

The Dilemma of NATO Strategy, 1949-1968

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This dissertation titled
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Abstract

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This study is a reappraisal of the strategic dilemma of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in the Cold War. This dilemma revolves around the problem of articulating a strategic concept for a military alliance in the nuclear era. NATO was born of a perceived need to defend Western Europe from a Soviet onslaught. It was an imperative of the early alliance to develop a military strategy and force posture to defend Western Europe should such a war break out. It was not long after the first iteration of strategy took shape than the imperative for a military defense of Europe receded under the looming threat of thermonuclear war. The advent of thermonuclear arsenals in both the United States and Soviet Union brought with it the potential destruction of civilization should war break out. This realization made statesmen on both sides of the Iron Curtain undergo what has been referred to as an ongoing process of nuclear learning. This led to deterrence, rather than defense, being the priority for both the NATO allies and the Soviet-dominated Warsaw Pact. But fundamental tensions remained, and a need for military strategies seemed to remain. The problem was to then gauge how important conventional forces, tactical nuclear weapons, and strategic nuclear forces were to determine force postures that provided the most effective combination of deterrence and defense.

The first chapter is an overview of the development of Western defense policy and strategy in the early years of the Cold War. The second chapter looks at the development of NATO down to the important Lisbon conference of 1952, where it briefly seemed NATO might embrace the defense of Europe based on conventional forces. Chapter three addresses the attempts by the British and Americans to assert “new looks” towards NATO strategy in the wake of the blossoming thermonuclear age which resulted in the strategy popularly referred to as massive retaliation. Chapter four discusses the critique of the strategy of massive retaliation which developed in the late 1950s. Chapter five, in turn, studies the problems faced by the Kennedy administration when it tried to advance a strategy known as flexible response as an alternative to massive retaliation. The sixth chapter chronicles the strange resilience of flexible response in the period after Kennedy’s death. Flexible response eventually became NATO’s official strategy late in 1967 and remained so until the end of the Cold War. But its ambiguity, a feature which had marked alliance strategy since the late 1950s, meant that the change in strategy did little to resolve the fundamental dilemma of articulating strategy in the context of the Cold War in Europe. The epilogue discusses how the dilemmas and ambiguities of flexible response played out in the final two decades of the Cold War and how the problem of its interpretation lay at the heart of the ongoing debates over NATO strategy.

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Abbreviations

Abbreviations in the Text

ANF	Atlantic Nuclear Force
COS	United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff
ICBM	Inter Continental Ballistic Missile
IRBM	Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile
ISA	Office of International Security Affairs (US, DOD)
JCS	United States Joint Chiefs of Staff
MC	Military Committee (NATO)
MC/CS	Military Committee in Chiefs of Staff Session (NATO)
MLF	Multi Lateral Force (NATO)
NAC	North Atlantic Council (of NATO)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NPG	Nuclear Planning Group (NATO)
SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander Europe (NATO)
SACLANT	Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic (NATO)
SG	Standing Group (NATO)
SHAPE	Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (NATO)
SLBM	Sea Launched Ballistic Missile

Abbreviations in the Footnotes

BNA	British National Archives (formerly the PRO)
DDEL	Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, Abilene, Kansas
FRUS	Foreign Relations of the United States
HOSD	History of the Office of Secretary of Defense
HSTL	Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, Missouri
JFKL	John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, Massachusetts
LBJL	Lyndon B. Johnson Library, Austin, Texas
NARA	US National Archives and Records Administration
NSC	United States National Security Council

A Note on the Notes

The footnotes in this work are formatted in a way that may be unusual to those familiar with the citation formats recommended by most of the American presidential libraries. Instead of relying on the format of document, record group, further record subdivision, box number, then archive, the notes in this dissertation are organized in a descending hierarchical format. While perhaps unconventional, they are designed to enhance the readers' ability to track down the information in the notes. By presenting the information in a descending hierarchy of largest to smallest descriptors, the notes conform to the process by which the reader would have to follow in order verify the information in the note. While this format is unusual in many American works, it does conform to a format used by some British historians. The intent of this convention then is to increase the footnote's utility.

