid-January 1967 McNamara made his move. He drafted a lengthy memorandum for the President and circulated it in Washington. It contained a detailed case why the number of

---

[92] "Tripartite Talks and Offset," Barnes to Hood, January 25, 1967, FCO 41/117, NAUK; see also London 5885 to SecState, January 24, 1967.

[93] "Notes for Meeting with Secretary of State for Defence: Implications of the Withdrawal of British Troops from the Continent;" "Tripartite Talks and Offset," January 25, 1967.

[94] "U.S. Position in Trilateral Negotiations and Instructions to McCloy," memorandum for the President form Rostow and Bator, November 22 1966 at 5:30 pm, Bator Papers, box 17, LBJL.

NATO troops in Europe, if kept within a "fairly wide spectrum of force levels" would have no significant effect on the Soviet strategic calculus. There were now enough NATO troops, armed with enough tactical nuclear weapons and backed up by hardened and dispersed American strategic nuclear weapons that the Soviets would not invade Europe. In fact, fewer troops would do. Containment of the Soviet Union had not only succeeded but had encouraged "certain organic changes" in the Soviet Union and amongst its allies. The growing independence of the Eastern European countries and the Sino-Soviet split left the Soviet leadership "beset with complications which did not exist when NATO was created, nor even 5 years ago." Containment may still be necessary, but the Soviets could now be contained with fewer troops.

McNamara's solution was to "dual-base" a large number of fighter aircraft and ground troops. Three wings of fighter aircraft stationed in the FRG and UK, and two divisions stationed in Germany, plus thousands of their family members, would return to the United States. One quarter of the 432 aircraft, and one third of the 59,000 soldiers would always be stationed in Europe, with individual units rotating between Europe and the United States. Once a year, the full wings and divisions would be on the continent for training as a unit and to keep "highly visible NATO strings."[95] The plan was attractive because it would mean much lower foreign exchange costs, though it was still costly because of the need to maintain duplicate equipment and to pay for the constant rotations. Allied observers knew McNamara needed to get highly trained specialists, trainers, and pilots back to the United States from Europe to help the war effort in Vietnam. While the "simple solution" would have been to simply assign specific units from Europe to Vietnam, McNamara was aware

that this would appear as if the United States had abandoned the defense of Europe for the defense of Southeast Asia. The "rotation technique" provided a political cover for the return of specialists to the United States, and perhaps on to Vietnam.[96]

Earle Wheeler, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, rejected this analysis, arguing that cuts of such "magnitude … would impair the security of the Western World." The General, along with McCloy and officials in the State Department, thought the Europeans would sense the crumbling of the American security guarantee and be susceptible to Soviet blackmail.[97] McCloy warned Johnson that it was necessary to reestablish and keep German confidence in the US, and he vigorously opposed McNamara's proposal.[98]

McNamara and McCloy's positions were poles apart. McNamara believed that the dual basing could be done "without traumatic psychological impact in Germany, in NATO or in the United States."[99] McCloy believed that dramatic cuts would cause the allies – and no doubt he meant Germany in particular – to hedge their bets and "cast worried glances in the direction of the Soviet Union." This position earned a "Nuts!" in the margins from White

---

[95] "Redeployment of Certain US Forces from Europe," Draft Presidential Memorandum from McNamara to the President, January 19, 1967, DDRS, CK3100096939.

[96] The NATO allies and Moscow saw through this cover easily. Washington DC to External 1729, May 10, 1967, and Moscow to External 1161, May 11, 1967, both in S-2-5102, 2, v1, LAC.

[97] "Military Redeployments from Europe," memorandum for the Secretary of Defense, February 2, 1967, DDRS, CK3100725075; "Conclusions and Recommendation," a section of McCloy report to Johnson of November 21, 1966, DDRS, CK3100211986; "Draft B" [of memorandum for the President by Eugene Rostow], October 24, 1966, Bator Papers, box 17, LBJL.

[98] "Force Levels in Europe," memorandum for the President, February 23, 1967, DDRS, CK3100212022.

[99] "Redeployment of Certain US Forces from Europe," Draft Presidential Memorandum from McNamara to the President, January 19, 1967, DDRS, CK3100096939.

House staffers. [100] The far more realistic scenario, though just as fatal to NATO, would see Bonn turn away from Washington and exclusively towards Paris. As during the American debates over nuclear policy, McNamara and his acolytes seemed oblivious to political implications, while McCloy and State Department officials were unwilling to imagine realities beyond allied gut reactions. Neither side former their basis on anything more than American advice and ideas.

The President's advisors met to make their case to Johnson. Francis Bator prepared a scorecard of the key player's positions, lining up McNamara against the JCS and McCloy, with Rusk somewhere in the middle worrying about Atlantic politics. Bator agreed with Rusk that the real issue was not the military argument - McNamara's logic was unimpeachable. Bator did not necessarily subscribe to McCloy's "Wagnerian German nightmare," for "1967 is not 1914 or 1933." Still, his fear was a repeat of the Skybolt crisis, with the Americans making a unilateral decision that led to political crises for the allies and bad blood in the alliance. Bator favored a middle course of dual-basing one, rather than two divisions.[101]

What was clear to Bator was that 100% offset was not forthcoming from the Germans, and that a "crude 'no tickee-no washy' tactic" of linking troop reductions with payments from Germany would backfire badly. What the United States required was cooperation with the allies on new financial steps and perhaps some "sort of rules" that would get the "world on to a dollar standard" and limit the vulnerability from a continued balance of payments

---

[100] "Political Effects of NATO Troop Reductions," part of McCloy's submission to Johnson of November 21, 1966, DDRS, CK3100212003.

[101] "U.S. Position in the Trilateral Negotiations," memorandum for the President from Bator, February 23, 1967. DDRS, CK3100480725.

deficit. Perhaps, in the solution to the NATO crisis, the US could become "banker to the world."[102]

Johnson believed he would eventually have to cut some forces and provide "dollar outlays" to keep the British from cutting theirs. But he "wanted to move as little as possible" at the moment. Cognizant of Bator's allusion to Skybolt, accusations that the United States was "dominating" Europe by making unilateral decisions, and trying to protect his position in Congress, Johnson planned to "move slowly and not take the lead before getting an idea of what Britain and Germany were prepared to do."[103] He held his hand closely and there were no consultations with other NATO allies.

Johnson started to build support in Washington for rotating one division. He told the Congressional leadership at a breakfast that American "troops are in Europe to protect vital national interests. They are not there to do anybody a favor." Johnson defended NATO and the maintenance of American troops in Europe, citing the need not only to balance the Soviets but also to protect Europe from blackmail and ensure the "wrong political tendencies" – German neutralism, revanchism, or nationalism – did not grow. The military and political security situation in Europe was such, he said, that he would not have considered reducing the American troop strength if it were not for Congressional pressure.

Still, it was up to the Germans to decide what levels of procurement they wished to undertake, and the British and Americans "should deal with the remaining balance of payments consequences … by cooperation in the management of monetary reserves." What the United States and its allies were doing, said Johnson, was moving away from the "old rigid offset

---

[102] Ibid.

[103] "Results of the Meeting with the President of Feb. 24, 1967" [Bator's notes of the meeting], undated, DDRS, CK3100233106.

concept" that had covered the costs of British and American commitments to NATO. The new plan moved toward "close and permanent cooperation on the monetary field," with protections for the American gold stock. This would be a "stabilizing policy" and "very much in [American] long run interests," for in the last decade other countries had converted their reserve dollars to gold at an increasing rate.[104] But rather than telling London and Bonn what the United States would do, Johnson would avoid making a final decision and instead propose that the United States would dual base one of their divisions and one air wing.[105]

McCloy thought Johnson was making a mistake and told him. NATO needed a "clear note on the trumpet" from the United States, not an invitation to collaborate on a multilateral solution that looked like American indecision. He wanted permission from Johnson to tell the Germans and the British that Johnson preferred "not to do any cutting" if a solution could be worked out. Johnson hit back, blaming McCloy, McNamara and Rusk for not doing their "job with Congress" and leaving Johnson exposed. Although he would "like to hold the breakfast position" he feared pressure for more significant cuts would make that impossible. "Ultimately," Johnson told McCloy, "we will be very lucky if we do not have to cut 2 divisions."

Johnson told McCloy to tell the allies that "we've got to get together and see what we can do," meaning that the solution to the problem could only be solved by a three-way agreement. A unilateral or bilateral fix would not work. If the Germans could come up with something to help the British, then maybe the United States "could hold the line" and help keep the British and

---

[104] "Talking Points – Force Levels in Europe," February 27, 1967, DDRS, CK3100054480. Due to the uncertainties of the 1930s and the Second World War, over 70% of the world's gold had been concentrated in the United States, but conversion had increased in 1958 when European currencies became fully convertible to gold. "Recommendations Relating to United States International Payments Problems," February 24, 1963, POF, folder: "Acheson, Dean, 1962-may 1963," JFKLDC.

[105] Johnson to McCloy, March 1, 1967, Bator Papers, box 17, LBJL.

American forces assigned to NATO in Europe. But what the Americans "could do depends on what they" - the Germans and the British - "do to solve this problem. … The third brother just can't hold it together by himself."[106] McCloy needed to find out what the other brothers would put "in the family pot." But before the meeting wrapped up, Walt Rostow mentioned something that had gone unsaid by McCloy or Johnson, but that was clearly the basis of Johnson - and Bator's - thinking. The "sleeper" issue in the negotiations, said Rostow, was that the United States might get a "good money bargain with the Germans" that would "help stabilize the monetary situation and provide protection for the dollar."[107]

These ongoing discussions in Washington had delayed the tripartite talks. The British sensed that the Americans were "keenly interested in using the present occasion to make progress in the field of international monetary arrangement."[108] This interested them very little, for they desperately needed German purchases - the "rigid old offset" system Johnson wanted to do away with. And in early March, Kiesinger was not fully convinced that the British commitment to stationing troops in Germany as part of a NATO force was necessary for Germany's security or keeping the American contribution to NATO on the continent.[109] Neither London nor Bonn was looking towards a multilateral solution, and McCloy still had a big task ahead of him.

3.9.6 A Grand Scheme to Solve All Known Problems

On March 3, McCloy set to work trying to get the Germans and British together. He warned that NATO and the concept of common security were now "in some jeopardy." And while the trilaterals were "to invigorate NATO and to avoid a series of unilateral actions which would lead

---

[106] Memorandum for the record, March 2, 1967, Bator Papers, box 18, LBJL.

[107] Ibid.

[108] Washington no. 581 to FO, February 27, 1967, FCO 41/118, NAUK.

to further disintegration," there had been little constructive action to "reinforce NATO solidarity." He castigated the British and the Germans for taking public, sharp positions and making unilateral ultimatums. It was necessary to recapture the "spirit of cooperative effort" that had been the postwar "keynote."[110]

The German team still had their hands tied ahead of a March 15 Cabinet meeting. The British, however, urgently needed to know whether Germany could provide offset procurement. London remained committed to obtaining a full offset of foreign exchange from the Germans, even though Bonn had repeatedly made clear the Cabinet's dislike of any formal offset commitment. Instead, the Germans wanted to buy British arms as they needed, and pleased.[111] McCloy dismissed the meeting as "simply a repetition of familiar positions."[112]

McCloy then met with Wilson and Kiesinger. Each leader maintained his hard line. Wilson said he would not make any concessions to Germany. Moreover, after having "stuck our neck out when France had weakened the Alliance," Britain was now being treated unfairly. Britain had

---

[109] Gavin has translated the key part of the discussion in Gavin, *Gold, Dollars, and Power*, 161. For the full conversation see Lahr's record of the Federal Defence Council, March 2, 1967, *AAPD, 1967, 1:* 367.

[110] "Tripartite Talks: Record of a Meeting at Riverwalk House, London, on Friday 3 March, 1967," undated, FCO 41/120, NAUK; London 7113 to SecState, March 3, 1967, DDRS, CK3100521718.

[111] "Offset," C.M. Maclemose to Secretary of State, March 2, 1967, FCO 41/120, NAUK; "Tripartite Talks," Thomson to Secretary of State, March 3, 1967, FCO 41/120, NAUK. On MoD efforts to provide Bonn with a "shopping list" see: "Trilateral Talks," Memorandum of Conversation, March 6, 1967, DDRS, CK310052175; "Tripartite Talks: Record of a Meeting at Riverwalk House, London, on Friday 3 March, 1967."

[112] Roberts to Gore-Booth, March 6, 1967, FCO 41/120, NAUK.

saved NATO then; now Britain needed help.[113] Kiesinger worried that no matter what he did, the British would reduce their troops and so would the Americans.[114]

A private conversation between McCloy and Thomson helped break the logjam. All the parties understood that even if the Germans had granted full offset at previous levels, Britain would have to withdraw some troops from Germany. But Thomson told McCloy that the British would not announce and make the reduction unilaterally, and that they preferred to keep their troops in Germany. But if there was no adequate German offer on offset, withdrawals would be "massive," perhaps more than half the BAOR.[115] Thomson's confirmation that the UK would delay their cuts and present them as part of a trilaterally agreed reorganization convinced McCloy the British wanted a solution, and that Kiesinger was wrong to worry the British would cut unilaterally no matter what.

McCloy met next with Duckwitz next. The Germans still claimed they could "tolerate any Anglo-German failure." But the Americans could not. McCloy told him it was "utterly unrealistic to believe that the American position would remain the same if the Germans paid no more and thus accepted the inevitability of British withdrawals on this [massive] scale." Congressional pressure on Johnson "would become irresistible." The British withdrawal "would therefore be followed by an American reaction that would gravely endanger the German security position."[116] The Germans had to find a way to support the British or the Americans would leave.

---

[113] Michael [unclear] to R. E. Parsons, March 3, 1967, FCO 41/119, NAUK; CAP 67104 [Rostow to the President], March 5, 1967, NSF, Country File, box 210, LBJL; Roberts to Gore-Booth, March 6, 1967, FCO 41/120, NAUK.

[114] "Telegram from the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Rostow) to President Johnson, in Texas," March 6, 1967, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII,* doc. 239.

[115] Roberts to Gore-Booth, March 6, 1967.

[116] "Tripartite Talks," to PUS from Thomson, March 9, 1967, FCO 41/120, NAUK.

The Germans remained "very reluctant" to consider any formal offset agreement. There seemed "no practical half-way house between 0% and 100% [offset]."[117] The Americans told the British that the idea of straight offsets was "defunct," and instead there must be a "re-orientation of thought on the whole problem."[118] The new idea, explained Walt Rostow, was a "global solution" that "secured German participation in a solution of world liquidity problems."[119] There would be three stages to the plan: In the immediate short term, there must be found some way of relieving the balance of payments pressure. The Americans would allow the Germans to neutralize some of the foreign exchange costs by buying bonds. This would not help the British, however, who needed cash purchases. But perhaps the German relief at not having to meet the full American offset with arms purchases would free up Bonn's money for London. In the medium-term, the United States would build a "club of gold-abstainers" who would promise not to trade the dollars they held for gold. In the long-term, the allies could work out a means of "under-pinning the reserve currencies." The British would be bailed out with a massive multi-billion dollar loan from the Americans, Germans, and others that would allow London to pay off its debts to the IMF and gets its house in order.[120]

This plan would bring the Americans great gains. The British privately railed against these "grandiose American monetary ideas," believing that they represented, like the MLF, more "American grand schemes to solve all known problems."[121] They did not like Bator's "brain-

---

[117] Ibid.

[118] Washington no. 650 to FO, March 2, 1967, FCO 41/119, NAUK; Washington no. 687 to FO, March 6, 1967, FCO 41/119, NAUK.

[119] Washington no. 650 to FO, March 2, 1967.

[120] Washington no. 667 to FO, March 4, 1967, FCO 41/119, NAUK; Washington no. 687 to FO, March 6, 1967.

[121] "U.S. Monetary Ideas," Barnes to Sir P. Gore-Booth, March 8, 1967, FCO 41/120, NAUK; Washington no. 687 to FO, March 6, 1967.

child" of lumping together "defence and world liquidity," and they knew that the Americans were using the crisis to find a solution of solving "a number of wide financial problems."[122] They worried the scheme would frighten the Germans and offend the French, and lead to another French veto on British entry into the Common Market.[123] Would this, they wondered, be another Nassau - a "financial Nassau"?[124] Perhaps this was all melodrama, for the British were also tired of looking like "un-European American pensioners."[125] Ultimately they would go along because they needed to find some solution to their foreign exchange costs before things got "completely out of control."[126]

The Germans, through involved and separate discussions with the Americans, had been "cooking up a money offer" for Washington. In the short run, the German *Bundesbank* would buy enough bonds to neutralize more than half the American foreign exchange costs of keeping troops in Germany. Critically, in the long run, they promised not to convert dollars to gold. This essentially put them on a dollar standard. The Germans agreed to work to get other Europeans to agree (though it would be an obvious nonstarter in Paris), and the United States lobbied the Canadians and Japanese to join the club of abstainers.[127] In Washington, the implications were

---

[122] Washington no. 650 to FO, March 2, 1967.

[123] Ibid.; Washington no. 667 to FO, March 4, 1967, FCO 41/119, NAUK; "U.S. Monetary Ideas," Barnes to Sir P. Gore-Booth, March 8, 1967, FCO 41/120, NAUK.

[124] "International Economic Arrangements: U.S. (Rostow) Proposals," March 15, 1967, FCO 41/121, NAUK.

[125] Ibid.

[126] "U.S. Monetary Talks," March 7, 1967.

[127] For Bator's hopes see Zimmermann, *Money and Security*, 220; Wightman, "Money and Security," 54.

enormous. Bator told Johnson that now "we won't need to worry much about our deficit, as long as it does not get completely out of hand."[128]

Now with all the parties committed to finding a multilateral solution, the British and Germans shared their tentative "magic numbers" - that is, the minimum the British required in order to avoid massive cuts, and the maximum the Germans could come up with in offset. The difference was small, but there was a difference. As Leddy advised the Secretary, "we are, almost literally, within $40 million of preventing really serious damage to NATO."[129] Bator warned the President the gap, if left unfilled, would lead to a "UK-FRG collision and massive cuts in the BAOR." Johnson would then face pressure to make unilateral withdrawals, and this would begin the "unraveling process." Most important perhaps, the "chances of getting German help on international money will nosedive."[130] Johnson told his advisors to find a solution; perhaps the Germans and Americans could split the difference. He declared "he would not see NATO" - or the prospects of for a *de facto* dollar standard – "go down over $40 million."[131]

Before Kiesinger made his final decision, he met with de Gaulle for a pre-arranged tête-a-tête. The British and Americans watched closely, for a closer Franco-German relationship was Bonn's only alternative to its place in NATO. But Kiesinger told de Gaulle that Germany "could not share France's attitude towards NATO since they believed very strongly in an

---

[128] "Your 12:45 p.m. Meeting with John McCloy on the trilaterals," memorandum for the President, March 8, 1967, Bator Papers, box 18, LBJL.

[129] "Meeting with President, March 9, on Trilaterals," Leddy to the Secretary, March 8, 1967, Bator Papers, box 18, LBJL.