Introduction

Throughout the history of the Cold War, the NATO alliance faced a fundamental dilemma. That dilemma was the product of the inability to articulate a military strategy for the alliance that reconciled the perceived requirements for defense against Soviet attack, and later, deterrence of such a threat with available resources and means. It was a product of different strategic outlooks of the members of the NATO alliance. In the early phase of the alliance, NATO planners articulated force goals which called for significant conventional forces to hold back any Soviet assault on Western Europe until such time as the potential of a US, and to a lesser extent British, strategic (read atomic) bombing campaign could decisively defeat the Soviet Union. However, the conventional force goals which were articulated in the early phase of alliance strategy were never attained. Increasing difficulties in the 1950s in creating a viable conventional deterrent to Soviet aggression coupled with general strategic predilections of the American and British governments led to increasing stress throughout the decade on the importance of a credible massive retaliatory nuclear deterrent. Once NATO had embraced a strategy premised on this deterrent, the governments of the European NATO were reluctant to consider any shifts towards alternate strategies which restored the prominence of large-scale conventional forces.

NATO's shift to a strategy that relied on the deterrent power of massive retaliation certainly generated considerable unease in the West. Nonetheless, the NATO alliance pressed ahead with the deployment of US theater nuclear weapons into Western Europe from 1954 on as a corollary to the strategy of massive retaliation. The profusion of theater nuclear weapons in NATO Europe, and later in the Warsaw Pact, ultimately

contributed to the sense of unease in Western Europe that any potential conflict would result not in defense against Soviet aggression, but a civilization ending conflagration. The viability of massive retaliation as NATO's military strategy received a further blow in the fall of 1957 when the Soviets successfully launched Sputnik, the world's first earth satellite. By implication, the Soviets had developed the ability to consistently strike the continental United States, which further undermined-especially to United States' NATO allies-the efficacy of massive retaliation. Opinion in the West increasingly held that NATO and the Warsaw Pact were approaching a state of mutual deterrence, in which each side possessed the ability to destroy the other, regardless of who struck first in a war. Complicating matters further, the NATO alliance enjoyed little firm agreement as to when the state of mutual deterrence was reached. By the end of the 1950s, NATO authorities clearly sensed that massive retaliation had lost its validity, but it was utterly unclear what should replace it.

The search for options led some, especially those with a less than vested interest in massive retaliation, to postulate that a more viable strategy might be found in graduated deterrence or flexible response. The Kennedy and Johnson administrations ardently championed flexible response. Yet many NATO member states in Europe proved very uncomfortable with this new strategy for two basic reasons. First, flexible response would necessitate the reconstitution of substantial and expensive conventional forces. Second, flexible response suggested that "limited" tactical nuclear warfare might be confined to Europe, thus potentially decoupling the American strategic nuclear deterrent from NATO defense. Despite persistent European resistance to flexible

response, it retained a strange resilience within the US government. Indeed, after NATO adoption of flexible response in 1968, every subsequent US government continued to press its European allies to undertake steps to better implement the new strategy. In the 1970s and 1980s, the alliance faced recurrent cycles of earlier debates over the importance of conventional force improvements and tactical nuclear weapons which demonstrated that NATO's strategic dilemma was never satisfactorily answered during the Cold War.¹

Among the many who participated in this strategy debate was former Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara. McNamara famously made two important claims in *Foreign Affairs* in 1983. First he claimed that as Secretary of Defense to Presidents Kennedy and Johnson he had argued that nuclear weapons were totally useless militarily, serving only to deter their potential use by the Soviets.² He also charged that in the fifteen years since NATO had officially adopted flexible response the essential element-which he then identified as "sufficient conventional forces to offset those of the Warsaw Pact-had never been achieved."³ In his article, McNamara sketched out a brief history of the

1 My perception of the cyclical nature of the alliance debates over strategy is drawn largely from Lawrence Freedman's work on nuclear strategy. Freedman began his research under the premise that there was an evolution, or "progress along a learning curve" toward a higher level of understanding of nuclear strategy. What Freedman found, however, was a "cyclical character of the debates." These cyclical debates faced the problem that it proved "impossible to plan sensibly" for the extension of America's nuclear deterrent to its West European allies. This is referred to as the problem of "extended deterrence." Lawrence Freedman, *The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy*, 2nd edn. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), pp. xviii, 424.