[130] "Your 12:45 p.m. Meeting with John McCloy on the trilaterals," March 8, 1967.

[131] "Record of President's March 9 Meeting with Messrs. Rusk, McNamara, Fowler, McCloy, Walt Rostow, and Bator," March 9, 1967, DDRS, CK3100233128. For the records of a March 13 Trilateral meeting where McCloy urged finding a solution to the short term problem, see: "Record of a Meeting Between Mr. George Thomson, M.P., Mr. McCloy and

integrated military force."[132] This relieved McCloy, who was glad Kiesinger realized there was "not much to be gotten from Paris." Further, Kiesinger and his colleagues, though still eager to open relations with Eastern Europe, recognized this would be a slow process and that Germany required NATO in the meantime. The new German government was finally ready recommit to "tightening up the West as a basis for their policy."[133] The bombastic Strauss raised "unshirted hell," but Kiesinger carried the Cabinet on a commitment to buy bonds, abstain from buying gold for dollars, and provide some offset for Britain.

At the final trilateral meeting on March 20 and 21, the Germans came up with more money for Britain than expected, and the Americans made new military orders to keep British foreign exchange costs very low. The British agreed to withdraw only one brigade - about 5,000 men - from the continent. But they surprised their partners by springing a plan to redeploy RAF forces, too. The Germans called this "friendly blackmail." Still, the British agreed to avoid any major reduction or seek, once again, to alter their commitments under the 1954 agreement.[134]

Now everything rested on how the Americans handled their reductions. The Germans, along with the rest of the allies, urged Washington to present their dual-basing plans as realistic and to avoid any suggestion that they doubted the need to defend Europe. Johnson was able to hold his "Breakfast Position," and the US and Germans entered an agreed minute that the US

Herr Duckwitz at the Foreign Office at 6 p.m. on 13 March, 1967," undated, FCO 41/121, NAUK; Gore-Booth to Roberts, March 8, 1967, FCO 41/120, NAUK.

[132] Paris 13742 to SecState, March 9, 1967, DDRS, CK3100301074.

[133] "Memorandum of Conversation," March 15, 1967, Bator Papers, box 18, LBJL.

[134] McCloy to Johnson, March 22, 1967, Bator Papers, box 18; Department of State 161070 to Bonn, London, and Paris, March 23, 1967, NSF, Country File, box 187, LBJL.

would rotate one division and some fighters - far fewer than McNamara had hoped.[135] Publicly, the Americans presented their plan as one resting on "military logic," rather than financial arguments. They claimed it was a multilaterally agreed decision, rather than an American "cut."[136] On Capitol Hill, Mansfield called the plan "an encouraging start" and "enough for the time being."[137]

"All in all" Bator told Johnson, "we have avoided what could have become a major crisis in our Atlantic relations." Bator pushed hard to convert the solution "into a more permanent and stable structure." He prioritized the next steps: First was the German pledge not to trade dollars for gold, second was the German purchase of American bonds, and third was the need to avoid "large-scale, helter-skelter" troop cuts.[138] The Americans, who had begun the trilaterals to build a new foundation for the alliance, had used the discussions of NATO troop strength and expenditures to achieve their own national financial and economic goals.

The trilateral meetings – despite the economic benefits for the United States – had preserved the Anglo-American commitment upon which NATO rested. Robert Bowie, who had served on McCloy's delegation, said the "tripartite talks had set a pattern for the sort of discussions in which NATO ought to engage more often." This did not sit easily with Sir Arthur Hockaday, the NATO Assistant Secretary General who sat in on the meetings. Hockaday wished

---

[135] "Final Report on Trilateral Talks," undated [April-May 1967], *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII,* doc. 249.

[136] Ultimately, the French eviction of NATO forces and this agreed minute led to a major overhaul and reorganization of American forces in Europe, REDCOSTE and REFORGER/CRESTED CAP.

[137] Reported by the Canadian delegation in Washington DC to External 1648, May 3, 1967, S-2-5102-2, v1, LAC.

for the talks to be regarded as "inputs leading to decisions by NATO, rather than as preparation for decisions to be taken outside the NATO framework."[139]

In fact, the three kept everything secret from NATO during the critical decision-making period in March for fear that leaks or debates in the North Atlantic Council might scuttle agreement.[140] The three allies insisted that they would reach no decision without allowing the other NATO allies to consider their ideas and make adjustments. But leaks came anyway, likely from the Department of Defense. The aggrieved allies first learned from the *New York Times*, and then the *New York Herald Tribune,* that the British and Americans had decided on their force adjustment plans ahead of any NATO-wide meeting.[141]

Brosio had hoped that the decisions on force reductions would be taken to NATO for consultation, and not presented as a *fait accompli*. The three powers agreed to make a joint presentation to NATO's Defense Planning Council to propose the idea, and maintain the pretense of NATO-wide, rather than tripartite, multilateral agreement.[142] But the Americans, British and Germans had debated and agreed the fundamental issues between themselves, outside the NATO machine. The Dutch complained in Council of a "double standard in NATO" and warned that the

---

[138] "Trilaterals – Status Report," memorandum for the President, March 17, 1967, 3:30 p.m., DDRS, CK3100550713.

[139] "Record of a Meeting Held at Riverwalk House on Monday, 27 February at 4.00 p.m.: Tripartite Talks," undated, FCO 41/120, NAUK. Hockaday was the usual NATO representative though Brosio had sat in on the first meeting.

[140] Hood to Burrows, March 6, 1967, FCO 41/119, NAUK.

[141] Washington DC to External 1310, April 6, 1967; External to Washington DC DL920 (repeated to London), April 6, 1967, and NATOParis to External 1310, April 6, 1967, all in S-2-5102-2, v1, LAC.

[142] Paris 15055 to SecState, March 29, 1967, NSF, Country File, box 173, LBJL.

"implication of a directorate had serious psychological effects in member countries." If the NATO allies did not make allied strategy and force plans together, what was NATO for?[143]

[143] NATOParis to External 1004, April 28, 1967, S-2-5102-2, v1, LAC.

CHAPTER 10: AN ALLIANCE FOR PEACE:

NATO, EUROPE, AND DÉTENTE

"What have we armed for, if not to parley?"

- British Prime Minister Harold Wilson, March 1966.[1]

"The problems of the NATO Alliance are not the result of failure but success … The very accomplishments of our past policies have created a new situation requiring new policies – this is the meaning of our problems in NATO."

- Adam Yarmolinsky, Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, to Deputy National Security Advisor Francis Bator, June 1966[2]

"There has been a good deal of talk recently about rejuvenating the Alliance, but I am not sure that this means the same thing to everyone."

- E. J. W. Barnes, to a member of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, May 1967[3]

***

In the aftermath of de Gaulle's withdrawal, the Central Intelligence Agency set out one of the few cogent American articulations of the case for maintaining NATO. NATO, the intelligence memorandum read, provided a "necessary margin of military safety" to the allies, and allowed the United States to provide the Europeans with "support which is politically and psychologically necessary." But, above all, NATO was "an essential element in the political stability of Western Europe itself."[4]

---

[1] "France and Nato," Prime Minister to the Foreign Secretary, PM's Personal Minute No. M11/66, March 15, 1966, PREM 13/1043, NAUK.

[2] Adam Yarmolinsky to Francis Bator, [in a 'non-paper,'], June 21, 1966, Bator Papers, Box 28, LBJL.

[3] Barnes to Millard, May 23, 1967, FCO 41/211, NAUK.

[4] "The NATO Crisis in its Political Setting," CIA Intelligence Memorandum, April 2, 1966, NSF, Country File, box 178, LBJL.

The CIA's analysis is borne out by the history of NATO since the mid-1950s. The diplomacy in the North Atlantic Council and the hallways of NATO and the policies crafted in allied capitals revolved almost entirely around the relations between allies rather than the relationship between NATO and the Warsaw Pact.[5] That NATO practically ignored the Warsaw Pact reflected early Cold War images of the Soviet bloc as a monolith that needed to be contained and could not be engaged. This cardboard cutout of a single-dimensional Communist menace helped cover over disagreements between the allies over the past, present, and future of the Cold War. But as the CIA analysis hinted, the allies focused on relations with one another because NATO was an instrument for the allies to check each other just as much as the Soviet Union.

Whatever the reason, the shallow and limited attention given to the Soviet Union in contemporary analyses of NATO's usefulness is remarkable. Even NATO's military and defense policies focused more on alliance contributions than Soviet capabilities. American officials sent to Paris to participate in annual conferences on military forces were "impressed" by the contrast between the high levels of effort spent studying "NATO's own posture (force structure, weaponry, etc.) and the relative paucity of thoroughgoing re-analysis of the enemy threat."[6]

In spite of the allies spending so little time trying to reach agreement on Soviet capabilities and intentions, or because they knew not to force the issue, the former Secretary General Paul Henri Spaak could proclaim in 1966 that NATO was "one of the few organizations which has

---

[5] Even the major reports on NATO, like those by Acheson in the early 1960s, ignored the Soviet Union. "Acheson on the January Debacle," memorandum for Mr. Bundy from Kaysen, February 2, 1963. NSF, box 212A, folder: Europe, General 2/1/63-2/6/63, [folder 2 of 3], JFKL.

[6] Memorandum for General Hugin from Komer. "Re-Analysis of the Soviet Threat to NATO," May 25, 1962. "Komer Washington Papers," Executive Secretariat. Komer Records. Box 2.

ever achieved complete success. "It had never had to resort to military force to protect the North Atlantic area."[7] In the late 1960s, as the year approached when allies could announce their renunciation from the North Atlantic Treaty, it was uncertain just how NATO had achieved its success. Had it deterred a Soviet Union that would have greedily snapped up Western Europe, or was NATO the whistle that kept the tiger away? NATO may or may not have been necessary; this was purely academic. The real question was whether there was still a need for NATO.

NATO's relationship to the Soviet Union and the Cold War was paradoxical. Adam Yarmolinsky of the Department of Defense, when writing to Francis Bator, articulated the assumption held by so many officials in this period: "The problems of the NATO Alliance are not the result of failure but success."[8] The more secure was Western Europe, the less secure was NATO. If NATO existed primarily to deter Soviet aggression or blackmail against Western Europe, than it was conceivable that NATO could put itself out of business. Toward the end of the decade, hopes for greater relaxation of tensions between the East and the West - détente - appeared to be both the fruits of NATO's success and the seeds of its demise.[9]

---

[7] Brussels 1087 to SecState, March 10, 1966, DDRS, CK3100068041

[8] Adam Yarmolinsky to Francis Bator, [a 'non-paper,'], June 21, 1966, Bator Papers, Box 28, LBJL.

[9] The best account of the complex series of policies, hopes, and diplomacy is Raymond L. Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan*, Rev. ed. (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1994). He examines the European and NATO context for detente in the late 1960s in pages 123-131. For the particulars of detente in specific NATO countries, see the individual chapters in Wilfrid Loth and Georges-Henri Soutou, eds., *The Making of Détente: Eastern and Western Europe in the Cold War, 1965-75* (New York: Routledge, 2008); N. Piers Ludlow, *European Integration and the Cold War: Ostpolitik-Westpolitik, 1965-1973* (London: Routledge, 2007). For another, broader interpretation of the phenomenon of détente, see Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Detente* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003).

Both the crises begun in 1966, de Gaulle's withdrawal from the integrated military command and the threat of the collapse of the Anglo-American continental commitment, were symptoms of this larger paradox. De Gaulle could move against NATO because he believed that the Cuban Missile Crisis had demonstrated the unlikelihood of general war. McNamara could urge the withdrawal of troops from Europe because of the strength of the American nuclear deterrent and the changes he perceived in the Soviet bloc, including the loosening ties between Warsaw Pact countries and the disagreements between Moscow and Peking. The British had thought the prospect of a war for Europe absurd since Macmillan's premiership. Macmillan saw the death of Stalin and his later "de-sanctification" by Khrushchev as a "hopeful sign." Like the French Revolution, he judged, "the Terror" was changing "into the directory," and this transformation seemed to be accelerating.[10] The Germans were far more wary, but the significant American nuclear power in the FRG and the development of NATO's nuclear committees helped assure them.

What was NATO to do, however, when its original *raison d'être* seemed to be fading away? Robert Komer pointed to the absurdity of the situation when he asked: "Is the price of re-uniting NATO re-uniting the Sino-Soviet bloc?" Komer was not suggesting this policy. None would have wished to piece back together a Communist monolith. But his question points to what he saw as a growing assumption that NATO had become an end in itself.[11]

This worried American officials in the White House and the Department of Defense. Richard Neustadt, presidential adviser to Kennedy and Johnson, warned McNamara's influential Assistant Secretary of Defense John McNaughton that NATO should "keep its purposes narrowed to defense preparation and relationships." The "NATO organs," he said, "are not and

[10] Macmillan to Jock Whitney, November 29, 1961, MS. Macmillan, dep.c.312,

[11] "Acheson on the January Debacle," February 2, 1963.

never have been workable vehicles" for other types of cooperation, "nor is there any reason why they should be."[12]

By the mid-1960s, however, Neustadt himself would have to face Neustadt's Law: NATO was no longer a serviceable instrument for governing politicians if it appeared to be solely for defense. In 1966 and 1967 the NATO allies set out to provide a new face for NATO in a world in which détente seemed possible. This new gloss was necessary because many officials, and much of the voting public, though NATO had become obsolete.

The primary effort to give NATO a new public face was a chaotic study on "The Future Tasks of the Alliance" proposed by Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs Pierre Harmel. Informally, the study was known as the "Harmel Exercise" and the final paper christened the "Harmel Report.' Scholars have held it up as an important event that transformed NATO from a purely defensive organization into one that justified its existence on the two pillars of defending the West and encouraging détente with the East.[13] The Harmel Exercise was in itself a mess, regretted by most participants, and nearly jettisoned several times. Its primary purpose, in which it narrowly succeeded, was to give allied politicians a new argument for supporting NATO and the defense spending required of allies when hopes of détente made this spending seem frivolous.

---

[12] Neustadt to McNaughton, April 4, 1966, Yarmolinsky Papers, Subject Files, box 32, folder: France-NATO, 1963-1967, JFKL.

[13] Excellent factual accounts of the Harmel Report are in Helga Haftendorn, "The Harmel Report and Its Impact on German Ostpolitik," in *The Making of Détente: Eastern and Western Europe in the Cold War, 1965-75*, ed. Wilfrid Loth and Georges-Henri Soutou (New York: Routledge, 2008); *NATO and the Nuclear Revolution*. See also Andreas Wenger, "Crisis and Opportunity: NATO's Transformation and the Multilateralization of Détente, 1966-1968," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 6, no. 1 (Winter 2004). The lead up to the Harmel Report is recounted in Locher, *Crisis? What Crisis?*

Beyond the inherent symbolism of the Harmel Report, the results were modest but important. NATO developed a work program that expanded NATO's committee structure to allow consideration of arms control and disarmament. These new additions to the NATO machine provided another opportunity for the allies to share information and ideas and ensure that no ally moved too far ahead of the others in their dealings with the East. And by accepting that NATO machinery could play a role towards relaxing Cold War tensions, the allies signaled that their support for NATO was no longer owed directly to East-West antagonism and could survive beyond the Cold War.

3.10.1 An Outworn European Policy?

For many foreign policy observers, the idea that NATO could improve East-West relations was counterintuitive. NATO, according to George Kennan, was "a device for avoiding political compromise rather than for facilitating it."[14] And Kennan's thinking had its official champions. In 1959, Robert Komer circulated what he called a "variant" of Kennan's disengagement plan to replace America's "outworn European policy." Komer wanted the United States to negotiate with the Soviet Union to withdraw troops from Germany. The withdrawal would "create a fluid situation in which the life expectance of the GDR would increasingly decline."[15]

In 1963, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., warned Kennedy that the Soviets were more likely to negotiate a European settlement and German reunification "with a non-NATO Western Europe than with NATO."[16] The same year, the Deputy Director of Intelligence at the CIA, Ray Cline,

---

[14] Kennan, *Russia, the Atom, and the West*, 88; "Disengagement Revisited," *Foreign Affairs* 37, no. 2 (January 1959).

[15] Covering Memorandum and the attached document by Komer, "A New Look at Our European Policy," April 22, 1959, RG59, Policy Planning Council. Subject Files, 1954-1962, Box 151, folder: "Europe 1959," NARA.

[16] Memorandum for the President from Schlesinger, "De Gaulle: Where Do We Stand Now?," memorandum for the President from Schlesinger, January 30, 1963, Schlesinger Papers, box WH-34, folder: France, General 9/61-10/63, JFKL.

drafted a document for the Director of Central Intelligence John McCone envisioning a diplomatic settlement in Europe. The "McCone Plan," foreshadowing de Gaulle's ideas in the years to come, argued that the United States would be better off abandoning NATO and relying on "conventional bilateral diplomacy to keep Germany, France and the United Kingdom individually balanced against one another and collectively balanced against the USSR."[17]

Henry Kissinger has argued that American Cold War policy, resting on the containment and eventual collapse or conversion of the Soviet Union, offered no role for diplomacy.[18] Komer, Schlesinger, and Cline's plans all offer tantalizing glimpses of how American Presidents, if holding greater confidence in the possibilities for negotiation with the Soviet Union, might have chosen a more dynamic policy in Europe. They also all suggest that any such negotiation over Europe would require the end of NATO. Kennedy himself had faced the squeeze between diplomacy with Moscow and good relations with the FRG during the Berlin Crisis as White House advisers moved closer towards the idea of disengagement.[19]

The United States, and all of its NATO allies - save de Gaulle - were unwilling to risk their diplomatic cunning against that of the Soviet Union without the guarantee of a military alliance and integrated command. To preserve this command, they had sought to keep discussions of diplomacy - especially over Berlin, but also over Suez and other crises - out of NATO. By the 1960s, however, the NATO allies could no longer ignore that there were significant and growing

---

[17] Memorandum for Mr. McCone from Ray Cline. "A New NATO Policy (the "McCone Plan")," Memorandum for Mr. McCone from Ray Cline, March 21, 1963, and "An Alternative US Policy Toward NATO," undated, both in NSF, box 221, folder: NATO, General 7/62-11/63 [Folder 2 of 3], JFKL.

[18] Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 471.

[19] See Chapter 5.

exchanges - of goods, ideas, and diplomats - between the East and West creating a new dynamic between the East and West that could not be ignored.

From 1953 to 1959, trade between NATO countries and the Soviet bloc had more than doubled, representing a higher rate of trade expansion than either inter-European trade or world trade.[20] Throughout the 1960s, the increase continued at "phenomenal" rates.[21] In the early 1960s NATO formed an ad hoc working group of the Committee of Economic Advisers to study East-West trade.[22] The allies in the group espoused a range of contradictory opinions over the implications of trade. They worried that in the short term, the Soviet economic offensive would allow Moscow to exploit differences between the Western allies, or between the West and their allies like Japan.[23] NATO economic analysts pointed out that the West's sales of machinery and technical knowhow to the East was benefitting the economies of the Warsaw Pact countries more than the West. Some allies were comfortable with this while others were not. The Americans were the most militant in ensuring NATO allies not send the Soviet bloc items that might be put to military use and "could bolster up its aggressivity."[24]

But all the NATO allies agreed that in the long term trade with the Soviet Union was desirable. US officials argued that improved economic relations with the Soviet bloc would "help to stimulate pressure for change within the Communist system, and thus to promote evolutionary

---

[20] "Problems of East-West Trade," June 29, 1962, AC/127-D/71, NATO.