2 Robert McNamara, "The Military Role of Nuclear Weapons: Perceptions and Misperceptions," *Foreign Affairs*, v.62, n.1 (Fall 1983), p. 79.

3 McNamara, "The Military Role of Nuclear Weapons," p.65. Two years earlier, Stanley Hoffman had argued that "There was, in the first place, never any agreement on the military function of theater nuclear forces in NATO's strategy." Stanley Hoffman, "NATO and Nuclear Weapons: Reasons and Unreasons," *Foreign Affairs*, v.60, n.2 (Winter 1981/82), pp.327-46. Similarly, former German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt wrote in his memoirs, "In reality, since 1967 military plans and maneuvers have provided for no real flexibility. Rather, the NATO leadership has invariably worked with the idea of rapid escalation; it

development of NATO strategy. His article conformed to the basic delineation between massive retaliation and flexible response that John Gaddis had posited in his then recently published study, *Strategies of Containment*.⁴ In addition, McNamara referred explicitly to two NATO strategy documents, MC 14/2 and MC 14/3, which he associated with “massive retaliation” and “flexible response” respectively.⁵ Though these documents had been cited before in open records, McNamara’s discussion of them in *Foreign Affairs* no doubt helped to pique the interest of a new generation of scholars in the deeper meanings of both documents.⁶ It also again raised the issue of what the shift from massive retaliation to flexible response meant.⁷ Indeed, by the time McNamara laid out these

assumed and in its maneuvers rehearsed the early use of nuclear weapons by the West.” Helmut Schmidt, *Men and Powers: A Political Retrospective*, translated by Ruth Hein (New York: Random House, 1989), p.111.

4 John Gaddis identified five distinct geopolitical codes, or modes of thought, of American strategic thinking in the postwar World War II-era. These codes were feasible responses based on assessments of threats, contrasted with American interests that statesmen and policymakers had developed. Gaddis delineated these five codes as: George Kennan’s original strategy of containment, the NSC-68 shaped response in the era of the Korean War, the Eisenhower/Dulles “New Look” from 1953-1961, the Kennedy and Johnson-era “flexible response,” and the complex of ideas referred to as détente that emerged after 1969. John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), p.ix.

5 McNamara, “The Military Role of Nuclear Weapons”, pp.63-64.

6 Anthony Cave Brown, a British journalist, also helped stir interest in early American postwar strategy with the publication of *Dropshot: The U.S. Plan for War with the Soviet Union*. Though the plan (DROPSHOT, like HALFMOON, was part of a series of US postwar plans) never received official sanction as a war plan, it did reflect a phase in American strategic thinking. Anthony Cave Brown, *Dropshot: The U.S. Plan for War with the Soviet Union in 1957* (New York: Dial Press, 1978). It was republished in Britain the next year as *Operation World War III: The Secret American Plan ‘Dropshot’ for War with the Soviet Union, 1957* (London: Arms and Armour, 1979). Brown’s work has been supplanted by the massive fifteen volume collection of US war plans from the early Cold War edited by Steven T. Ross and David Alan Rosenberg. Stephen T. Ross and David Alan Rosenberg, eds. *America’s Plans for War Against the Soviet Union 1945-1950*, 15 vols. (New York: Garland Publishing, 1989). Another useful source on American strategic thought in the early Cold War is Marc Trachtenberg, ed. *The Development of American Strategic Thought, 1945-1969*, 6 vols. (New York: Garland, 1988). See also his “Strategic Thought in America, 1952-1966,” *Political Science Quarterly*, v.104, n.2 (Summer 1989), pp.301-34.

7 David Alan Rosenberg and Fred Kaplan both undertook path-breaking work in this period. Rosenberg, a student of Akira Iriye’s at the University of Chicago, published the fruits of his research in a series of articles between 1981 and 1986. Rosenberg, who began his research in 1973 before many of the archival sources were opened, brought to light a number of critical documents related to the development of

claims, an emerging scholarship on US and NATO strategy was already seeking answers to these very questions.

There is of course a substantial literature on the foreign and security policies of many of the respective NATO members.⁸ In addition, a growing body of literature has

American nuclear policy in the Truman and Eisenhower eras. David Rosenberg published (in chronological order): “A Smoking Radiating Ruin at the End of Two Hours’: Documents on American Plans for War with the Soviet Union, 1954-1955,” *International Security*, v.6, n.3 (Winter 1981/82), pp.3-27; “U.S. Nuclear Stockpile, 1945-1950,” *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, v.38 (May 1982), pp.25-30; “The Origins of Overkill: Nuclear Weapons and American Strategy, 1945-1960,” *International Security*, v.7, n.4 (Spring 1983), pp.3-71; “American Atomic Strategy and the Hydrogen Bomb Decision,” *Journal of American History*, v.66 (Summer 1985), “Reality and Responsibility: Power and Process in the Making of United States Nuclear Strategy, 1945-1968,” *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, v.9, n.1 (March 1986), pp.35-52. Rosenberg’s dissertation, “Toward Armageddon: The Foundations of United States Nuclear Strategy, 1945-1961” (PhD dissertation, University of Chicago), was defended in August 1983. His seminal article, “The Origins of Overkill” (1983), demonstrated the complex interaction between strategic policy and bureaucratic infighting that led to the development of the first SIOP, the plan for nuclear war with the Soviet Union that embodied “massive retaliation.” Fred Kaplan, a political science graduate student at MIT, had his dissertation published as *The Wizards of Armageddon* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983). It was a study of the strategic intellectuals-particularly the community at RAND-who articulated the nuclear critique of massive retaliation and went on to become key players in the McNamara Pentagon. Both Rosenberg and Kaplan made skilled use of the newly declassified American materials and interviews with key figures from the US government. Rosenberg in particular exploited material from the papers of Admiral Arleigh Burke at the US Naval Operational Archives. These files were only briefly open in 1981 before being closed again to researchers until the mid-1990s.

⁸ Due to its massive scope, this literature will not be dealt with in any detail here. Among a number of the works that were useful in the preparation of this study are John Baylis, *Ambiguity and Deterrence: British Nuclear Strategy 1945-1964* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995); Robert R. Bowie and Richard H. Immerman, *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); McGeorge Bundy, *Danger and Survival: Choices about the Bomb in the First Fifty Years* (New York: Random House, 1988); Campbell Craig, *Destroying the Village: Eisenhower and Thermonuclear War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998); Saki Dockrill, *Eisenhower’s New-Look National Security Policy, 1953-1961* (Basingstoke, England: Macmillan Press, 1996); Lawrence Freedman, *The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy*, 2nd edn. (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1989); John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); John Lewis Gaddis, et. al., eds., *Cold War Statesmen Confront the Bomb: Nuclear Diplomacy since 1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Francis H. Heller and John R. Gillingham, eds., *NATO: The Founding of the Alliance and the Integration of Europe* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1992); 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); Michael J. Hogan, *A Cross of Iron: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of the National Security State, 1945-1954* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Lawrence S. Kaplan, *The Long Entanglement: NATO’s First Fifty Years* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1999); John Kent, *British Imperial Strategy and the Origins of the Cold War, 1944-1949* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1993); Klaus Larres, *Churchill’s Cold War: The Politics of Personal Diplomacy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002); Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford:

focused on the strategy debate within NATO. Robert Wampler, Saki Dockrill, Stephen Twigge and Alan Macmillan, G. Wyn Rees, and Andrew Johnston have all written on the development of NATO strategy in the alliance's first decade.⁹ The shift towards flexible response and its subsequent contentious implementation have been dealt with by J. Michael Legge, Jane Stromseth, Ivo Daalder, Pascaline Winand, Helga Haftendorn, Constantine Pagedas, and Frederic Bozo.¹⁰ David Schwartz, John Duffield, Richard Kugler, and Michael Wheeler have all analyzed NATO strategy over a broader swath of