[21] Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation*, 140.

[22] "Problems of East-West Trade," June 29, 1962.

[23] "Problems of East-West Trade. Note by the Chairman," February 22, 1961, AC/127-WP/70, NATO; "Problems of East-West Trade," June 29, 1962.

[24] "Meeting of Experts on East-West Trade. Note by the Chairman," October 2, 1961, AC/127-D/81, NATO. On exports controls in this period see Michael Mastanduno, *Economic Containment: CoCom and the Politics of East-West Trade* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992).

tendencies."[25] In 1962, however, the Americans were still thinking of how trade could be used as a tool against the Soviets. This is the same period in which the United States pushed for a NATO-wide trade embargo against the Warsaw Pact as a component of Washington's grand strategy for Berlin. The title of a paper circulated by the Americans, "The Application of Western Economic Strength to the East-West Conflict," is indicative of their efforts. Still, the Americans believed the NATO allies could "seek to establish meaningful communications with the Communist regimes, and thereby hope to influence their long term orientation." This would be only "a long term change" and there was "no reason to be sanguine over the possibilities." Moscow would be clever enough to prevent any Bloc country from developing a political vulnerability by trading too much with the West. But the Americans, like the British and other allies, hoped to encourage a "tendency for the political cohesion of the Bloc to diminish" and ultimately the fragmentation of Eastern Europe.[26]

The British did not think of trade as a tap that could be turned off and on. London always prioritized trade over Cold War politics and export control, and this led to rows over exports to communist countries in the 1960s. The British argued that since Stalin's death the Soviet Union had shifted more to a consumerist society than its leaders intended, and would continue to shift, for "the appetite grows with eating: the Soviet and satellite peoples will want the rise in living standard to continue and will certainly resist, as far as they can, any abrupt reversal." This would put the onus on Soviet leaders to adapt to their society's "popular aspirations" and to "eschew risk-taking and to avoid raising tension" that might result in war. It was surely right, the British delegation told its NATO allies, to "foster such tendencies," and to develop exchanges that would

[25] "Problems of East-West Trade. Note by the Chairman," February 22, 1961, AC/127-WP/70, NATO.

[26] "The Application of Western Economic Strength to the East-West Conflict," Note by the United States Delegation, October 10, 1962, AC/214(A)-WP/6, NATO.

"expose the whole range of those who influence policy in each country to the contagion of Western thought and experience." That the West would need more and more markets and supplies for its own economic growth was certainly part of the British argument.[27]

In trying to make sense of the debates at NATO, the Germans noted two broad arguments for economic trade, of which the British and Americans offered the most outspoken positions: First that economic relations offered an "opportunity for exerting political influence and for a gradual easing of the conflict between east and west." The other view was that economics relations were simply a "political weapon" that the East used better than the West.[28]

Because of the bitterness in attempting to coordinate an economic embargo during the Berlin Crisis, the roller coaster ride of the British Common Market application, and the alliance's focus on defense issues and particularly the MLF, the North Atlantic Council and the allies took few further steps on the matter of East-West trade. The North Atlantic Council recommended experts produce a study of "economic measures as might be taken by NATO to loosen the ties between the USSR and the various satellites," and there was a conference of national officials to discuss such steps.[29] The meeting, modeled after the Experts Committees on regional affairs, did a better job of highlighting differences between allies than finding agreement. Some allies wanted to coordinate and target national economic policies to try and pick-off Communist countries "who showed signs of emancipating themselves from the Soviet bloc."[30] Others, however, were

---

[27] "Western Economic power in relation to the East-West Conflict," Note by the United Kingdom Delegation, October 9, 1962, AC/214(A)WP/5, NATO.

[28] "Use of Western Economic Strength in the East-West Conflict," Note by the German Delegation, October 16, 1962, AC/214(A)WP/10, NATO.

[29] "Meeting of National Officials on NATO Countries' Trade Policies Towards the European Satellite Countries," June 8, 1964, AC/127-D(160)Draft, NATO.

[30] See the American position described in ibid.

reluctant to envisage politically-motivated trade discrimination" and preferred to encourage trade for trade's sake. [31]

With no agreement in NATO, the allies took their own steps to build relations with Eastern Europe, both by encouraging trade and by reaching out for small but symbolic bilateral diplomatic contacts. In 1964, the French foreign minister visited his colleagues in several Warsaw Pact countries, the British invited Alexei Kosygin and later Andrei Gromyko to visit London, Turkey received a Soviet parliamentary delegation, the Germans continued their policy of resuming contacts with the states of Eastern Europe, and Johnson, in his State of the Union address, called for an "exchange of visits" between the US and USSR.[32] In December, at the NATO Ministerial, many of the allied foreign ministers celebrated these growing contacts with Eastern Europe and called on each other to continue these efforts to encourage a détente between East and West.[33]

This proliferation of contact, however, had worrying implications for an organization whose public *raison d'être* was the defense of Western Europe from an aggressive Red Army. Brosio warned the allies that as contacts with the Soviet Union increased, the NATO allies "should seek the widest possible consensus as to the objectives to be achieved, the practical possibilities of achieving them, and the methods by which they are to be pursued." It was "essential," he argued,

---

[31] "Summary record of a meeting of the Council, held at Permanent Headquarters, Paris, XVIe., on Wednesday, 11th November, 1964, at 4.15 p.m.," November 18, 1964, CR(64)49, NATO.

[32] "East-West Relations," Secretary General to the Permanent Representatives, February 1, 1965, PO/65/56, NATO.

[33] "East-West Relations," Secretary General to the Permanent Representatives, February 1, 1965, PO/65/56, NATO.

that the NATO allies avoid competing with each other for the Soviets might "play one of us off against the others."[34]

3.10.2 A Thorny Path

NATO held the attention of policymakers and politicians in 1965 and 1966 because of de Gaulle's withdrawal. But they were less interested in the military implications than with the broader change in East-West relations. As the improvised, unorganized, and unofficial contacts across the Iron Curtain multiplied, the allies wondered how they could use NATO in this new environment. To a surprising degree, the thoughts of officials in capitals beyond Paris merged with the General's ideas about détente.

Whitehall might have been shocked and doubtful when the Paris Embassy reported that de Gaulle aimed "to create a continental system based on a Franco-Soviet entente." But it was not a misjudgment.[35] Like his 1958 memorandum, de Gaulle's plan for rapprochement with the Soviet Union was simply the most extreme variation on a theme played in many European capitals. His plans for a bilateral alliance with the Soviet Union represented, at their core, a belief that the Soviet Union was simply Russia by another name, a state in a world of states that could be bargained with like any other.

Wilson and his closest advisers found much to agree with in de Gaulle's policy. While de Gaulle was uncooperative and his methods potentially dangerous, "not all of his ideas are wrong." In fact, several were sound: Wilson agreed with de Gaulle's key points: There would be no war in Europe, and as a result, the "NATO powers" ought to seriously try to promote détente. Since there "is really no danger from the East," there was little if any need for "continuing with

---

[34] Ibid.

[35] "Mr. Geoffrey Robinson," minute by C.C.C. Tickell, December 16, 1966, Reilly Papers, MS.Eng.c.6874, Paris: correspondence, 1965-1969, BL.

the weight of armament on both sides of the Iron Curtain."[36] Wilson put these ideas in a note to his Foreign Secretary, and eventually in a letter to Lyndon Johnson. The crux of his thinking was in his question: "What have we armed for, if not to parley?"[37]

American diplomats were reporting similar opinions throughout the continent. Ridgway Knight, the Ambassador in Belgium, claimed that the Belgians desired "détente and a workable long-term *modus vivendi* with the Soviets." The Europeans believed their safety was achieved and there was widespread consensus the Soviets "no longer threaten Europe."[38]

Where the Europeans and the British differed from de Gaulle, however, was whether NATO could be done away with completely. That distinction was very significant. Even if they wished to pay less for defense, the Europeans (minus the French) still wished to maintain the NATO alliance and the American commitment to Europe. And if they debated just how many troops NATO required, they agreed that some forces were necessary for fostering a détente. And the congenital European worry of a resurgent Germany never abated. Neither, therefore, did support for an integrated military system.[39] For Wilson, NATO was necessary as the "only tolerable context for West German defence."[40] The British remained convinced in 1966 that the "forces of German irredentism" needed containing.[41]

---

[36] "France and NATO," note to the Prime Minister, March 11, 1966, PREM 13/1043, NAUK. Wilson annotated the note: "I very much agree with all this."

[37] "France and Nato," Prime Minister to the Foreign Secretary, PM's Personal Minute No. M11/66, March 15, 1966, PREM 13/1043, NAUK.

[38] Brussels 1087 to SecState, March 10, 1966.

[39] Ibid.

[40] "France and Nato," March 15, 1966.

[41] "France and NATO, (OPD(66)44)," Burke Trend to Prime Minister, PREM 13/1043, NAUK.

In the wake of de Gaulle's attack on NATO in the spring of 1966, American officials began to think of recasting NATO as an instrument to encourage peace rather than prevent war. This was a largely semantic shift, taken for practical reasons, especially amidst reports from Europe of a "widespread feeling that if NATO is not to disintegrate, it must find some rationale beyond military deterrence." The "inevitable" answer was to paint NATO as a tool for attaining a European settlement.[42]

Acheson, thinking up ideas to strengthen NATO in the face of de Gaulle's challenge, suggested that NATO take on a "new purpose" and seek "a resolution of the major European problem left from the last war - the separation from Western Europe and the continued division of Germany."[43] Leddy sought to put Acheson's ideas into policy terms. He suggested NATO do more to encourage trade and cultural relations with the East, and thus lessen distrust; to focus on arms control measures; and encourage contacts between West and East Germany. Immediately, though, he saw a daunting number of impediments. German issues were the domain of the Four Powers (the US, USSR, UK, and France), not NATO. France now opposed any political role for NATO. The German Hallstein doctrine, in which the FRG refused to recognize any country that recognized East Germany, was a major impediment to any NATO's country's efforts toward the East. And the Americans had for years encouraged systems to prevent trade with Eastern Europe, such as the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls (COCOM).[44] Many of these were the formal and informal structures built up to contain the Soviet Union.

---

[42] Cleveland to Acheson, June 24, 1966, RG59, EUR, DAS, Schaetzel files, box 3, folder: "Acheson," NARA.

[43] "Constructive Action: Part II: Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union," undated, RG59, EUR, DAS, Schaetzel files, box 3, folder: "Acheson," NARA.

[44] "NATO and German Reunification," Draft Memo from Leddy to Acheson, April 21, 1966, RG59, EUR, FRG Records, box 1, folder: "De Gaulle and NATO - Pol. 3 - 1966 New Structure for NATO," NARA.

Still, the American position, as summed up by Ambassador in Belgium Ridgway Knight, was to find a "political reason for NATO" if only to help "retain the essential military strength which the organization provides."[45] Cleveland, at NATO, provided the negative corollary to Knight's prognostication. He warned that the United States had to prevent the emerging "impulse to seek a broader detente" from getting "out of hand." Too much focus on improving exchanges with the Soviet Union could leave individual NATO allies exposed but also totally undermine the rationale for maintaining military strength. "The problem," he warned, "must somehow be contained by defining it and coming to grips with it."[46]

The Americans were between a rock and a hard place: Complaints that the United States was too overbearing in NATO, and also that Washington did not show enough leadership. It was vogue in 1960s Europe to speak of American domination. This was one of the reasons Johnson treaded so carefully and quietly in the showdown with de Gaulle. At home, American politicians such as Mansfield were pressing for the United States to withdraw troops from Europe. Others in government hoped that by relaxing their efforts to support NATO and limiting the American military commitment and rhetorical leadership, the Europeans would be forced to increase their own defense expenditures.[47]

At the same time, European diplomats found it puzzling that the Americans kept such a low profile in the face of de Gaulle's threats, and worried about the American preoccupation

---

[45] Brussels 1087 to SecState, March 10, 1966.

[46] Cleveland to Acheson, June 24, 1966, RG59, EUR, DAS, Schaetzel files, box 3, folder: "Acheson," NARA.

[47] Neustadt to McNaughton, April 4, 1966, Yarmolinsky Papers, Subject Files, box 32, folder: France-NATO, 1963-1967, JFKL.

with Vietnam. They started asking American officials: "Why is the US absent from Europe?"[48] Johnson and his officials had certainly not forgotten about Europe.[49] In a National Security Action Memorandum signed in July 1966, Johnson laid out a policy that called for "bridge-building" between East and West in which NATO might play a role.[50] Still, this was a policy statement, not action. Senior officials in Washington knew that the United States lagged behind their allies in terms of "liberalization" in their political and economic relations with Eastern Europe.[51] Zbigniew Brzezinski, a scholar of Eastern European affairs on the State Department's Policy Planning Council, warned Walt Rostow that the Europeans might soon "write us off as no longer of concern to them" if the United States did not show a commitment to "the new realities that are shaping up in Europe."[52]

The only means for the United States to ensure its relevance was to play a role in the emerging efforts of European countries to foster détente with the Soviet Union. Brzezinski, like American policy makers concerned with nuclear policy and the trilateral negotiations, thought the solution was a tripartite Anglo-American-German effort to establish a "common strategic concept" for dealing with Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. But he also saw a role for NATO with "regular discussions within the NAC, and a NATO working group, appointed by and

---

[48] "US and Europe," memorandum for Mr. Rostow from Zbigniew Brzezinski, September 12, 1966, NSF, Agency File, box 53, LBJL.

[49] This is the major theme of Schwartz, *Lyndon Johnson and Europe*. See also Schwartz, "Moving Beyond the Cold War."

[50] Schwartz, "Moving Beyond the Cold War," 85-86.

[51] "Meeting with the President, 1:15 p.m., Thursday, June 23. Talking Points," June 23, 1966, Bator Papers, box 28, LBJL.

[52] "US and Europe," memorandum for Mr. Rostow from Zbigniew Brzezinski, September 12, 1966, NSF, Agency File, box 53, LBJL. For Cleveland's similar worries about leadership, see his note at the top of Cleveland to Acheson, June 24, 1966, RG59, EUR, DAS, Schaetzel files, box 3, folder: "Acheson," NARA. See also "European Impressions," Edward W. Doherty to Owen, June 12, 1967, NSF, Agency File, Box 53, LBJL.

reporting to the NATO Secretary General." These multilateral approaches had their drawbacks, as Dulles had always known and Kennan pointed out. But Brzezinski believed a Cold War that ended with the fragmentation of both alliances would sow the seeds for "new conflicts and tensions." Ultimately, his goal, and the one the Americans would pursue, was to control the pace of détente and promote the "evolution of the Communist camp" rather than simply do away with both NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Détente was no end in itself, but a means of winning the Cold War.[53]

American officials believed that covering NATO in the language of détente would provide a sugar coating for the increasingly bitter pill of paying for NATO's military structure. While the time had come, wrote Yarmolinsky, "to expand NATO's role from one dedicated to defense to one encompassing the development of a Western position leading to a détente in Europe," pursuing détente would be "a thorny path."[54] Rather than push NATO toward détente, Washington needed to use the NATO machine to keep the allies in loose formation in their march East and to warn them of the dangers posed by wily Soviet diplomats.

This thinking motivated Johnson's advisers to press him to make a major public pronouncement on America's policy toward Europe. His staff crafted a speech intended to foster American goals of improving US-USSR relations, while also playing catch-up with the European allies who were already far ahead in improving their contacts with Eastern Europe. On October 7, 1966, Johnson declared that it was time "to make Europe whole again." His speech laid out an argument for overcoming the "bitter hostility" between the opposing alliances in Europe. But he

---

[53] "Memorandum: Atlantic Cohesion and East-West Relations," by Zbigniew Brzezinski, NSF, Agency File, box 53, folder: State Department, Policy Planning, vol. 7 [1 of 2], LBJL.

[54] Adam Yarmolinsky to Francis Bator, June 21, 1966.

also made a strong case for maintaining and strengthening NATO, albeit a "modernize[d]" NATO which would consult on East-West relations.[55]

The speech came on the heels of Erhard's visit to Washington, with all its political fallout in Bonn. In December, the Grand Coalition's new Foreign Minister, Willy Brandt, told his colleagues at the NATO Ministerial that his government would "not be bound by the rigid theology of the Adenauer period" on relations with Eastern Europe. This removed one of the main barriers to East-West exchanges.[56] The Grand Coalition, even before Brandt's accession to the Chancellorship in 1969, opened up possibilities for East-West exchange that had not yet existed in the Cold War. But it was not universally celebrated. Brandt's ideas were "exhilarating to some and disquieting to others." The perennial worry that Germany would shift into neutralism or perhaps into alignment with the East gave weight to the American argument that détente was dangerous and needed coordination.[57]

3.10.3 A New Image and Rationale for NATO

Through the rest of 1966, the United States did little more than rely on "slogans" like Johnson's "building bridges." Harlan Cleveland, writing from NATO, warned that the United States could no longer "afford to stick to generalities in talking about 'East-West' relations." American officials needed to pause and get an "intellectual grip" on what a broad approach to

---

[55] *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Lyndon Johnson: Containing the Public Messages, Speeches and Statements of the President, November 22, 1963 to January 20, 1969,* volume 3, book 2, (Washington, D.C. United States Government Printing Office, 1967), 1126-1127. For the background of the speech, including domestic political motives, see Schwartz, "Moving Beyond the Cold War," 86.

[56] Telegram from Secretary of State Rusk to the Department of State, December 16, 1966, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII,* doc. 229.

[57] "European Impressions," Edward W. Doherty to Owen, June 12, 1967, NSF, Agency File, Box 53, LBJL. Haftendorn notes that the Harmel Report opened avenues for German *Ostpolitik.* Haftendorn, "The Harmel Report and Its Impact on German Ostpolitik." But clearly the emerging German policy made the efforts to discuss détente in NATO more pressing.

détente would mean in a multilateral context. Washington needed to develop a "strategy that will guide" these relations "in the US interest." Détente, and relations with Eastern Europe, was a "dangerous business" and Cleveland wanted a careful analysis done of what NATO or the NATO allies could do before developing a new "pack of initiatives."[58]

At the December 1966 NATO Ministerial, the ministers agreed that the Council "should become a more effective Western clearing-house, particularly … to receive reports from members on current and forthcoming bilateral contacts with the East."[59] This notion mimicked NATO's discussions on non-North Atlantic areas a decade before. Starting in early 1967, the allies did make good use of the Council to provide detailed reports of their bilateral diplomatic dealings.[60] The allies knew, however, that the "most promising avenue" for improving relations between the East and West was to "increase economic contacts." But, also like the debates on the Soviet economic offensive in the developing world, the allies despaired at finding a method to coordinate or control trade in NATO. They left discussions of economic matters largely to organizations like the OECD and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE).[61]

Before a thorough and searching study of a NATO strategy for East-West relations could be undertaken, however, domestic political events intervened to force the allies' hand. While many of the NATO capitals had been thinking of how best to adjust NATO to changes in the Cold War, it was an initiative of the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Pierre Harmel, that put

---

[58] "East-West Relations in NATO," Memorandum to the Secretary form Cleveland, RG59, CFPF, 1964-1966, box 3271, folder: "NATO 3 Meeting Sessions. 1/1/66," NARA.

[59] Barnes Minute of January 24, 1967, FCO 41/19, NAUK.

[60] Thorough reports were provided on top-level visits, like the Belgian Minister of Defence's trip to Poland, Nikolai Podgorny's visit to Italy, and the Dutch Foreign Minister's trip to Romania. J.C.W. Bushell to H.F.T. Smith, February 2, 1967, FCO 28/21, NAUK.

[61] "Note on the Attitudes of East European Governments to Improved Economic Relations with Western Europe," J.H.A. [Adam] Watson, June 23, 1967, NATO/Harmel.

the issue squarely before the North Atlantic Council. The NATO Ministerial adopted Harmel's resolution committing the North Atlantic Council "to study the future tasks which face the Alliance, and its procedures for fulfilling them, in order to strengthen the Alliance as a factor for a durable peace."[62]

The Harmel Exercise was an effort "to provide a new image and rationale for NATO for the 1970s."[63] That the exercise came from Belgium, the new home of NATO headquarters after its eviction from Paris, was not a coincidence. The resolution was a creature of Harmel's own private office and rested on his government's domestic political needs to make the relocation, and continued Belgian defense spending, more palatable to an electorate that saw NATO as "an organization of the past."[64] The political nature of the idea was evident to foreign diplomats when officials in the NATO section of the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs "professed total ignorance of any concrete proposals."[65]

Before Harmel, some NATO allies had suggested that NATO study it goals and purposes for the coming decade. These ideas gained no traction with the rest of NATO for fear any study might irritate de Gaulle. Some historians have seen an explicit link between de Gaulle and Harmel, arguing that it took de Gaulle's withdrawal from military command to allow such a

---

[62] "Extract from C-R(66)71" of a meeting held on December 16, 1966, NATO/Harmel.

[63] "Future Tasks of the Alliance," by the UK delegation at NATO, April 8, 1967, FCO 41/211, NAUK.

[64] His staff informed the Secretary General that Belgian proposal "put forward basically in response to growing pressure of public opinion." Christian Chapman to the Secretary General, GAS/67/6, January 13, 1967, NATO/Harmel. See also See report of Belgian views in London 5028 to SecState, April 26, 1966, NSF, box 177, folder: "France-NATO Dispute, Volume 2, 3/66-4/66," LBJL. See also "Harmel Exercise 1967," by Adam Watson, undated [January 1968], FCO 41/215, NAUK.

[65] Burrows to Barnes, January 12, 1967, FCO 41/210, NAUK. See also Hague to External 74, February 7, 1967, S-2-5100-7-6-v1, LAC.

study to move forward. [66] But the French withdrawal from the military command did not make the process of studying NATO any easier. France still remained party to the Treaty, sat on the North Atlantic Council, and opposed any such consideration of NATO's "future tasks." There was little enthusiasm from any of the allies for the Harmel study, and they begrudged its necessity.[67] Some, like the British and the Germans, after just having put the issue of France and the Fourteen to bed, did not want to generate any more animosity with Paris.[68] The British wanted any study of NATO to avoid discussing economic issues, for doing so might confuse their negotiations with Western Europe.[69] The Americans initially refused to discuss the "German question" - on which any discussion of détente and the new realities of Europe obviously hinged - before the quadripartite powers had done their own study.[70] Further, because the trilateral talks were still ongoing, neither the United States nor the Germans wished to deal with the broad but critical area of "political-military" issues.[71] The Dutch, like the Germans, did not take the study seriously in its first months.[72] After the NAC adopted the Harmel Resolution, the other allies

---

[66] Locher, *Crisis, What Crisis?*, 280.

[67] Too often, scholars assume the Harmel Report was accompanied by an enthusiasm that did not exist. See for example Haftendorn, "The Harmel Report and Its Impact on German Ostpolitik."

[68] FO no. 1674 to Brussels, December 9, 1966, FO 1042/156, NAUK. See also "The Future of the Alliance Study (The Harmel Study)," paper by EUR, NSF, Agency File, Box 60, LBJL. For more on British distaste for the idea see "Wise Men" Exercise, Extract of conversation between Leddy and Hood in Washington, undated, FO 1042/156, NAUK; Tomkins to Hood, November 28, 1968, FO 1042/156, NAUK.

[69] UKDel no. 650 to FO, December 4, 1966.

[70] Washington no. 3367 to FO, December 9, 1966, FO 1042/156, NAUK.

[71] "Belgian Proposal for Experts Study of Future of NATO ("Wisemen")," background paper for Brosio visit, November 14, 1966, DDRS, CK3100339744; "Future Tasks of the Alliance: Record of a meeting with the Special Group on Friday 17 March [1967]," March 20, 1967, FCO 41/210, NAUK.

[72] Bonn no. 1810 to FO, December 12, 1966, FO 1042/156, NAUK; Carran to Hood, December 8, 1966, FO 1042/156, NAUK.

found it "rather depressing" when the Belgians turned "upon others to give it substance by producing ideas."[73] What the allies knew, broadly, was that Harmel hoped to see NATO "increasingly assume a political character and become '*une alliance pour la paix*.'"[74]

Still, many of the allied governments shared the Belgian government's political needs. What the Americans complained were "fuzzy, but nonetheless real" desires to "reexamine and reformulate Alliance goals" were in fact quite explicit on the continent.[75] The Italian Socialist Unified Party had pledged their "full support" to NATO, but only on the condition there was an "evolution of the alliance." A failure to effectively redefine NATO would be a big boost to the Italian Communist Party.[76] The Norwegians expected a major debate on NATO in the *Storting* in the upcoming year, and it was imperative that the government could explain "that the Alliance and détente were not contradictory."[77] Like the Belgians, the Danes, Dutch, Canadians, Italians, and Norwegians all claimed they needed a "more active and political" component to NATO to help maintain NATO's "defence machinery."[78] The Americans also had their political needs. They saw a review of NATO as a possible weapon with which to "combat the ever-present pressure of isolationism, exemplified in the Mansfield Resolution."[79]

---

[73] Burrows to Barnes, January 11, 1967, FCO 41/210, NAUK.

[74] Brussels to External 144, February 3, 1967, S-2-5100-7-6-v1, LAC.

[75] "The Future of the Alliance Study (The Harmel Study)."

[76] UKDel to FO, December 11, 1967, FCO 41/214, NAUK.

[77] UKDel no. 23 Saving to FO, November 25, 1967, FCO 41/214, NAUK.

[78] "NATO Studies of European Security, the German Problem and Arms Control," Watson to Hood, November 14, 1967, FCO 41/214, NAUK; see also Watson to Burrows, October 19, 1967, FCO 41/213, NAUK.

[79] "Record of a Conversation at a Luncheon Given by the United States' Minister, in the American Embassy, on Thursday, 14 September, 1967," September 15, 1967, FCO 41/212, NAUK.

While in some cases the allies fretted over specific domestic political debates, there was a broader fear that NATO would lose its appeal as young Europeans that did "not remember why we got into an Atlantic Alliance to begin with" reached political maturity. [80] It was necessary to convince a voting public which otherwise might not "automatically accept that [NATO] should continue indefinitely after 1969."[81] NATO's future rested on the allies convincing their citizens "that NATO can play a constructive role in East/West relations if the détente develops."[82]

It is incomplete, and perhaps a little misleading, to argue that the Harmel Exercise gave a voice to NATO's smaller powers.[83] Nor is it right to argue that Johnson "moved the alliance" toward a policy of détente.[84] The direct impetus for the Harmel Exercise was a shared domestic political need, felt by many allies of all sizes, to convince their voters that NATO was worth maintaining. Any American enthusiasm for the idea went only so far as they saw an opportunity to control détente and inform the allies of the risks of unmitigated exchange with the East. For

---

[80] Telegram from the Mission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and European Regional Organizations to the Department of State, December 17, 1966, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII*, doc. 232. Burrows made similar arguments to the Right Honourable George Brown, December 22, 1967, FCO 41/215, NAUK.

[81] "Mr. Eugene Rostow's Visit – Harmel Exercise," Watson to Hood, September 12, 1967, FCO 41/212, NAUK; "Harmel Exercise 1967," undated.

[82] Barnes to Millard, May 23, 1967, FCO 41/211, NAUK. Similar arguments are made in The NATO 'Harmel' Exercise," Memorandum for Mr. Rostow, October 2, 1967, DDRS, CK3100133443; Record of Discussion at the 23d Meeting of the Senior Interdepartmental Group, October 19, 1967, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII*, doc. 271. The idea that NATO hindered, rather than helped, the relaxation of tensions was still strong years after Kennan had given his Reith lectures. See the first source in this note and Belgian views in London 5028 to SecState, April 26, 1966, NSF, box 177, folder: "France-NATO Dispute, Volume 2, 3/66-4/66," LBJL.

[83] This is the main theme of Locher, *Crisis? What Crisis?* Kaplan, "The U.S. And NATO in the Johnson Years," 135-36.

[84] Schwartz, *Lyndon Johnson and Europe*, 46. Johnson, according to Rusk, took little interest in the exercise. Dean Rusk, Oral History IV, LBJL, 14.

others, like the British, there was hope that the study "might encourage some of the more reticent allies" - no doubt including the Americans - "that steps towards détente can be safely taken."[85]

There was enough of a broad consensus that the Harmel Exercise was necessary - that NATO needed a new image acceptable to the voting public - for the study to go forward. Just what, precisely, the Harmel Exercise would accomplish, and how, was secondary. The Permanent Representatives, jealous of ceding national prerogatives to an international organization, moved quickly to ensure national delegations and not the NATO staff controlled the study.[86] The allies agreed, after much haggling, that an ad hoc group of national officials organized into an over-arching Special Group would oversee the work of four sub-groups. Rapporteurs were assigned to the sub-groups, and they wrote a report to the Special Group of their sub-groups discussions. The Special group would draw on these reports to write the final "Harmel Report."

East-West relations, the prospects for détente, and a possible European settlement were the responsibility of Sub-Group 1. Since any European settlement would revolve around Germany, the allies agreed it was necessary to have a German rapporteur. Still, "no one was willing to leave it to the Germans alone," according to Walt Rostow, so the group had both a German and British rapporteur. Sub-Group 2, led by Paul-Henri Spaak, dealt with inter-allied relations, especially those between North America and Europe. Foy Kohler, a foreign service officer who served as US ambassador in Moscow during the Cuban Missile crisis and had much experience dealing with the NATO allies, was the rapporteur for Sub-Group 3

[85] UKDel no. 650 to FO, December 4, 1966.

[86] NATOParis to External 434, February 22, 1967, S-2-5100-7-6-v1, LAC.

on the security and defense policy. Sub-Group 4, on problems outside the North Atlantic area, was a hot potato that ultimately fell in the lap of a Dutch professor named Patijhn.[87]

The results of Working Groups 2 and 4 were insignificant. The allies created Working Group 2 to discuss European-American relations with the expectation Britain would soon join the Common Market and that transatlantic relations would undergo fundamental change. De Gaulle's May 1967 veto ended this prospect.[88] The less generous understanding of Working Groups 2's purpose was another Belgian political need: to provide an "outlet for Monsieur Spaak's energies in this field."[89] Spaak led the sub-group with considerable gusto but also his traditional controversy. The French found his efforts upsetting and offensive.[90] Spaak's papers had to be re-written and were essentially written off.

Working Group 4 had offered hope to Americans who saw it as "part of the continuing process of re-engaging Western Europe's interest and sense of responsibility on a world-wide basis." They hoped that current consultations and Harmel "will help get some motion on concerting policies for the Mediterranean and the Middle East. Next year we might be able to direct Allied interest to more distant geographical areas such as China."[91]

But the idea was toxic, especially in the shadow of Vietnam. Canada and Italy both backed out of the rapporteur job. All the allies could read between the lines. The Canadians,

---

[87] See "The NATO 'Harmel' Exercise," Memorandum for Mr. Rostow, October 2, 1967, DDRS, CK3100133443 for a breakdown of the groups. For more on the groups and their subjects, see Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in France, September 6, 1967, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII*, doc. 264.

[88] NATOParis to External 1601, July 14, 1967, S-2-5100-7-6-v1, LAC.

[89] "Harmel Exercise 1967."

[90] For French reactions see "Harmel Exercise (Part 1 of 3), memorandum of conversation, September 25, 1967, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII*, doc. 266.

[91] "The Future of the Alliance Study (The Harmel Study)."

for example, when interviewed by NATO officials as part of the Working Group's research, "were prodigal with examples of American invitations to consult which were, they said, in fact invitations to align along the American position."[92] The current, albeit growing, use of NATO's committees and the Atlantic Policy Advisory Group were more than enough for discussing the world outside the North Atlantic and no one was eager for more American invitations.

3.10.4 Two Pillars

The real substance of the Harmel Exercise was in Working Groups 1 and 3, which considered, respectively, East-West relations and defense policy. Foy Kohler, who chaired Sub-Group 3, and Adam Watson, the British co-rapporteur of Sub-Group 1, cooperated as they produced their reports. At the outset, Kohler told Watson while there was no "Webster definition" of détente, he hoped the Harmel Exercise would help the allies come to some consensus on what Soviet objectives were in pressing détente and what Western attitudes should be.[93]

Finding common ground was challenging. There was no agreement between NATO allies, not even between officials in national capitals, on what détente was or whether it existed at all. One NATO official tried to catalogue the conundrums: If indeed the Soviet threat had diminished, as so many believed, what was the cause? Were the Soviets less powerful now? Or were they simply counterbalanced by force? If so, did NATO itself provide a counterbalance, or were the Soviets simply deterred by American nuclear power? Was Moscow reticent because of the Sino-Soviet rift, or because the cohesion of the Warsaw Pact was less than previously? Or had the Soviets themselves "radically changed their minds"?[94] The response to these questions

---

[92] John Vernon to Director of Information, JV(67)314, June 22, 1967, NATO/Harmel.

[93] Letter from Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Kohler) to the British Assistant Under Secretary of State (Watson), July 13, 1967, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII*, doc. 260.

[94] A. G Kühn to A.S.G.(P.A.), January 9, 1967, RS/67/4, January 9, 1967, NATO/Harmel.

would have dramatically different consequences for NATO by influencing whether it needed to maintain its troop strength, reduce troops, or even continue to exist as a military or political organization.

The questionnaire that Watson distributed to the members of his group posed some of the choices: "Is détente an end in itself? Or is it rather to be seen as a means to an end, the end being a European settlement and disarmament?"[95] In the working group, discussion turned toward the philosophical. Helmut Sonnenfeldt, an American representative on Watson's sub-group, argued that it was "not possible to define détente in real life" because everyone had his own definition.[96]

Although there was no official agreement on détente's meaning, a consensus emerged that the purpose of détente – and by extension the purpose of NATO – was to achieve a European settlement. This had been the major thrust of Johnson's October 1966 speech, and American officials like Eugene Rostow continued to argue "beyond deterrence and détente, the objective of the Alliance is to create conditions in which the division in Europe could be healed."[97] Brosio and the Secretary General's staff also used this language that Johnson had employed in calculated response to what Americans thought Europeans wanted. Brosio started referring to the "principal task of the Alliance" as "achiev[ing] a stable settlement in Europe."[98]

This notion, however, received little support from the American officials and diplomats, especially Kohler, who actually shaped the Harmel Exercise. They no doubt agreed with their

---

[95] "Future Tasks of the Alliance," by the UK delegation at NATO, April 8, 1967, FCO 41/211, NAUK.

[96] NATOParis to External, May 16, 1967, S-2-5100-7-6-v1, LAC.

[97] "Address by the Honorable Eugene Rostow, Under Secretary for Political Affairs, before the American Chamber of Commerce. Brussels, Belgium, April 14, 1967," April 15, 1967, White House Aides, Bellinger, box 13, LBJL.

[98] Christian Chapman to the Secretary General, January 13, 1967. See similar conclusions in "Record of Meeting in the Office of the Secretary General, 25th February 1967, at 10.30 a.m.," NATO/Harmel.

President that relaxing East-West tensions was good for the United States, if handled carefully. But they were not optimistic. At the spring 1967 meeting of American Chiefs of Mission in Europe, Tommy Thompson "stated flatly that detente doesn't exist," and none of his colleagues disagreed.[99]

Kohler himself thought Moscow was using détente to further Soviet interests, hoping to relax "tensions selectively, to weaken the cohesion of the Alliance, divide the states of Western Europe, and in particular, to isolate the Federal Republic and open differences between Western Europe and the US." Their long-term objective was to "reduce US influence in Western Europe and eventually remove the US presence from the continent" by making NATO "no longer relevant."[100] He could point to continued improvements in Soviet weaponry, especially missiles, as evidence of their true intentions.

Kohler worked throughout the Harmel Exercise to emphasize the need for "defence and solidarity," and to play down "freewheeling bilateralism."[101] Kohler's final sub-group report argued that NATO members' security "rests on two pillars." First, the "maintenance of adequate military strength and political solidarity to deter aggression and other forms of pressure." Second were "realistic measures to reduce tensions and the risk of conflict, including arms control and disarmament measures."[102] The Special Group gave the concept of two pillars a prominent place in the final Harmel Report. But there should be no assumption of equality or equivalence

---

[99] Schaetzel to Acheson, April 2, 1967, AP, Gen. Corr., Box 28, Folder 357

[100] Letter from Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Kohler) to the British Assistant Under Secretary of State (Watson), July 13, 1967.

[101] "Harmel Exercise (next steps)," J.H.A. Watson, May 23, 1967, FCO 41/211, NAUK.

[102] "The Future Security Policy of The Alliance (Report of Subgroup 3," by Kohler, October 6, 1967, NATO/Harmel.

between the pillars in the minds of allied officials. Détente was always, and would only be, a possibility derived from a continued and consistent maintenance of NATO's military strength.[103]

The Americans had effectively done their job in using the Harmel Exercise to warn their allies of the risks of détente. They seemed to have convinced Brosio of the harm in trying to change NATO too much in response to hopeful claims about détente. In the late spring of 1967 Brosio feared such efforts to adapt NATO might "weaken the Alliance and perhaps disintegrate it altogether." He started "bombarding" the sub-groups with papers and oral advice "which tends to stress the Soviet political threat and the need for collective rather than bilateral action."[104]

The British, for their part, disagreed with the United States on the security situation. They continued to believe, as Thomson argued during the trilaterals (as had McNamara), that the security situation had changed significantly as a result of changes in Soviet thinking.[105] Still, the Foreign Office thought it "impossible to state the political purpose of NATO, which in his view should be largely related to the détente without at the same time restating the military purpose of it which made the détente possible."[106] Whether because of the United States' urging or their own analysis, the European allies largely agreed that whatever they said publicly about NATO's new role, NATO's military structure remained important and necessary.[107] "Western Europe and its institutions," reported one of the NATO international staffers "will survive as long as the Soviets

---

[103] See Memorandum of Conversation. "Harmel Exercise (Part 1 of 3)," memorandum of conversation, September 25, 1967, 4:30 pm *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII*, doc. 266.