Stanford University Press, 1992); David Clay Large, *Germans to the Front: West German Rearmament in the Adenauer Era* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina Press, 1996); Kevin Ruane, *The Rise and Fall of the European Defence Community: Anglo-American Relations and the Crisis of European Defence* (London: Palgrave, 2000); Scott D. Sagan, *Moving Targets: Nuclear Strategy and National Security* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989); Gustav Schmidt, ed., *A History of NATO-The First Fifty Years*, 3 vols. (New York: Palgrave, 2001); Rolf Tamnes, *The United States and the Cold War in the High North* (Oslo: Ad Notam, 1991); and Marc Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace: The Making of a European Settlement, 1945-1963* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999). There is a chronological list in the appendix of some of the major periodical literature between 1949 and 1969 that commented on the NATO strategy debate.

⁹ On the development of NATO strategy in the first decade, see Robert E. Osgood, *NATO: The Entangling Alliance* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1966); Robert A. Wampler, "Ambiguous Legacy: The United States, Great Britain and the Foundations of NATO Strategy, 1948-1957," (PhD, Harvard University Press, 1991); Robert A. Wampler, "Conventional Goals and Nuclear Promises: The Truman Administration and the Roots of the NATO New Look," *NATO: The Founding of the Alliance and the Integration of Europe*, ed. by Francis H. Heller and John R. Gillingham (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), pp.353-380.; Saki Dockrill, "Cooperation and Suspicion: The United States' Alliance Diplomacy for the Security of Western Europe, 1953-1954," *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, v.5, n.1 (March 1994), pp.138-82; Stephen Twigge and Alan Macmillan, "Britain, the United States, and the Development of NATO Strategy, 1950-1964," *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, v.19, n.2 (June 1996), pp.260-81; G. Wyn Rees, *Anglo-American Approaches to Alliance Security, 1955-1960* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996); Andrew M. Johnston, "The Construction of NATO's Medium Term Defence Plan and the Diplomacy of Conventional Strategy, 1949-50," *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, v.12, n.2 (June 2001), pp.79-124; and Andrew M. Johnston, *Hegemony and Culture in the Origins of NATO Nuclear First-Use, 1945-1955* (London: Palgrave, 2005).

¹⁰ J. Michael Legge, *Theater Nuclear Weapons and the Strategy of Flexible Response* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1983); Jane E. Stromseth, *The Origins of Flexible Response: NATO's Debate over Strategy in the 1960s* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988); Ivo H. Daalder, *The Nature and Practice of Flexible Response: NATO Strategy and Theater Nuclear Forces Since 1967* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991); Pascaline Winand, *Eisenhower, Kennedy, and the United States of Europe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993); Helga Haftendorn, *NATO and the Nuclear Revolution: A Crisis of Credibility, 1966-1967* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996); Constantine A. Pagedas, *Anglo-American Strategic Relations and the French Problem 1960-1963: A Troubled Partnership* (London: Frank-Cass, 2000); and Frédéric Bozo, *Two Strategies for Europe: De Gaulle, the United States, and the Atlantic Alliance* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001).

time.¹¹ Gregory Pedlow, the official SHAPE historian, has also provided a useful overview essay introducing a collection of major NATO strategy documents.¹² Christopher Bluth and Beatrice Heuser, among others, have contributed to our understanding of the different approaches to nuclear weapons taken by the Britain, France, and Germany.¹³ This study integrates the entire arc of the NATO strategy debate from the beginning of the alliance to the adoption of flexible response. It is based primarily upon US and British archival records complemented by NATO archival material, and a wide range of published documentary material and official histories.¹⁴

11 David N. Schwartz, *NATO's Nuclear Dilemmas* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1983); Richard L. Kugler, *Laying the Foundations: The Evolution of NATO in the 1950s* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1990), *The Great Strategy Debate: NATO's Evolution in the 1960s* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1991), and *Commitment to Purpose: How Alliance Partnership Won the Cold War* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1993); John S. Duffield, "International Regimes and Alliance Behavior, Explaining NATO Conventional Force Levels," *International Organization*, v.46, n.4 (Autumn 1992), pp.819-855; "The Soviet Military Threat to Western Europe: US Estimates in the 1950s and 1960s", *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, v.15, n.2 (June 1992), pp.208-27; and *Power Rules: The Evolution of NATO's Conventional Force Posture* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995); and Michael O. Wheeler, "NATO Nuclear Strategy, 1949-90", *A History of NATO-The First Fifty Years*, v.3. John Duffield, a political scientist, focuses specifically on the alliance's conventional force posture, providing a very useful complement to the general focus on the role of nuclear weapons in alliance strategy.