[104] Watson to Barnes, May 15, 1967, FCO 41/211, NAUK.

[105] See Memorandum of Conversation. "Harmel Exercise (Part 1 of 3)," memorandum of conversation, September 25, 1967, 4:30 pm *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII*, doc. 266.

[106] Burrows to Barnes, January 26, 1967, FCO 41/210, NAUK.

[107] Memorandum from the Counselor of the Department of State (Bowie) to Secretary of State Rusk. October 16, 1967, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII,* doc. 270.

tolerate it." They tolerated Western Europe now because of the presence of Americans troops and American nuclear weapons. "Therefore, NATO commitments must continue."[108]

Still, Kohler's attention to arms control and disarmament was of consequence. Kohler argued that the NATO machinery should be expanded to include a permanent arms control and disarmament committee. Kohler and State Department officials were opposed to "any reductions of forces by anyone, including the United States, in Europe." Although the trilateral exercise had prevented any unilateral withdrawals in 1967, the Americans wished to establish a more enduring process for managing, and ideally preventing, any troop reductions unmatched by the East.[109] A committee on arms control and disarmament, however, provided assurances to the Americans they could help control reductions, even while NATO publicly appeared to be an institution with a new goal of achieving mutual force reductions with the Warsaw Pact. This modest idea to expand the NATO machine was considered the most constructive aspect of the whole Harmel Report.[110]

Before the four sub-group reports could be synthesized to produce the official Harmel Report, the exercise reached its own state of crisis. The allies complained about the chaos of the sub-groups and drafting process, and it was unclear whether the allies could produce a valuable final product.[111] Important officials involved in the project, like Bob Bowie, Zbigniew

---

[108] A. Alacakaptan to ASG for Political Affairs, GAS/67/6, January 3, 1967, NATO/Harmel.

[109] Tomkins to Hood, October 5, 1967, FCO 41/213, NAUK. On plans for NATO and disarmament, see Memorandum of Conversation. "Harmel Exercise (Part 1 of 3)," memorandum of conversation, September 25, 1967, 4:30 pm *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII*, doc. 266.

[110] NATOParis to External 2128, September 27, 1967, S-2-5100-7-6-v2, LAC.

[111] NATOParis to External 1601, July 14, 1967, S-2-5100-7-6-v1, LAC.

Brzezinski, and John Barnes of the Foreign Office all thought it would have been better had the Harmel initiative not begun at all.[112]

Throughout the study, French officials had let the "wheels" of the Harmel Exercise turn, "always, however, holding a spanner poised for dropping between them."[113] As the rapporteurs presented their papers, de Gaulle dropped the wrench. The French claimed great offense in these efforts to charge NATO with some sort of political responsibility. Nearly a decade after his revolutionary memorandum de Gaulle had completely reversed his stance: NATO was only a military alliance and had no responsibility for coordinating anything but the defense of Europe. Couve spoke "violently" to Brosio to this effect.[114] Because the French were upset, the Germans were ready to throw the entire project overboard rather than open another rift with France.[115] The British wished to avoid any major battle with Paris to protect their application to the Common Market.[116] They were willing to jettison the "expendable" reports of Working Groups 2 and 4 that had particularly offended France in order to keep the peace.[117]

Still, the domestic political needs that necessitated the study kept it going. Denmark and Norway, especially, but also the Canadians and Germans, warned that the "Harmel Exercise could not just terminate in empty space."[118] The Americans were the least resistant to French

---

[112] "The Future of NATO," Barnes to Hood, FCO 41/214, NAUK.

[113] "The NATO 'Harmel' Exercise," Memorandum for Mr. Rostow, October 2, 1967, DDRS, CK3100133443.

[114] UKDel no. 303 to FO, September 26, 1967, FCO 41/212, NAUK.

[115] NATOParis to External 2219, October 6, 1967, S-2-5100-7-6-v2, LAC.

[116] Burrows to Hood, September 21, 1967, FCO 41/212, NAUK; Burrows to Hood, September 21, 1967, FCO 41/212, NAUK.

[117] Parsons to Millard, September 27, 1967, FCO 41/212, NAUK.

[118] Telegram from the Mission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to the Department of State, November 23, 1967, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII,* doc. 277.

demands, and supported the study once it got started. They worried that if the French scuttled the Harmel Report, it would strengthen those in the United States calling for the return of American troops from the continent.[119] The allies were keen to have a final report before the December 1967 ministerial meeting that could be agreed to with fanfare. They also needed something that the France could agree to. The allies kept re-drafting the final report - an amalgam of watered-down rapporteur's report – under the looming pressure of what verged on the "almost complete failure of Harmel exercise as a public presentation of future tasks of alliance."[120]

The Canadian delegation reported that the final report was "somewhat indigestible" for the public and journalists, but it was trotted out at the December Ministerial. The allies were content that the public document, which claimed NATO rested on two pillars – deterrence and détente - portrayed the alliance as "forward looking and actively seeking a political settlement in Europe."[121]

The study of East-West relations was very confusing for the East. One Russian diplomat told an NSC staffer that he was "genuinely puzzled as to why such apparent effort could yield so innocuous a result."[122] Anatoly Dobrynin, the Soviet Ambassador in Washington, asked Walt Rostow whether the report was "an operational decision or a statement of intent? Are we expected to respond now?"[123] Like so much of the NATO machine built up in the 1950s and 1960s, the Harmel Report had been about relations between allies, not enemies.

---

[119] Burrows to Hood, September 21, 1967, FCO 41/212, NAUK.

[120] External DL3538 to NATO, November 21, 1967, S-2-5100-7-6-v2, LAC.

[121] External DL3767 to NATO, December 21, 1967, S-2-5100-7-6-v2, LAC.

[122] Memorandum of conversation between Victor Kompletov, Counsellor of the Embassy of the USSR, and Richard N. Ullman, NSC Staff, December 4, 1967, NSF, Fried Files, box 2, LBJL.

[123] Memorandum of Conversation, December 18, 1967, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII*, doc. 282.

3.10.5 Conversion and Subversion

Much of the Sub-Group 1 and 3 reports did not go into the final Harmel Report because of the need to carry the French on the final draft, and because the final product was to be a public appeal as much as a policy statement. But the allies believed they had at least "begun the examination of the responsibilities of NATO in the fields of European security, Germany and the détente on the one hand, and defence and arms control on the other." These, they expected, would be NATO's main concerns going forward.[124]

Disarmament and arms control took priority over the broader questions of European Security and German reunification.[125] An augmented group of the Political Advisers Committee (called the Senior PAC) took on the responsibility for discussing disarmament matters relevant to NATO. While the 14-power group at the Eighteen National Committee would still discuss broader issues of nuclear proliferation on Disarmament in Geneva, NATO would focus on any "pact to pact" subjects, especially troop reductions.[126]

Predictably, given the bureaucratic wrangling that defined committee work at NATO, the first meeting after the work program "achieved relatively little;" it was "devoted to argument about when and how [the] committee might examine [the] problems and possibilities of balanced forced reductions."[127] But the allies got to work determining just what they would need - mainly intelligence information - to begin discussing the possibilities for a balanced force reduction with the Warsaw Pact.[128] Some delegations submitted papers, bringing in disarmament and military

---

[124] "NATO Studies of European Security, the German Problem and Arms Control," Watson to Hood, November 14, 1967, FCO 41/214, NAUK.

[125] NATO Paris to External 301, February 9, 1968, S-2-5100-7-6-v3, LAC.

[126] NATO to External 54, January 11, 1968, S-2-5100-7-6-v3, LAC.

[127] NATO to External 822, March 29, 1968, S-2-5100-7-6-v3, LAC.

[128] NATO to External 54, January 11, 1968, S-2-5100-7-6-v3, LAC.

experts to "embark on elaboration of models" for balanced force reductions[129] These studies, with their inauspicious beginning in 1968, led to the Mutual Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) negotiations of the 1970s.[130]

The use of the NATO machine to discuss limiting or even ending the Cold War was, indeed, a remarkable transition, especially in contrast with the awkward silences during the Berlin Crisis.[131] It is perhaps too much to argue, however, that this transformation was "instrumental to the multilateralization of détente."[132] NATO, in fact, could *do* very little. The broader improvement of East-West relations, which served both to provide economic opportunities for NATO allies and, they hoped, to fragment the Warsaw Pact, rested on a complex web of decisions made by various national bureaucracies, individual firms, and a number of international organizations.

As noted above, as early as the 1960s, allied officials were convinced that economic cooperation between East and West Europe held the key to improved relations. Brzezinski and Americans on the Policy Planning Staff continued to believe this in 1966.[133] Throughout the Harmel Exercise, British officials tried to find ways to build on "trade," which they thought was the "most useful fields for exchanges of information and ideas." The problems were not new: Private companies from NATO countries competed with each other for markets and contracts, making coordination difficult. Some specific financial exchanges, like British credits to the East

---

[129] NATO to External 849, April 3, 1968, S-2-5100-7-6-v3, LAC.

[130] Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation*, 128.

[131] See Suri, "The Normative Resilience of NATO."

[132] Andreas Wenger, "NATO's Transformation," ibid., 223.

[133] "Memorandum: Atlantic Cohesion and East-West Relations," by Zbigniew Brzezinski, NSF, Agency File, box 53, folder: State Department, Policy Planning, vol. 7 [1 of 2], LBJL.

Germans, complicated the FRG's efforts to apply carrots and sticks against Pankow.[134] The countries of the Warsaw Pact were moving to greater participation in intentional organizations and global economics in the 1960s: Poland applied to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and Hungary wished to join the IMF. For these applications to succeed, the Warsaw Pact countries in question had to build consensus among the NATO allies. But governments handled these discussions - critical to loosening ties between Moscow and Warsaw or Budapest – bilaterally, at least at first.[135] The British preferred to use the ECE, and perhaps eventually the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), as their "chief instrument for multilateral E[ast]/W[est] economic cooperation."[136] They, like the other allies, were prepared to discuss the growing East-West relations with their allies, but otherwise saw "no reason for an initiative by us in NATO."[137] NATO did not, could not, and would not work to manage East-West trade.

The Harmel Report, Jeremi Suri writes, "legitimized diplomatic overtures to the East."[138] There is truth to this. But diplomatic overtures had already begun and the allies already considered them legitimate. In fact, the Harmel Exercise bears greater resemblance to another process Suri describes: the use of détente to contain challengers to the existing political order of

---

[134] "Suggestions Arising out of N.A.T.O. Report on East/West Relations," B.L. Crowe to Mr. Rhodes, January 31, 1967, FCO 41/19, NAUK.

[135] Rhodes minute of February 6 on "Suggestions Arising out of N.A.T.O. Report on East/West Relations," January 31, 1967.

[136] Wilde minute of February 20 on "Suggestions Arising out of N.A.T.O. Report on East/West Relations," January 31, 1967.

[137] Rhodes minute of February 21 on "Suggestions Arising out of N.A.T.O. Report on East/West Relations," January 31, 1967.

[138] Suri, "The Normative Resilience of NATO," 25.

the 1960s.[139] When Kohler argued that détente provided a "greater risk of disagreement amongst us because there are more choices to be made and greater room for maneuver," he was arguing that NATO could serve to ensure that no ally moved toward the East in such a way as to make itself, or NATO, vulnerable. In calls for détente, the Americans heard the best reason for the "maintenance of the NATO organization as a locus of consultation." As in the discussions over the developing world, Berlin, and nuclear policy, the United States wished to maintain some freedom of maneuver, and believed there were limits on how far it would be "desirable to coordinate East-West contacts in NATO."[140] But they believed the discussion of European security and a possible settlement in NATO was a part of the NATO machine developed as the "primary vehicle keeping US and Western European thinking on this subject from diverging."[141]

The Harmel Exercise and the consideration of East-West relations in NATO in 1966 and 1967 did not fundamentally transform NATO. Instead, it marked another development of the NATO machine. It was part of expanding NATO to "serve as [a] meeting place for senior officials from capitals," supplementing the work of the delegations, and creating a closer connection between the "main stream of policy" that was crafted in national capitals. The NPG had been a "substantial step" in this direction, because of the role played by defense ministers.[142] The arms and control and disarmament committees never achieved this status, but they were

---

[139] Suri, *Power and Protest*, 213-16.

[140] Letter from Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Kohler) to the British Assistant Under Secretary of State (Watson), July 13, 1967.

[141] Camps' description was predictive, not descriptive. "The Relationship between Further Integration in Western Europe and German Reunification," by Miriam Camps, June 21, 1967, NSF, Agency File, box 53, LBJL.

[142] Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in France, September 6, 1967, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII*, doc. 264.

consistent with the development of the NATO committee structure that included the committees of political and economic advisers and the experts committees on regional areas. Helmut Sonnenfeldt had told his colleagues that the best way to understand détente was as a "mutual process of conversion and subversion."[143] This description is also an apt explanation of what the NATO allies were trying to achieve, using the NATO machine to try to convert and subvert their allies' policy so that it more closely matched their own.

[143] NATOParis to External, May 16, 1967, S-2-5100-7-6-v1, LAC.

CONCLUSION: KEEPING A-HOLD OF NURSE

"The West in the end will be rescued by the heretics of the East."[1]
- Harold Nicolson, in *Foreign Affairs*, 1961

"[N]o alliance had ever ended in success. They all ultimately ended in failure. But some of them served their purpose for a very considerable time and were very successful. That is all that could be hoped of NATO. Nothing is permanent."
- Lauris Norstad, just before his appointment as Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, 1956[2]

***

In the middle of the night between August 20 and 21, 1968, NATO's Situation Center, recently formed at NATO's new headquarters in Evere, Belgium, to monitor crises and ensure allied preparedness, was quiet. At 2:09 a.m. the Associated Press put out a "flash" report on its wire service announcing that Warsaw Pact tanks were rolling into Prague. The Situation Center remained quiet. Unbeknownst to officials, the one teleprinter was out of order. And although several national capitals were aware of the invasion, they did inform anyone at NATO. At 3:15 a.m., the Duty Officer at the SHAPE command, 85 kilometers away, called his colleagues at the Situation Center to tell them of the news flash. Only then did the Situation Center rouse NATO's senior officials. They did not arrive at the Situation Center until 4:15, and the NATO delegations were not advised of the conflict until 5:00 that morning.[3]

NATO's Situation Center was set up to receive information from SHAPE but also from national ministries. It was to collate this information and distribute it to all of the national delegations, allied capitals, and major NATO commanders. But the allies' had not alerted NATO

---

[1] Harold Nicolson, "Diplomacy Then and Now," *Foreign Affairs* 40, no. 1 (October 1961): 41.

[2] Sulzberger, *The Last of the Giants*, 438.

[3] "Crisis Management Aspects of the Invasion of Czechoslovakia," Report by the Council Operations and Exercise Co-ordinating Working Group, C-M(68)42, September 25, 1968, NATO.

when they learned of the invasion, the national intelligence authorities on which NATO relied for its intelligence had not passed on word, and NATO's radar network had failed to spot Soviet aircraft entering into Czechoslovakia.[4] For the first twelve hours of the crisis NATO Headquarters "functioned almost entirely on press reports."[5]

NATO officials did have warning that the Soviets were preparing some sort of response to the Czechoslovak dissidents. As early as April 1968, SHAPE had started including reports on Czechoslovakia in its weekly intelligence report. In May, the NATO's Situation Center started issuing "special bulletins." But there was "no single assessment" that had predicted an invasion, and "NATO had no tactical warning whatever" of the invasion.[6] Instead, like the night three Red Army divisions had moved around Berlin to cover the building of the Berlin Wall, NATO had proved unable to recognize Warsaw Pact military actions in the heart of Europe.

***

The Prague coup of 1948 was one of the main catalysts for forming the alliance in the first place; twenty years later, Soviet actions in Prague and Czechoslovakia convinced the allies to ignore the provisions in the Treaty allowing them to leave the alliance after 1969. Czechoslovakia had tremendous implications for *Pax Atlantica* and the future of NATO. On the one hand, the NATO allies were convinced that the Soviet satellites wanted to, and would eventually, break out of their orbit around Moscow and join the liberal world order that NATO defended. On the other hand, the allies knew that collapsing empires were dangerous things. The

---

[4] "NATO and Czechoslovakia," Barnes for D. Greenhill, September 10, 1968, FCO 41/444, NAUK.

[5] "Crisis Management Aspects of the Invasion of Czechoslovakia," September 25, 1968.

[6] "A Military Analysis and Assessment of the Warsaw Pact Invasion of Czechoslovakia," DPC/D(68)30, September 26, 1968, and "Analysis of Recent Soviet Actions in Czechoslovakia from a Military Point of View," MCM-70-68(Revised), September 23, 1968, both in NATO.

changes in the Eastern European countries might have disastrous consequences if the Soviets used force to crush dissent. The consequences would be unpredictable and might spiral out of control. It was no longer prudent to guess at Soviet intentions; the Military Committee urged the allies that NATO's plans "must consider the enemy's capabilities for military courses of action rather than an estimate of his possible intentions."[7] As Rusk told the Cabinet, the Soviet decision to take military action "indicates that the Soviets are either changing their basic attitudes or are nervous and fearful and therefore dangerous."[8]

In a sense, then, the West was back to where it was at the start of the Cold War: containing the Soviet Union and waiting for it to rot from the inside out. NATO remained essential to contain the Soviets, to contain the Germans, and - now that the collapse of the Soviet empire was at least conceivable - to control the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. But there was one signal difference. The NATO allies' discussions of NATO's future after Czechoslovakia, though they involved fundamental reconsideration of the shape of the alliance, did not harken to the old tropes of the Atlantic mystique. Gone were the references to community, values, culture and heritage; no longer was it simply assumed that the NATO allies operated together because they were bound exclusively by intangibles. They no longer argued that the values they celebrated were inherent only to North Americans and western Europeans; how could they when Czechoslovaks had died in search of them? They knew that NATO was necessary to maintain the *Pax Atlantica*, and that they would benefit if their world order was maintained and expanded. Once again, the NATO allies considered how best to adapt NATO to meet changes in the world and at home, especially the need for Europe both to have a greater voice and carry more of the

---

[7] "A Military Analysis and Assessment of the Warsaw Pact Invasion of Czechoslovakia," DPC(68)30, September 26, 1968, NATO.

[8] "Minute of the [Cabinet] Meeting, September 5, 1968, Cabinet Papers, Box 14, LBJL.

burden in the alliance. NATO's post-Czechoslovakia diplomacy was, like past diplomacy at NATO, hard-nosed and based on national interests. What was different was that the allies did not pretend it was anything else.