12 Gregory W. Pedlow, "The Evolution of NATO Strategy, 1949-1969," *NATO Strategy Documents*. Available electronically at the NATO Archives website.

13 Christoph Bluth, *Britain, Germany, and Western Nuclear Strategy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995); Beatrice Heuser, "The Development of NATO Nuclear Strategy", *Contemporary European History*, v.4, n.1 (1994), pp.36-66, and *NATO, Britain, France and the FRG: Nuclear Strategies and Forces for Europe, 1949-2000* (London: Macmillan, 1997).

14 On the US side, the *Foreign Relations of the United States* [hereafter cited as *FRUS*] series produced by the US Department of State has been invaluable. There are also a number of very valuable histories of the US Department of Defense and Joint Chiefs of Staff which deserve note. As of 2008, there are five volumes of the *History of the Office of the Secretary of Defense* [hereafter cited as *HOSD*] published: vol.I *The Formative Years, 1947-1950* (1984); vol.II: *The Test of War, 1950-1953* (1988); vol.III: *Strategy, Money, and the New Look, 1953-1956* (2001); vol.IV: *Into the Missile Age, 1956-1960* (1997); and vol.V: *The McNamara Ascendancy, 1961-1965* (2006). The volumes of the *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff* [hereafter *HJCS*] relevant to this study that have been published include, Kenneth W. Condit, *HJCS: The Joint Chiefs and National Policy*, vol.II: 1947-1949 (1979); Walter S. Poole, *HJCS: The Joint Chiefs and National Policy*, vol.IV: 1950-1952 (1980); Robert J. Watson, *HJCS*, vol.V: *The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy 1953-1954* (1986); Kenneth W. Condit, *HJCS*, vol.VI: *The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy 1955-1956* (1992); Byron R. Fairchild and Walter S. Poole, *HJCS: The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy*, vol.VII: 1957-1960 (2000). This series is of particular importance because of a decision by the Secretary of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in August 1974 to destroy all transcripts of Joint

This study is divided into six chapters. The first two chapters are largely synthetic accounts which establish the background of Western strategic thinking and the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The first chapter is an overview of the development of Western defense policy. It focuses particularly on the development of war plans by the United States, Britain and Canada in the early years of the Cold War. All three of these states traditionally avoided “continental commitments” in Western Europe.¹⁵ The need to provide the states of Western Europe with viable support challenged traditional policies, and ultimately led all three of these peripheral countries to enter into the North Atlantic Treaty.

The second chapter looks at the development of NATO down to the 1952 Lisbon meeting of the North Atlantic Council. This has traditionally been seen as the meeting where NATO considered developing a force plan which would have provided the option for a conventional defense of Europe. This defense was premised on a substantial military buildup which was laid out in DC 13, the first NATO Medium Term Defense

Chiefs meetings more than six months old “after screening for historical significance.” The loss of these documents increases the historian’s reliance on official histories that have been produced to date. See the letter from Edmund F. McBride, Chief, Documents Division of the Joint Secretariat to James J. Hastings of the Records Appraisal and Disposition Division of the National Archives, dated 25 January 1993, which is found inside the finding guide for RG 218 (Records of the JCS) at NARA II. Other official US histories of note include: Defense Threat Reduction Agency, *Defense’s Nuclear Agency 1947-1997* (Washington, DC: US Department of Defense, 2002); Ernest R. May, John D. Steinbruner, and Thomas W. Wolfe, *History of the Strategic Arms Competition 1945-1972* (Office of the Secretary of Defense Historical Office, 1981), available at the National Security Archives; and John Ponturo, *Analytical Support for the Joint Chiefs of Staff: The WSEG Experience, 1948-1976*. IDA Study S-507 (Institute for Defense Analysis, July 1979), available at the DOD FOIA website.