The Dangers of Explosion

The increase of Warsaw Pact troops in Czechoslovakia was problematic from a strictly military point of view, for it moved more troops closer to NATO and shifted warning time for any attack against the West. The allies did not believe the Warsaw Pact would attack NATO directly, but they envisioned a number of scenarios that could lead to war. Belgian General Baron Charles de Cumont, Chair of the NATO Military Committee, had worried that perhaps units - maybe even whole divisions - of Czechoslovak troops might retreat or be forced across their borders into Bavaria or Austria. How would NATO react? Who would manage the refugees? Who would disarm these soldiers, who, after all, belonged to the Warsaw Pact?[9] The Department of State sent out a "flash" cable to the NATO mission and all NATO capitals to ensure American forces and its allies avoided any border incident that might open a new conflict.[10]

But what if the Soviets took further steps to crush dissidents in Eastern Europe? Soviet efforts to "nail down the status quo," warned John Leddy, would have "a dynamism of its own" and lead to further violence. General de Cumont told the Council the Soviets could move again, and it was especially "disquieting … that the Russians had now tasted blood." There were rumors the Soviets might move next on Romania. NATO military officials believed in early September that Moscow was "following the same pattern of preparatory moves with respect to

[9] Ginsburgh to Rostow, August 15, 1968, DDRS, CK3100510797.

[10] Department of State 224681 to US Mission NATO, all NATO Capitals, US Mission Berlin, USUN, August 20, 1968, DDRS, CK3100155333.

Rumania as that which had taken place before the invasion of Czechoslovakia."[11] A move against Romania, either by invasion, Warsaw Pact maneuvers meant to bring Romania to heel, or perhaps a *coup d'état* against Nicolae Ceaușescu, might touch off a frontier incident between Rumania and Hungary. It might also be preparation for a move against Tito. If so, American officials expected the United States would "engage in military support operations for Yugoslavia."[12] Maybe the Soviets would move on Austria? Finland? Berlin? Or perhaps the East Germans would rise up again, creating a humanitarian catastrophe, refugees, and great confusion?[13]

After 1968, the allies could no longer ignore violence in Europe, even if it was not directed at NATO. As John Leddy put it, "aggression anywhere in Europe is of concern to NATO."[14] And the prospects for violence in Europe were increasing and might "spill-over" into the NATO area.[15] The pressure for liberalization in Eastern Europe created an international situation now

---

[11] UKDel No. 56 Saving to FO, September 2, 1968, FCO 28/57, NAUK.

[12] "Material for Use in the SIG Meeting, October 4, Concerning Contingency Planning in Europe," Leddy to the Under Secretary, October 1, 1968, NSF, Agency File, Box 59, LBJL.

[13] These worries set off a flurry of rumors, reporting, and intelligence reports; for high-level discussions of these issues, see the previous notes in this paragraph and: "Talking Points on Czechoslovakian Situation fur Use at Cabinet Meeting, Thursday, 22 August 1968," memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from Paul Warnke, August 21, 1968, DDRS, CK3100049733; UKDel No. 56 Saving to FO, September 2, 1968, FCO 28/57, NAUK; "Minute of the [Cabinet] Meeting, September 5, 1968; "Will the Russians try to remove Ceausescu?" Smith to Maitland, September 6, 1968, FCO 28/57, NAUK; FO no. 7055 to Washington, October 2, (N) [1968], FCO 28/57, NAUK; Rostow to Johnson with attached memorandum by Kramaemer, October 3, 1968, NSF, Country File, box 189, LBJL; "Czechoslovakia," C.M James (Paris) to C.S.R. Giffard, October 11, 1968, FCO 28/57, NAUK; Telegram from the Department of State to the Mission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, October 16, 1968, *FRUS, 1964-1968,* XIII, doc. 333; Cabinet Conclusions, November 22, 1968, CAB, NAUK.

[14] "Material for Use in the SIG Meeting, October 4, Concerning Contingency Planning in Europe," October 1, 1968.

[15] Summary Record of Meeting of the Council, CR(68)50, October 11, 1968, NATO.

"more precarious than it had been during the days of Stalin." The NATO allies, even French officials who had been sanguine about prospects for peace in Europe, worried about the "dangers of explosion."[16]

In 1961 Harold Nicolson, British diplomat and author, wrote in *Foreign Affairs* that the "massive front of the Communist world" might already have started disintegrating in the face of dissent. And the more Moscow repressed the dissidents, the more ardently they would dissent. "The West," he wrote, "in the end will be rescued by the heretics of the East."[17] Czechoslovakia convinced the NATO allies that the Soviet Union's empire had started rotting from the inside out. The Chairman of NATO's political advisors committee wrote that the "gap between rulers and ruled in the Eastern Europe satellites" was now widened to the point where "more people than ever will be watching for the day of change," not only in the satellites, but "in the Soviet Zone and elsewhere."[18] Of course, the willingness of the Soviets to use military force to "prevent its empire form falling apart" would likely cause dissidents to act more cautiously. But dissent would build. The invasion of Czechoslovakia would embitter Czechs and Slovaks, certainly. But Hungarians, Poles, and East Germans would not forgive their own leaders for partaking in the invasion.[19] British and French officials expected that going forward from 1968, "the Soviet Union and the Socialist system generally in Eastern Europe would almost certainly be subjected

---

[16] "Czechoslovakia," James to Giffard, October 11, 1968.

[17] Nicolson, "Diplomacy Then and Now," 40-41.

[18] "Political implications of the Czechoslovakian Crisis," report by the Chairman of the political committee at senior level, CM(68)43, September 26, 1968, NATO. The language is lifted from a Warner's Foreign Office assessment, cited below.

[19] "Political Assessment of the Implications of the Czechoslovak Crisis," [prepared by F. A Warner, UKDel], undated [September 1968], FCO 28/57, NAUK.

to violent upheavals."[20] The possibility – perhaps unannounced, but likely violent - of the Soviet satellite system, gave sharp meaning to American arguments of 1967 that NATO was necessary not only during the Cold War but after.

Of course the Cold War did not end in 1968, or quickly after. In fact, those who had hoped in 1967 that a European settlement could be settled quickly had their hopes dashed and there was much backtracking. French officials, like Jacque Andréani, head of the Eastern European affairs at the Quai d'Orsay, told his British colleague he "had to admit straight away was that the French had been wrong about their assessment of Soviet intentions." All around Europe, officials like Andréani were coming to "a darker and more pessimistic view."[21] Although de Gaulle still wished to carry on with his policy of détente, even he conceded publicly that the USSR had "not separated itself from the policy of blocs," a separation essential to his vision of Europe without NATO.[22]

A Long Future

The allies did not expect the collapse of the Warsaw Pact or the Soviet system of control to be imminent. But when it did come, and they believed it would, the results might well be violent and dangerous for all of western Europe. In either scenario, there would be no easy and "agreed solution of European problems." British Foreign Office argued "NATO should

---

[20] "Czechoslovakia," C.M James (Paris) to C.S.R. Giffard, October 11, 1968, FCO 28/57, NAUK.

[21] "Czechoslovakia," C.M James (Paris) to C.S.R. Giffard, October 11, 1968, FCO 28/57, NAUK. See also Telegram from the Embassy in France to the Department of State, September 2, 1968, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XII,* doc. 83.

[22] "Talking Points on Czechoslovakian Situation for Use at Cabinet Meeting, Thursday, 22 August 1968," August 21, 1968.

expect a long future."[23] But NATO's history had been one of efforts by allies to achieve change. What was NATO's future?

Immediately after the invasion, Kiesinger called on his fellow leaders to hold a NATO summit meeting to demonstrate NATO cohesion. Of all the allies, officials in Bonn were most concerned by the actions in Czechoslovakia, for it put Soviet troops on the Bavarian border and alarming images of Soviet tanks in Prague, not so very far from the FRG.[24] American officials believed Kiesinger's call reflected a broader "European opinion" that had "moved sharply in the direction of traditional US policy goals of promoting the integration of Europe and the strengthening of NATO."[25]

American officials recognized the invasion could be much more powerful than Washington's exhortations for Europeans to improve their conventional decisions. It was the "Russians," not the Americans, who "stopped the rot and underlined the fact that NATO must be preserved."[26] The Soviet actions ended, for the time being, the drawdown of NATO defense budgets. The Belgians and Canadians had been moving towards unilateral force reductions, but these were put off in light of the crisis.[27] But the Americans wanted the Europeans to do more; the Secretary of Defense, Clark Clifford, wanted to "use the crisis" to push the allies,

---

[23] "Political Assessment of the Implications of the Czechoslovak Crisis," [prepared by F. A Warner, UKDel], undated [September 1968], FCO 28/57, NAUK.

[24] Cable from Rostow to the President, CAP82344, September 2, 1968, DDRS, CK3100072901.

[25] Bonn 2032 to SecState, August 27, 1968, DDRS, CK3100058049. See also Cable from Rostow to the President, September 2, 1968; "Further Comments on Possible NATO and EDC Initiatives," memorandum by Miriam Camps, September 3, 1968, DDRS, CK3100475152.

[26] "Further Comments on Possible NATO and EDC Initiatives," memorandum by Miriam Camps, September 3, 1968, DDRS, CK3100475152.

[27] London 12398 to SecState, September 5, 1968, NSF, Country File, box 212, LBJL.

especially the Germans, on their defense budgets, troop quality, and ability to mobilize in a crisis.[28]

The Americans let the crisis sink in to European cabinets and chancelleries. They refused to attend a summit, or to move up the regular December Ministerial meeting. The Americans did not wish to use NATO to make any declaratory statement, preferring that the condemnation of the invasion occur in the UN. They had not pressed for any alert of NATO forces. When a heightened alert finally did come, a month after the invasion, the Germans thought this was far too late. The German Permanent Representative at NATO complained NATO's reaction to the crisis was "inadequate or non-existent."[29]

This was a deliberate policy set by Lyndon Johnson. Moving slowly was a dangerous game; Henry Cabot Lodge, the US ambassador in Germany, reminded Washington of all the old fears that if NATO ignored German's security worries, Bonn would be in "a mood of pessimism and of accommodation towards the USSR."[30] But for Johnson, the "greatest problem" of the last five years had been improving relations between the United States and the Soviet Union; he remained focused on the relationship between Washington and Moscow, not the blocs as a whole.[31] And Johnson had not forgotten the years of difficulty in trying to get the Europeans to contribute more to NATO's defense posture. The British and German stinginess during the trilateral negotiations had put this into sharp contrast. In Czechoslovakia, he saw an opportunity to press the Europeans to contribute more troops to the alliance. American

---

[28] Summary Notes of the 590th NSC Meeting, September 4, 1968, 5:00-7:25 pm, DDRS, CK3100195752.

[29] Summary Record of Meeting of Council, CR(68)50, October 1, 1968, NATO.

[30] Bonn to SecState 17480, September 28, 1968, NSF, Country File, box 189, LBJL.

[31] Summary Notes of the 590th NSC Meeting, September 4, 1968. The British grasped this very early. "Implications of the Czechoslovak Crisis," R.D. Clift, September 24, 1968, FCO 28/57, NAUK.

ambassadors in NATO capitals told their hosts that the United States would only agree to an early meeting if the Europeans stepped up.[32]

While the Germans were frustrated with the American position, the British had a sense that the United States was "trying to make our flesh creep." They correctly assumed that Washington was trying to scare London, Bonn, and perhaps Paris and others "about the dangers looming up for NATO if Europe does not do more for itself, for their own national motives."[33]

Throughout NATO's first two decades, the United States had been ambiguous and confused about what role it wanted Europe to play in NATO. Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson had always wanted the European states to pay more of the costs of defending the continent, but they had all shied away from anything like a European bloc, or caucus in NATO. In nuclear policy the United States had never accepted the possibility of anything but an American finger on the trigger. And when "the chips were down," recalled one Permanent Representative, thinking about Cuba, and perhaps Berlin, "all NATO could do was hold its breath while Washington took whatever steps the president and his military advisers deemed appropriate."[34]

American policy in 1968 was not to browbeat their allies, but to force them to fill a vacuum. American officials sought to encourage a "European caucus" that could present a European viewpoint in NATO discussions, nourish the growing European entity, and - most tangibly for American officials, pick up some of the costs paid by the United States. After previously insisting on setting NATO policy, the United States now sat silently and wished

---

[32] John Leddy Oral History, LBJL, 8.

[33] "American Attitudes towards NATO," Barnes for Lord Hood, November 8, 1968, FCO 41/444, NAUK.

[34] Ignatieff, *The Making of a Peacemonger*, 206.

for the Europeans to form their own views, hoping to spark European initiative.[35] Ultimately, Rostow told Johnson, France might "come back into the European and NATO family," and Britain would join Europe. This would strengthen NATO. But it would also be the "basis for a carefully scheduled decline in U.S. forces in the years ahead."[36] The United States pressed carefully, and slowly, but they believed the best way to maintain NATO was to dramatically change it by accepting - even pressing for - an explicit European foreign and defense policy.[37]

The Europeans accepted the American conditions for an early meeting after many allies agreed to seek increases to their defense budgets. The regular Ministerial meeting was moved to November, from December, to demonstrate NATO's concern about Czechoslovakia and its continued cohesion. Afterwards, American intelligence judged the European response to Czechoslovakia as "more promise than performance," for there were no dramatic increases in European defense expenditure. But the European allies started to discuss the possibility of a new European Defense Community. The British, especially Healey, championed the idea. In a typical assessment of allied behavior, the Americans assumed the British were only doing what Washington had asked to head off US cutbacks on

---

[35] Telegram from the Mission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to the Department of State, October 5, 1968, *FRUS, 1964-1968*, *XIII*, doc. 331;"Implications of Czechoslovakia for European Security," memorandum of conversation, September 10, 1968, DDRS, CK3100070868; Memorandum of Conversation between Birrenbach and Rusk, September 9, 1968, and "European Policy," memorandum of conversation, NSF, Country File, box 189, LBJL.

[36] Rostow to Johnson, July 24, 1968, DDRS,

[37] "Further Comments on Possible NATO and EDC Initiatives," memorandum by Miriam Camps, September 3, 1968, DDRS, CK3100475152.

the continent.[38] But there was a growing conviction in Washington, London and Bonn that the Europeans needed to concert their defense efforts: In his memoir, Harold Wilson recalled the "twin lesson" of Czechoslovakia, that NATO was necessary but so to was "the greater unity of Europe, so that the view of Europe as a whole could be more strongly concentrated on any threat to freedom."[39] Even de Gaulle seems to have reconsidered the EDC he had so loathed in its earlier incarnation; the CIA obtained records of de Gaulle's ideas for a new European defense entity.[40]

The NAC launched a wide-ranging study of its policies after Czechoslovakia.[41] The allied studied again the Soviet threat, and what economic, diplomatic or military action they could or should take in case of Soviet actions in the peripheral states.[42] These studies bogged down, however, and NATO stopped short of making firm contingency plans. The intense worries of August 1968 did not last. The "weak sisters" were reluctant to plan for confrontations short of deterrence. And, most important, the United States was unwilling - as they had been during the Berlin Crisis - to operate through NATO, and preferred to plan on a "government to government" basis.[43]

---

[38] "Intelligence Memorandum No. 2049/68," November 4, 1968, *FRUS, 1964-1968, XIII,* doc. 334.

[39] Wilson, *The Labour Government, 1964-1970: A Personal Record*, 554.

[40] "French Intention to Revive European Defense Community Concept during De Gaulle's September Visit to Bonn," CIA Intelligence Information Cable, September 13, 1968; see also Rostow to Johnson, September 14, 1968, NSF, Country File, box 189, LBJL.

[41] "The NATO Response to the Czechoslovak Crisis," INR Memorandum REU-57, September 27, 1968, DDRS, CK3100005759.

[42] "NATO Reaction to possible further Soviet moves in Eastern Europe," from Hood to F. Cooper, December 19, 1968, FCO 41/450, NAUK; "Economic Contribution to Contingency Studies," Note by the Economic Directorate, ED/68/93, December 12, 1968, S-2-5109-2, LAC.

[43] "NATO Reaction to Further Moves in Eastern Europe," Barnes to Hood, December 3, 1968, FCO 41/450, NAUK.

Still, NATO was looking to its frontiers, and beyond, more than ever before. The allies recognized that growing unease in Eastern Europe threatened NATO and the Soviet Bloc simultaneously, making NATO's continuation essential. One American analysis argued that "against the high ideals of Atlantic partnership," NATO's post-Czechoslovakian "prospects seem rather minor." Still, they offered "some ground for optimism.[44]

The Czechoslovakian crisis helped the allies solve the problem of NATO's 20th anniversary. 1969 was, after all, the first year that the allies could give notice to abrogate the North Atlantic Treaty. For years, Soviet propaganda had cleverly portrayed the year 1969 as the "end" of NATO, and the NATO allies had never found a viable way to contradict this myth. At the November ministerial, the allies announced that Czechoslovakia had made it necessary to consider the North Atlantic Treaty one of "indefinite duration." Even this language reflected hard bargaining between allies.[45] None wished for NATO to disappear, but none were willing to rely on the language of the Atlantic mystique, or the sonorous language of the Treaty with its suggestion the allies were natural partners because they shared a "common heritage and civilization," to justify NATO's continued existence. Instead, Denis Healey thought the allies' attitude reflected the lesson taught by Hilaire Belloc's poem "Jim," about a boy who had slipped his nurse's hand and been eaten by a lion at the zoo: "best to keep ahold of nurse for fear of having something worse."[46] What other nurse could be expected to simultaneously deter the Soviet Union; enmesh Germany; search

---

[44] "Intelligence Memorandum No. 2049/68," November 4, 1968.

[45] "NATO and Czechoslovakia," Burrows to Stewart, Letter No. 39, December 16, 1968, FCO 41/450, NAUK.

[46] London 12398 to SecState, September 5, 1968.

for, even with no guarantee of finding, new means of cooperation; and prepare for the collapse of the Soviet empire?

The dissent at work collapsing the Soviet empire proved to be much of the impetus for NATO's indefinite survival. It was senseless to rely on a concept of heritage and values binding the NATO allies when Eastern Europeans were fighting for what seemed to be the very "common values" NATO's officials once claimed to be exclusively theirs. In fact, by the late 1960s, the allies were no longer willing to suggest that the people of western Europe were that much different than their eastern European neighbors. The Soviet invasion, according to the Permanent Under-Secretary of State Paul Gore-Booth, showed "that there are things … not in the long run tolerable to civilized and sophisticated people and that sooner or later human nature and the human spirit will reassert themselves."[47] The ideological divisions of the Cold War were temporary; but NATO, and the *Pax Atlantica* it defended, need not be.

[47] P.H. Gore-Booth to Sir William Barker (Prague), September 12, 1968, FCO 28/57, NAUK.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Official Archives:

Archives of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO Headquarters. Brussels, Belgium.

Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library. Abilene, KS.
- Papers as President of the United States, 1953-61 (Ann Whitman File)
  - Administration Series
  - Ann Whitman Diary Series
  - Cabinet Series
  - DDE Diary Series
  - International Series
  - Name Series
  - NSC Series
  - White House Central File
- Personal Papers
  - Alfred M. Gruenther
  - C.D. Jackson
  - Christian A. Herter
  - Gerard C. Smith
  - John Foster Dulles
  - Lauris Norstad
  - Robert J. Schaetzel
- White House Office
  - National Security Council Staff Papers
  - Office of the Staff Secretary
  - Special Assistant for National Security Affairs

John F. Kennedy Presidential Library. Boston, Massachusetts.
- Papers of President Kennedy
  - National Security File
- Personal Papers
  - Adam Yarmolinsky
  - Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.
  - David Nunnerley
  - McGeorge Bundy
  - Richard E. Neustadt
  - Robert H. Estabrook

Library and Archives Canada. Ottawa, Canada
- Record Group 24
- Record Group 25

Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library. Austin, TX.
- Papers of Lyndon B. Johnson

Presidential Papers
National Security File, 1963-1969
Office Files of the White House Aides
White House Central File Subject Files, 1963-1969
Collections of Personal and Organizational Papers
Personal Papers of Charles E. Johnson
Personal Papers of Francis M. Bator
Personal Papers of George W. Ball

National Archives. Kew, United Kingdom.
Records of the Cabinet Office
CAB 128: Minutes (CM and CC Series)
CAB 134: Miscellaneous Committees: Minutes and Papers
Records of the Ministry of Defence
DEFE 7: Ministry of Defence prior to 1964
Records of the Foreign Office and Commonwealth Office and predecessors
FCO 28: Northern Department and East European and Soviet Department
FCO 41: Western Organisations and Co-ordination Department
FCO 49: Planning Staff and Commonwealth Policy and Planning Department
FO 115: Embassy and Consulates, United States of America: General Correspondence 1791-1967
FO 146: Embassy and Consulates, France: General Correspondence
FO 371: Political Departments: General Correspondence, 1906-1966
FO 462: Correspondence Respecting the United States of America
FO 800: Private Offices: Various Ministers' and Officials' Papers
FO 953: Information Policy Department and Regional Information Departments
FO 1042: Embassy, Bonn, West Germany, General Correspondence
FO 1116: UK Delegation to NATO: Registered Files
Records of the Prime Minister's Office
PREM 11: Correspondence and Papers, 1951-1964
PREM 13: Correspondence and Papers, 1964-1970

National Archives and Records Administration. College Park, Maryland.
Record Group 59: General Records of the Department of State
Bureau of African Affairs
Office of Inter-African Affairs
Records of the Political-Military Advisor, 1951-1963
Bureau of European Affairs
Deputy Assistant Secretary
Subject Files (J. Robert Schaetzel), 1961-1966
Country Director for Germany
Records Relating to the Federal Republic of Germany, 1954-1967
[Office of] NATO and Atlantic Political-Military Affairs
Records Relating to NATO Affairs, 1959-1966
Records Relating to NATO Trilateral Discussions, 1965-1968
Office of Atlantic Political and Military Affairs

Records Relating to NATO, 1957-1964
Subject Files, 1953-1962
Office of Northern European Affairs
Records Relating to the United Kingdom, 1962-1974
Office of Central European Affairs – Berlin Desk
Records Relating to the "Live Oak" Program, 1954-1979
Office of Regional Planning & UN Advisor
Records Relating to Planning and United Nations Matters, 1959-1967
Records of the Office of European Regional Affairs
Records of the Director, 1955-1960
Correspondence Files, 1955-1959
Subject Files, 1956-1960
Records of the NATO Advisor, 1957-1961
Records Relating to the British Proposal for a Grand Design, 1957-1959
Subject Files, 1945-1958
Central Decimal Files
Central Foreign Policy Series
Miscellaneous Lot Files
Miscellaneous Office Files of the Assistant Secretaries of State for European Affairs, 1943-1957
Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs
Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Politico-Military Affairs
Office of the Executive Secretariat
Multilateral Force Documents, 1960-1965
Records of Ambassador Charles E. Bohlen, 1942-71
Records of Robert W. Komer, 1948-68
Records Relating to the Acheson – NATO Exercise, 1966
Policy Planning Council
Subject Files, 1954-1962
Records of the Office of Western European Affairs
Subject File Relating to France, 1944-1960
Records of Under Secretary of State George W. Ball, 1961-1966

Record Group 85: Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State
Belgium, U.S. Mission to NATO, Brussels
Classified Central Subject Files, 1965-1970

Record Group 469: Records of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948-61
Office of African and European Operations
Subject Files, 1955-59

Personal Papers and Manuscript Collections

Bodleian Library, Oxford University. Oxford, UK
Modern Political MSS
Harold Macmillan, Earl of Stockton
Harold Wilson, Lord Wilson of Rievaulx
Sir (D'Arcy) Patrick Reilly

Churchill Archives Centre, Churchill College. Cambridge, UK
Papers of Lord Gladwyn
Papers of Sir Frank Roberts

Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College London. London, UK.

Special Collections, Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham. Birmingham, UK.
Papers of Sir Evelyn Shuckburgh

Trinity College Archives, University of Toronto. Toronto, Canada
George Ignatieff Papers
Papers of Lord (General Sir Hastings) Ismay

Published Documents, Microfilm, and Online Collections

Aktzen zur Auswärtigen Politk der Bundesrepublik Deutschland
Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1966. Bd. 2. Jul bis 21. Dezember 1966. Munich: r. Oldenbourg, 1997.
Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1967. Bd. 1. January bis 31. März 1967Munich: r. Oldenbourg, 1998.

Dean Gooderham Acheson papers (Microform), Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 2004.

Digital National Security Archive
Berlin Crisis

Declassified Documents Reference System

Documents Diplomatiques Français
Documents Diplomatique Français, 1956. Tome 1, (1 janvier – 30 juin). Paris: Commission de Publication des Documents Diplomatiques Français, 1988.
Documents Diplomatique Français, 1956. Tome 2, (1 juillet – 23 octobre). Paris: Commission de Publication des Documents Diplomatiques Français, 1989.
Documents Diplomatique Français, 1956. Tome 3, (24 octobre – 31 décembre). Paris: Commission de Publication des Documents Diplomatiques Français, 1990.
Documents Diplomatique Français, 1958. Tome 2, (1 juillet – 21 décembre). Paris: Commission de Publication des Documents Diplomatiques Français, 1993.
Documents Diplomatique Français, 1959. Tome 1, (1 janvier – 30 juin). Paris: Commission de Publication des Documents Diplomatiques Français, 1994.

Foreign Relations of the United States

FRUS, 1955-1957, Volume IV: Western European Security and Integration. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1988.

FRUS, 1955-1957, Volume XIII: Near East: Jordan-Yemen. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1988.

FRUS, 1958-1960, Volume VII, Part 1: Western European Integration and Security, Canada. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1993.

FRUS, 1958-1960, Volume VII, Part 2: Western Europe. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1993.

FRUS, 1958-1960, Volume VIII: Berlin Crisis, 1958-1959. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1993.

FRUS, 1958-1960, Volume IX: Berlin Crisis 1959-1960; Germany; Austria. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1993.

FRUS, 1961-1963, Volume I: Vietnam, 1961. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1988.

FRUS, 1961-1963, Volume XIII: National Security Policy. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1996.

FRUS, 1961-1963, Volume XIII: Western Europe and Canada. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1994.

FRUS, 1961-1963, Volume XIV: Berlin Crisis, 1961-1962. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1993.

FRUS, 1961-1963, Volume XV: Berlin Crisis, 1962-1963. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1994.

FRUS, 1964-1968, Volume XIII: Western Europe Region. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1995.

John F. Kennedy Digital Collections. Available at http://www.jfklibrary.org/.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization Archives Online. Available at http://www.nato.int/archives/.
Military Planning for the Berlin Emergency (1961-1968)
Future Tasks of the Alliance – "Harmel Report" (1967)

The Papers of John Foster Dulles and of Christian A. Herter, 1953-1961: Chronological Correspondence Series (Microform). Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1986.

The Papers of John Foster Dulles and of Christian A. Herter, 1953-1961: The White House Correspondence and Memoranda Series (Microform). Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1986.

Memoirs, Diaries, and Contemporary Material

Alphand, Hervé. *L'Étonnement d'Être: Journal 1939-1973*. Paris: Fayard, 1977.
Ball, George W. *The Past Has Another Pattern: Memoirs*. New York: Norton, 1982.
Bohlen, Charles E. *Witness to History, 1929-1969*. New York: Norton, 1973.

Catterall, Peter, ed. *The Macmillan Diaries, Vol. 2: Prime Minister and after, 1957-1966*. London: Macmillan, 2011.
Eisenhower, Dwight D. *Waging Peace, 1956-1961: The White House Years*. ed. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1965.
Eisenhower, John S. D. *Strictly Personal*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1974.
Ignatieff, George. *The Making of a Peacemonger: The Memoirs of George Ignatieff*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985.
Ismay, Lord. "Pax Atlantica." *Unilever Magazine* (Winter 1954).
Macmillan, Harold. *Riding the Storm, 1956-1959*. London: Macmillan, 1971.
Martin, Paul. *A Very Public Life*. Vol. 2: So Many Worlds, Ottawa, Ont.: Deneau, 1983.
Neustadt, Richard E. *Alliance Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1970.
———. *Report to JFK: The Skybolt Crisis in Perspective*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999.
Nitze, Paul H., Steven L. Rearden, and Ann M. Smith. *From Hiroshima to Glasnost: At the Center of Decision: A Memoir*. New York: G. Weidenfeld, 1989.
Ritchie, Charles. *Storm Signals: More Undiplomatic Diaries, 1962-1971*. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1987.
Rostow, W. W. *The Diffusion of Power: An Essay in Recent History*. New York: Macmillan, 1972.
Schlesinger, Arthur M. *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965.
Sorensen, Theodore C. *Kennedy*. New York: Perennial Library, 1988.
Spaak, Paul Henri Charles. *The Continuing Battle: Memoirs of a European, 1936-1966*. Translated by Henry Fox. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971.
———. *Why NATO?* Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1959.
Stevenson, William. *A Man Called Intrepid: The Secret War*. London: Macmillan, 1976.
Sulzberger, C. L. *The Last of the Giants*. New York: Macmillan, 1970.
Walters, Vernon A. *Silent Missions*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1978.
Wilson, Harold. *The Labour Government, 1964-1970: A Personal Record*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971.

Secondary Sources

Aldous, Richard. "'A Family Affair': Macmillan and the Art of Personal Diplomacy." In *Harold Macmillan and Britain's World Role*, edited by Richard Aldous and Sabine Lee, xv, 161 p. London: Macmillan, 1996.
Ambrose, Stephen E., and Morris Honick. In *Generals in International Politics: NATO's Supreme Allied Commander, Europe*, edited by Robert S. Jordan, xxiv, 229 p., [8] p. of plates. Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky, 1987.
Aono, Toshihiko. ""It Is Not Easy for the United States to Carry the Whole Load": Anglo-American Relations During the Berlin Crisis, 1961-1962." *Diplomatic History* 34, no. 2 (2010): 325-56.
Ashton, Nigel John. *Eisenhower, Macmillan, and the Problem of Nasser: Anglo-American Relations and Arab Nationalism, 1955-59*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996.
———. *Kennedy, Macmillan and the Cold War: The Irony of Interdependence*. New York, N.Y.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.

Aubourg, Valerie. "Organizing Atlanticism: The Bilderberg Group and the Atlantic Institute, 1952-1963." In *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe, 1945-1960*, edited by Giles Scott-Smith and Hans Krabbendam, 335 p. Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2003.

Ball, Desmond, and Jeffrey Richelson. *Strategic Nuclear Targeting*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1986.

Bayly, C. A., Sven Beckert, Matthew Connelly, Isabel Hofmeyer, Wendy Kozol, and Patricia Seed. "AHR Conversation: On Transnational History." *The American Historical Review* 111, no. 5 (December 2006): 1441-64.

Beer, Francis A. *Integration and Disintegration in NATO: Processes of Alliance Cohesion and Prospects for Atlantic Community*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1969.

Beschloss, Michael. *The Crisis Years: Kennedy and Khrushchev, 1960-1963*. New York: Edward Burlingame Books, 1991.

Betts, Richard K. *Surprise Attack : Lessons for Defense Planning*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1982.

Bird, Kai. *The Chairman: John J. McCloy, the Making of the American Establishment*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992.

Blackwell, Stephen. "Britain, the United States and the Syrian Crisis, 1957." *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 11, no. 3 (2000): 139-58.

Bluth, Christoph. "British-German Defence Relations, 1950-80: A Survey." In *British-German Defence Co-Operation: Partners within the Alliance*, edited by Karl Kaiser and John Roper, xii, 308 p. London: Jane's for the Royal Institute of International Affairs and Deutschen Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik, 1988.

Boutwell, Jeffrey. *The German Nuclear Dilemma*. 1st ed. London: Brassey's, 1990.

Bozo, Frédéric. *Deux stratégies pour l'Europe: de Gaulle, les États-Unis et l'Alliance atlantique: 1958-1969*. Espoir. Paris: Plon: Fondation Charles de Gaulle, 1996.

———. "The NATO Crisis of 1966-67: A French Point of View." In *The Strategic Triangle: France, Germany, and the United States in the Shaping of the New Europe*, edited by Helga Haftendorn, Georges-Henry Soutou, Stephen F. Szabo and Samuel F. Wells Jr., xii, 411 p. Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2006.

———. *Two Strategies for Europe: De Gaulle, the United States, and the Atlantic Alliance*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001.

Buffet, Cyril. "De Gaulle, the Bomb and Berlin: How to Use a Political Weapon." In *The Berlin Wall Crisis: Perspectives on Cold War Alliances*, edited by John P. S. Gearson and Kori N. Schake, xxi, 209 p. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.

Burk, Kathleen. "The Anglo-American "Special Relationship" in the Atlantic Context During the Late 1940s and 1950s." In *Defining the Atlantic Community: Culture, Intellectuals, and Policies in the Mid-Twentieth Century*, edited by Marco Mariano, vi, 217 p. New York: Routledge, 2010.

Burr, William. "Avoiding the Slippery Slope: The Eisenhower Administration and the Berlin Crisis, November 1958 - January 1959." *Diplomatic History* 34, no. 2 (April 1994): 325-256.

Buzzanco, Robert. "Where's the Beef? Culture without Poweri N the Study of U.S. Foreign Relations." *Diplomatic History* 24, no. 4 (Fall 2000): 623-32.

Campbell Jr., Thomas M. "NATO and the United Nations in American Foreign Policy: Building a Framework for Power." In *NATO after Thirty Years*, edited by Robert Clawson. Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1981.

Camps, Miriam. *European Unification in the Sixties: From Veto to the Crisis*. New York: Published for the Council on Foreign Relations by McGraw-Hill, 1966.
Catudal, Honoré Marc. *Kennedy and the Berlin Wall Crisis: A Case Study in U.S. Decision Making*. Berlin: Berlin-Verlag, 1980.
Cioc, Mark. *Pax Atomica: The Nuclear Defense Debate in West Germany During the Adenauer Era*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988.
Costigliola, Frank. *France and the United States: The Cold Alliance since World War II*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1992.
———. "The Nuclear Family: Tropes of Gender and Pathology in the Western Alliance." *Diplomatic History* 21, no. 2 (Spring 1997): 163-83.
———. "The Pursuit of Atlantic Community: Nuclear Arms, Dollars, and Berlin." In *Kennedy's Quest for Victory American Foreign Policy, 1961-1963*, edited by Thomas G. Paterson. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.
Daalder, Ivo H. *The Nature and Practice of Flexible Response: NATO Strategy and Theater Nuclear Forces since 1967*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991.
Davidson, Carolyne. "Dealing with De Gaulle: The United States and France." In *Globalizing De Gaulle: International Perspectives on French Foreign Policies, 1958-1969*, edited by Anna Locher, Garret Martin and Christian Nünlist, viii, 318 p. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010.
Dickie, John. *'Special' No More: Anglo-American Relations, Rhetoric and Reality*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1994.
Divine, Robert A. *The Sputnik Challenge*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.
Dockrill, Saki. "Retreat from the Continent? Britain's Motives for Troop Reductions in West Germany, 1955-1958." *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 20, no. 3 (September 1997): 45-70.
Doyle, A. Conan. "A Scandal in Bohemia." In *Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1892.
Duchin, Brian R. "The "Agonizing Reappraisal": Eisenhower, Dulles, and the European Defense Community." *Diplomatic History* 16, no. 2 (April 1992): 201-22.
Duffield, John S. *Power Rules: The Evolution of NATO's Conventional Force Posture*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1995.
Ellison, James. *The United States, Britain and the Transatlantic Crisis: Rising to the Gaullist Challenge, 1963-68*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
Feske, Victor H. "The Road to Suez: The British Foreign Office and the Quai D'orsay, 1951-1957." In *The Diplomats, 1939-1979*, edited by Gordon Alexander Craig and Francis L. Loewenheim. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994.
Freedman, Lawrence. *Kennedy's Wars: Berlin, Cuba, Laos, and Vietnam*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
Fursdon, Edward. *The European Defence Community: A History*. London: Macmillan, 1980.
Gaddis, John Lewis. *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
Garthoff, Raymond L. "Berlin 1961: The Record Corrected." *Foreign Policy*, no. 84 (Autumn 1991): 142-56.
———. *Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan*. Rev. ed. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1994.

Gavin, Francis J. *Gold, Dollars, and Power: The Politics of International Monetary Relations, 1958-1971*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004.
———. "The Myth of Flexible Response: United States Strategy in Europe During the 1960s." *The International History Review* 23, no. 4 (December 2001): 847-75.
Gearson, John P. S. *Harold Macmillan and the Berlin Wall Crisis, 1958-62: The Limits of Interests and Force*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998.
Gearson, John P. S., and Kori N. Schake. *The Berlin Wall Crisis: Perspectives on Cold War Alliances*. Cold War History Series. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.
Gelb, Norman. *The Berlin Wall*. London: M. Joseph, 1986.
Gendzier, Irene L. *Notes from the Minefield: United States Intervention in Lebanon and the Middle East, 1945-1958*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2006.
Geyer, Michael. "Cold War Angst: The Case of West-German Opposition to Rearmament and Nuclear Weapons." In *The Miracle Years: A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949-1968*, edited by Hanna Schissler, ix, 498 p. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001.
Giauque, Jeffrey Glen. *Grand Designs and Visions of Unity: The Atlantic Powers and the Reorganization of Western Europe, 1955-1963*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002.
Gienow-Hecht, Jessica C. E. "Cultural Transfer." In *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, edited by Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
Gijswijt, Thomas W. "Beyond NATO: Transnational Elite Networks and the Atlantic Alliance." In *Transforming NATO in the Cold War: Challenges Beyond Deterrence in the 1960s*, edited by Andreas Wenger, Christian Nuenlist and Anna Locher, xiii, 251 p. London: Routledge, 2007.
Granieri, Ronald J. *The Ambivalent Alliance: Konrad Adenauer, the CDU/CSU, and the West, 1949-1966*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2003.
———. "More Than a Geriatric Romance: Adenauer, De Gaulle, and the Atlantic Alliance." In *A History of Franco-German Relations in Europe: From "Hereditary Enemies" to Partners*, edited by Carine Germond and Henning Türk, xii, 286 p. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.
Haftendorn, Helga. "The Harmel Report and Its Impact on German Ostpolitik." In *The Making of Détente: Eastern and Western Europe in the Cold War, 1965-75*, edited by Wilfrid Loth and Georges-Henri Soutou. New York: Routledge, 2008.
———. *NATO and the Nuclear Revolution: A Crisis of Credibility, 1966-1967*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.
Hahn, Peter L. *The United States, Great Britain, and Egypt, 1945-1956: Strategy and Diplomacy in the Early Cold War*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991.
Harrington, Daniel F. *Berlin on the Brink: The Blockade, the Airlift, and the Early Cold War*. Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky, 2012.
Harrison, Hope Millard. *Driving the Soviets up the Wall: Soviet-East German Relations, 1953-1961*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003.
Heald, Morrell, and Lawrence S. Kaplan. *Culture and Diplomacy: The American Experience*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1977.
Hennessy, Peter. *Muddling Through: Power, Politics and the Quality of Government in Postwar Britain*. London: Indigo, 1997.