¹⁵ Here I use a phrase which is traditionally used to describe British reluctance to accept formalized ties to the affairs of continental Europe, but the concept is easily extended to Canada (which had long been a British colony and then dominion). In the United States we generally speak of the tradition of isolationism, but isolationism share features which are recognizable to one familiar with Britain’s reluctance to engage in a continental commitment. Andrew Johnston (see following note) has used the term peripheralism to describe this approach.

Plan.¹⁶ The chapter closes with an account of the British Global Strategy Review of 1952, which contained elements of the case against the Lisbon Force Goals which had been adopted by NATO at the beginning of the year.

Chapter three analyzes British and American attempts to assert “new looks” in NATO strategy. This took place in a climate where it seemed increasingly apparent that the Lisbon Force Goals would not be met. The first “new look” strategy documents adopted by NATO were MC 14 and MC 48. In the past, MC 48 was seen as beginning of NATO nuclearization. However, as subsequent research has shown, NATO strategy from the formation of the alliance countenanced the use of atomic weapons in the event of all out war with the Soviet Union.¹⁷ But MC 48 did mark a clear change in intensity, if not form, from the more conventional orientation of the Lisbon Force Goals. Marc Trachtenberg has written that, “In adopting MC 48, NATO was embracing a strategy of extremely rapid escalation. No strategy up to that point, and indeed no NATO strategy since, placed such a heavy and unequivocal emphasis on rapid and massive nuclear escalation.”¹⁸

16 The Medium Term Defense Plan has been the subject of a recent, closely argued critique by Andrew Johnston. According to Johnston, the strategic cultures of both the United States and Great Britain were disposed towards peripheral strategies which resisted large-scale conventional commitments in continental Europe to preserve maximum freedom of choice. The large-scale conventional force goals agreed to at Lisbon essentially masked the nuclear predilections of both the United States and Great Britain. Johnston originally made this argument in “The Construction of NATO’s Medium Term Defence Plan and the Diplomacy of Conventional Strategy, 1949-50,” and developed it further in his *Hegemony and Culture in the Origins of NATO Nuclear First-Use, 1945-1955*.

17 Osgood, *NATO: The Entangling Alliance*, pp.102-146, and Robert A. Wampler, “Conventional Goals and Nuclear Promises: The Truman Administration and the Roots of the NATO New Look,” in *NATO: The Founding of the Alliance and the Integration of Europe*, ed. by Francis H. Heller and John R. Gillingham (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1992), pp.353-380.

18 Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, p.159.

Chapter four discusses the criticisms of the massive retaliation strategy associated with MC 48 and its 1957 successor MC 48/2 which developed in the later part of the 1950s. Moving beyond the well-known “revolt of the paratroopers,” this chapter discusses how a bureaucratic consensus formed in the US which favored moving away from massive retaliation. Ironically this occurred at the same time the first Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP) was being completed. SACEUR Lauris Norstad played a key role in pressing for the adoption of the “flexible” aspects of MC 48/2. In doing so, Norstad downplayed the emphasis on massive retaliation as NATO’s sole strategic option. This contrasts with the assertion by Francis Gavin that flexible response was a “myth.”¹⁹ Instead I argue that there was indeed a belief in the United States that NATO should adopt a strategy of flexible response. That it proved very difficult to articulate in practice should not obscure the fact that there was a clear desire to do so.