———. *Never Again: Post-War Britain, 1945-51*. London: J. Cape, 1992.
———. *The Prime Minister: The Office and Its Holders since 1945*. London: Penguin, 2001.
Hershberg, James. ""Explosion in the Offing": German Rearmament and American Diplomacy, 1953-1955." *Diplomatic History* 16, no. 4 (October 1992).
Heuser, Beatrice. "Alliance of Democracies and Nuclear Deterrence." In *War Plans and Alliances in the Cold War: Threat Perceptions in the East and West*, edited by Vojtech Mastny, Andreas Wenger and Sven G. Holtsmark, ix, 310 p. New York, NY: Routledge, 2006.
———. "The European Dream of Franz Josef Strauss." *Journal of European Integration History* 4, no. 1 (1998): 75-103.
———. *NATO, Britain, France, and the FRG: Nuclear Strategies and Forces for Europe, 1949-2000*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997.
Hitchcock, William I. *France Restored: Cold War Diplomacy and the Quest for Leadership in Europe, 1944-1954*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998.
Hoffmann, Stanley. "Discord in Community: The North Atlantic Area as a Partial International System." In *The Atlantic Community: Progress and Prospects*, edited by Francis Orlando Wilcox and Henry Field Haviland, viii, 294 p. New York: Praeger, 1963.
Horne, Alistair. *Harold Macmillan*. Vol. 1957-1986, New York: Viking, 1989.
Immerman, Richard H. *John Foster Dulles: Piety, Pragmatism, and Power in U.S. Foreign Policy*. Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 1999.
Iriye, Akira. *Global and Transnational History: The Past, Present, and Future*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.
———. "Global History." In *Palgrave Advances in International History*, edited by Patrick Finney. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
———. "Internationalizing International History." In *Rethinking American History in a Global Age*, edited by Thomas Bender, ix, 427 p. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2002.
Isaacson, Walter, and Evan Thomas. *The Wise Men: Six Friends and the World They Made: Acheson, Bohlen, Harriman, Kennan, Lovett, McCloy*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986.
James, William. "The Ph.D. Octopus." *The Harvard Monthly* (March 1903): 1-9.
Jones, Matthew. "Anglo-American Relations after Suez, the Rise and Decline of the Working Group Experiment and the French Challenge to NATO, 19157-1959." *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 14, no. 1 (March 2003): 49-79.
———. "Anglo-American Relations after Suez, the Rise and Decline of the Working Group Experiment, and the French Challenge to NATO, 1957-59." *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 14 (2003): 49-79.
———. "The 'Preferred Plan': The Anglo-American Working Group Report on Covert Action in Syria, 1957." *Intelligence & National Security* 19, no. 3 (2004): 401-15.
Jordan, Robert S. *The NATO International Staff/Secretariat, 1952-1957: A Study in International Administration*. London: Oxford University Press, 1967.
———. *Norstad: Cold War NATO Supreme Commander: Airman, Strategist, Diplomat*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan, 2000.
Kaplan, Lawrence S. "The Berlin Crisis of 1958-1962: Views from the Pentagon." In *International Cold War Military Records and History: Proceedings of the International Conference on Cold War Military Records and History Held in Washington, D.C., 21-26*

March 1994, edited by William W. Epley, 87-116. Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1996.
———. *NATO 1948: The Birth of the Transatlantic Alliance*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007.
———. *NATO and the UN: A Peculiar Relationship*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2010.
———. *NATO before the Korean War: April 1949-June 1950*. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2013.
———. *NATO United, NATO Divided: The Evolution of an Alliance*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004.
———. "The U.S. And NATO in the Johnson Years." In *The Johnson Years, Volume 3: LBJ at Home and Abroad*, edited by Robert A. Divine, v. Lawrence, Kan.: University Press of Kansas, 1994.
———. "The Vietnam War and Europe: The View from NATO." In *La Guerre Du Vietnam Et L'europe, 1963-1973*, edited by Christopher E. Gosha and Maurice Vaïsse, xxvii, 491 p. Bruxelles: Bruylant, 2003.
Kaplan, Lawrence S., Ronald D. Landa, and Edward J. Drea. *The McNamara Ascendancy, 1961-1965*. History of the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Washington, D.C.: Historical Office, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2006.
Karber, Philip A., and Jerald A. Combs. "The United States, NATO, and the Soviet Threat to Western Europe: Military Estimates and Policy Options, 1945-1963." *Diplomatic History* 22, no. 3 (Summer 1998): 399-429.
Kaufmann, William W. *The McNamara Strategy*. New York: Harper & Row, 1964.
Kelleher, Catherine McArdle. *Germany and the Politics of Nuclear Weapons*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1975.
Kelly, George Armstrong. *Lost Soldiers: The French Army and Empire in Crisis, 1947-1962*. Cambridge, Mass.,: M.I.T. Press, 1965.
Kempe, Frederick. *Berlin 1961 : Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Most Dangerous Place on Earth*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2011.
Kennan, George F. "Disengagement Revisited." *Foreign Affairs* 37, no. 2 (January 1959).
———. *Russia, the Atom, and the West*. London: Oxford University Press, 1958.
Kingseed, Cole C. *Eisenhower and the Suez Crisis of 1956*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995.
Kissinger, Henry. *Diplomacy*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994.
Kuisel, Richard F. *Seducing the French: The Dilemma of Americanization*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1993.
Kunz, Diane B. *The Economic Diplomacy of the Suez Crisis*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991.
———. "The Importance of Having Money: The Economic Diplomacy of the Suez Crisis." In *Suez 1956: The Crisis and Its Consequences*, edited by William Roger Louis and Edward Roger John Owen. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991.
Kyle, Keith. *Suez*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1991.
Leffler, Melvyn P. "National Security, Core Values, and Power." In *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, edited by Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

———. *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992.
Liddell Hart, Basil Henry. *Strategy*. 2d rev. ed. Toronto: Meridian, 1991.
Liland, Frode. "Keeping NATO out of Trouble: NATO's Non-Policy on out-of-Area Issues During the Cold War." *Forsvarsstudier*, no. 4 (1999).
Little, Douglas. *American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East since 1945*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002.
———. "Cold War and Covert Action: The United States and Syria, 1945-1958." *Middle East Journal* 44, no. 1 (Winter 1990): 51-75.
———. "His Finest Hour? Eisenhower, Lebanon, and the 1958 Middle East Crisis." *Diplomatic History* 20 (Winter 1996): 27-54.
Locher, Anna. "A Crisis Foretold: NATO and France, 1963-1966." In *Transforming NATO in the Cold War: Challenges Beyond Deterrence in the 1960s*, edited by Andreas Wenger, Christian Nuenlist and Anna Locher, xiii, 251 p. London: Routledge, 2007.
———. *Crisis? What Crisis?: NATO, De Gaulle, and the Future of the Alliance, 1963-1966*. 1. ed. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2010.
Locher, Anna, and Christian Nuenlist. "NATO Strategies toward De Gaulle's France, 1958-1966: Learning to Cope." In *Globalizing De Gaulle: International Perspectives on French Foreign Policies, 1958-1969*, edited by Anna Locher, Garret Martin and Christian Nünlist, viii, 318 p. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010.
Loth, Wilfrid, and Georges-Henri Soutou, eds. *The Making of Détente: Eastern and Western Europe in the Cold War, 1965-75*. New York: Routledge, 2008.
Louis, W. M. Roger, and Ronald Robinson. "The Imperialism of Decolonization." *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 22 (1994): 462-511.
Lucas, W. Scott. *Divided We Stand: Britain, the US and the Suez Crisis*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1991.
Ludlow, N. Piers. *European Integration and the Cold War: Ostpolitik-Westpolitik, 1965-1973*. London: Routledge, 2007.
Mahan, Erin R. *Kennedy, De Gaulle, and Western Europe*. New York, N.Y.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.
Maier, Charles S. "The Making of 'Pax Americana': Formative Moments of United States Ascendancy." In *The Quest for Stability: Problems of West European Security, 1918-1957*, edited by R. Ahmann, Michael Howard and Adolf M. Birke, xi, 546 p. Oxford Oxford University Press, 1993.
Martin, Garret. "Towards a New Concert of Europe: De Gaulle's Vision of a Post-Cold War Europe." In *Visions of the End of the Cold War in Europe, 1945-1990*, edited by Frédéric Bozo, Marie-Pierre Rey, N. Piers Ludlow and Bernd Rother, vii, 358 p. New York: Berghahn Books, 2012.
Mastanduno, Michael. *Economic Containment: CoCom and the Politics of East-West Trade*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992.
Mayer, Frank A. *Adenauer and Kennedy: A Study in German-American Relations, 1961-1963*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996.
Milloy, John. *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 1948-1957: Community or Alliance?* Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006.
Milward, Alan S., H. George Brennan, and Federico Romero. *The European Rescue of the Nation-State*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992.

Newman, Kitty. *Macmillan, Khrushchev and the Berlin Crisis 1958-1960*. Cold War History Series. London ; New York: Routledge, 2007.
Nicolson, Harold. "Diplomacy Then and Now." *Foreign Affairs* 40, no. 1 (October 1961).
Nuenlist, Christian. "Into the 1960s: NATO's Role in East-West Relations, 1958-1963." In *Transforming NATO in the Cold War: Challenges Beyond Deterrence in the 1960s*, edited by Andreas Wenger, Christian Nuenlist and Anna Locher, xiii, 251 p. London: Routledge, 2007.
Nunnerley, David. *President Kennedy and Britain*. London: Bodley Head, 1972.
Oakeshott, Michael. "The Activity of Being a Historian." In *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays*, xxvi, 556 p. Indianapolis: LibertyPress, 1991.
Ovendale, Ritchie. "Great Britain and the Anglo-American Invasion of Jordan and Lebanon in 1958." *The International History Review* 16, no. 2 (May 1994): 284-303.
Pagedas, Constantine A. *Anglo-American Strategic Relations and the French Problem, 1960-1963: A Troubled Partnership*. Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2000.
Parr, Helen. "Anglo-French Relations, Détente and Britain's Second Application for Membership of the EEC, 1964 to 1967." In *European Integration and the Cold War: Ostpolitik-Westpolitik, 1965-1973*, edited by N. Piers Ludlow, xii, 194 p. London: Routledge, 2007.
Pedlow, Gregory W. "Allied Crisis Management for Berlin: The Live Oak Organization, 1959-1963." In *International Cold War Military Records and History: Proceedings of the International Conference on Cold War Military Records and History Held in Washington, D.C., 21-26 March 1994*, edited by William W. Epley, 87-116. Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1996.
———. ""The Evolution of NATO's Command Structure, 1951-2009." (undated).
———. "NATO and the Berlin Crisis of 1961: Facing the Soviets While Maintaining Unity."
———. "NATO Strategy Documents, 1949-1969."
———. "Three Hats for Berlin: Lauris Norstad and the Second Berlin Crisis, 1958-1962." In *The Berlin Wall Crisis: Perspectives on Cold War Alliances*, edited by John P. S. Gearson and Kori N. Schake, 175-98. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.
Preston, Andrew. "The Spirit of Democracy." In *Uncertain Empire: American History and the Idea of the Cold War*, edited by Joel Isaac and Duncan Bell, x, 302 p. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
Priest, Andrew. "From Hardware to Software: The End of the MLF and the Rise of the Nuclear Planning Group." In *Transforming NATO in the Cold War: Challenges Beyond Deterrence in the 1960s*, edited by Andreas Wenger, Christian Nuenlist and Anna Locher, xiii, 251 p. London: Routledge, 2007.
———. *Kennedy, Johnson and NATO: Britain, America and the Dynamics of Alliance, 1962-68*. London: Routledge, 2012.
Rey, Marie-Pierre. "De Gaulle, French Diplomacy, and Franco-Soviet Relations as Seen from Moscow." In *Globalizing De Gaulle: International Perspectives on French Foreign Policies, 1958-1969*, edited by Anna Locher, Garret Martin and Christian Nünlist, viii, 318 p. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010.
Reyn, Sebastian. *Atlantis Lost: The American Experience with De Gaulle, 1958-1969*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010.
Rice, Mark Jonathan. "The Alliance City: NATO and Berlin, 1958-1963." The Ohio State University, 2010.

Risse-Kappen, Thomas. *Cooperation among Democracies: The European Influence on U.S. Foreign Policy*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995.
Robertson, Terence. *Crisis: The inside Story of the Suez Conspiracy*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1964.
Rueger, Fabian. "Kennedy, Adenauer and the Making of the Berlin Wall, 1958-1961." Stanford University, May 2011.
Rynning, Sten. "NATO and the Broader Middle East, 1949-2007: The History and Lessons of Controversial Encounters." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 30, no. 6 (2007).
Sayle, Timothy Andrews. "Canada, NATO, and the Berlin Crisis, 1961-1962: "Slow-Boil" or "Pressure Cooker?"." *International Journal* 62, no. 2 (2013): 255-68.
Schake, Kori N. "A Broader Range of Choice? US Policy in the 1958 and 1861 Berlin Crises." In *The Berlin Wall Crisis: Perspectives on Cold War Alliances*, edited by John P. S. Gearson and Kori N. Schake, 175-98. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.
Schick, Jack M. *The Berlin Crisis, 1958-1962*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971.
Schulzinger, Robert D. *The Wise Men of Foreign Affairs: The History of the Council on Foreign Relations*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1984.
Schwartz, David N. *NATO's Nuclear Dilemmas*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1983.
Schwartz, Thomas. "Moving Beyond the Cold War: The Johnson Administration, Bridge Building, and Détente." In *Beyond the Cold War: Lyndon Johnson and the New Global Challenges of the 1960s*, edited by Francis J. Gavin and Mark Atwood Lawrence. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014.
———. "The United States and Western Europe." In *The Diplomacy of the Crucial Decade: American Foreign Relations During the 1960s*, edited by Diane B. Kunz, viii, 372 p. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.
Schwartz, Thomas Alan. *America's Germany: John J. McCloy and the Federal Republic of Germany*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991.
———. *Lyndon Johnson and Europe: In the Shadow of Vietnam*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003.
Sherwood-Randall, Elizabeth. *Allies in Crisis: Meeting Global Challenges to Western Security*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990.
Slusser, Robert M. *The Berlin Crisis of 1961: Soviet-American Relations and the Struggle for Power in the Kremlin, June-November 1961*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973.
Steinbruner, John D. *The Cybernetic Theory of Decision: New Dimensions of Political Analysis*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1974.
Steininger, Rolf. "John Foster Dulles, the European Defense Community, and the Germany Question." In *John Foster Dulles and the Diplomacy of the Cold War*, edited by Richard H. Immerman. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990.
Stikker, Dirk U. *Men of Responsibility: A Memoir*. 1st ed. New York: Harper & Row, 1966.
Stromseth, Jane E. *The Origins of Flexible Response: NATO's Debate over Strategy in the 1960s*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988.
Stuart, Douglas T., and William T. Tow. *The Limits of Alliance: NATO out-of-Area Problems since 1949*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990.

Suri, Jeremi. "The Normative Resilience of NATO: A Community of Shared Values Amid Public Discord." In *Transforming NATO in the Cold War: Challenges Beyond Deterrence in the 1960s*, edited by Andreas Wenger, Christian Nuenlist and Anna Locher, xiii, 251 p. London: Routledge, 2007.

———. *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Detente*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003.

Sutton, Michael A. *France and the Construction of Europe, 1944-2007: The Geopolitical Imperative*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2007.

Takeyh, Ray. *The Origins of the Eisenhower Doctrine: The US, Britain, and Nasser's Egypt, 1953-57*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000.

Taylor, A. J. P. *The Course of German History: A Survey of the Development of Germany since 1815*. New York: Capricorn Books, 1962.

Thies, Wallace J. *Why NATO Endures*. New York: Cambridge University, 2009.

Thomas, Ian Q. R. *The Promise of Alliance: NATO and the Political Imagination*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997.

Trachtenberg, Marc. *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement, 1945-1963*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999.

———. *The Craft of International History: A Guide to Method*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006.

———. *History and Strategy*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991.

———. "Strategic Thought in America, 1952-1966." *Political Science Quarterly* 104, no. 2 (Summer 1989).

Treverton, Gregory F. *The Dollar Drain and American Forces in Germany: Managing the Political Economics of Alliance*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1978.

Tusa, Ann. *The Last Division: A History of Berlin, 1945-1989*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1997.

Twigge, Stephen Robert, and L. V. Scott. *Planning Armageddon: Britain, the United States and the Command of Western Nuclear Forces 1945-1964*. Amsterdam: Harwood Academic 2000.

Vaisse, Maurice. "Post-Suez France." In *Suez 1956: The Crisis and Its Consequences*, edited by William Roger Louis and Edward Roger John Owen. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.

Wall, Irwin M. *France, the United States, and the Algerian War*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.

Wampler, Robert. "Ambiguous Legacy: The United States, Great Britain, and the Foundation of NATO Strategy, 1948-1957." Ph.D. Diss., Harvard University, 1991.

Wells, Sherrill Brown. "Monnet and 'the Insiders': Nathan, Tomlinson, Bowie, and Schaetzel." In *Monnet and the Americans: The Father of a United Europe and His U.S. Supporters*, edited by Clifford P. Hackett, xii, 268 p. Washington, D.C.: Jean Monnet Council, 1995.

Wenger, Andreas. "Crisis and Opportunity: NATO's Transformation and the Multilateralization of Détente, 1966-1968." *Journal of Cold War Studies* 6, no. 1 (Winter 2004): 22-74.

———. "NATO's Transformation." In *Transforming NATO in the Cold War: Challenges Beyond Deterrence in the 1960s*, edited by Andreas Wenger, Christian Nuenlist and Anna Locher, xiii, 251 p. London: Routledge, 2007.

Westad, Odd Arne. *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Wightman, David. "Money and Security: Financing American Troops in Germany and the Trilateral Negotiations of 1966-67." *Rivista Di Storia Economica* 5, no. 1 (February 1988): 26-75.

Williams, Phil. *The Senate and US Troops in Europe*. London: Macmillan, 1985.

Winand, Pascaline. *Eisenhower, Kennedy, and the United States of Europe*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993.

Yaqub, Salim. *Containing Arab Nationalism: The Eisenhower Doctrine and the Middle East*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004.

Zimmermann, Hubert. *Money and Security: Troops, Monetary Policy and West Germany's Relations with the United States and Britain, 1950-1971*. Washington, D.C.: German Historical Institute and Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Zubok, V. M. *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009.

Zubok, Vladislav M. "Khrushchev and the Berlin Crisis (1958-62)." *CWIHP Working Paper*, no. 6 (May 1993).