Chapter five, in turn, studies the problems faced by the Kennedy administration in convincing their NATO allies that the answer to the dissatisfaction with existing NATO strategy lie in replacing it with flexible response. It also delineates that there were initially two components to flexible response, increased conventional forces (which had won widespread acceptance in the US policy-making bureaucracy) and nuclear counterforce strategy brought in by McNamara’s “whiz kids” (which found less acceptance in the US, and which McNamara himself retreated from before long). This

19 Francis J. Gavin, “The Myth of Flexible Response: United States Strategy during the 1960s,” *The International History Review*, v.23, n.4 (December 2001), pp.847-75. I do largely agree with Gavin’s assertion that President Kennedy himself was retreating from his support for flexible response in the final year of his presidency. As with many other aspects of US foreign policy, one can speculate counterfactually that had Kennedy lived flexible response might not have retained its strange resilience within the US government.

raised two issues for US allies, both of which roused European discontent, but which need to be understood separately. This chapter ends with a discussion of MC 100/1, a NATO strategy document which contained language consonant with the notion of flexible response that the Kennedy administration had initially advanced in 1961.²⁰ No doubt this is because it never achieved official approval, due to a French veto late in 1963. Though this is not one of the more famous French vetoes of that year, the fate of MC 100/1 is an important chapter in the history of NATO strategy. Particularly interesting is the notion that by the time the French vetoed MC100/1, President Kennedy himself had little desire to see NATO adopt a flexible response strategy.

The sixth chapter chronicles the strange resilience of flexible response in the period after Kennedy's death. US authorities were finally able to push through its approval only after De Gaulle had withdrawn the French from NATO's military commands. This also meant the French no longer participated in NATO's Military Committee. The other NATO nations then constituted a NATO's Defense Committee, which included all the member states, less France and Iceland.²¹ Flexible response (or flexibility of response) finally became NATO's official strategy in late 1967-68. By the time it was adopted, however, flexible response was little more than a declaratory policy. As Robert McNamara subsequently charged, little was agreed by the members of the alliance in the intervening years to give substance to this new strategy.

20 MC 100/1 was not included in the NATO strategy document collection prepared by SHAPE historian Gregory Pedlow.

21 Iceland, though an adherent to the North Atlantic Treaty, maintained no military forces of its own, thus did not participate in the NATO military bureaucracy.

The epilogue discusses the ongoing difficulty in articulating what flexible response meant in the final two decades of the Cold War. It was only in the decades after flexible responses adoption that justification was found for the strategy. This occurred due to a confluence of factors, including a renewed interests in NATO's flanks; Britain's decision to devote the focus of its military establishment toward European defense once commitments "East of Suez" were wound down; the US Army's shift towards an exclusively European focus after the end of US involvement in the Vietnam War; and the articulation by the US Navy of the Maritime Strategy, especially once it was embraced by the Reagan administration in the 1980s. Almost all of this, however, came only after flexible response had already been adopted.

This study builds on a number of earlier works which have demonstrated the fundamental ambiguity built into NATO strategy. It provides a discussion of the debate over NATO strategy across the entire first two decades of the alliance, providing a broad enough perspective to appreciate the degrees to which the debates over strategy did follow a recurrent pattern. While not unique in doing so, it is one of the first monograph length treatments which surveys the debates over strategy from the beginning of the alliance to the era of flexible response.²² Successive American statesmen consistently pursued a quest for "flexibility." Though there is an argument to be made for ambiguity

22 Both Duffield's *Power Rules* and Kugler's *Commitment to Purpose* cover the entire history of NATO in the Cold War. Kugler's work, based on his earlier RAND studies, appears to be based primarily on secondary source material and provides little in the way of source notes. Duffield's work is impressive in its scope and, like this study, draws heavily on American and British archival material. This study has benefitted from the release of considerable additional material in the Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson Libraries, the Nixon Presidential Material at NARA, the opening of several additional years of British records (especially material on the years from 1965-1973 that were not available when Duffield research was conducted), and access to NATO Archives which have made it possible to address this period more completely.

increasing the reliability of deterrence, the ambiguity of NATO strategy created a legacy for the alliance in which it became impossible to articulate a coherent military force posture. Time and again this flexibility was sought, at least in part, by turning to a buildup of NATO's military capabilities. This United States quest for flexibility through military strength met with persistent resistance from NATO allies. The other members of the alliance were never convinced that the need for greater flexibility could be met through a strategy that was premised on the buildup of considerable conventional military force. The ambiguity of NATO strategy created a strategic dilemma that was never successfully solved.

Chapter 1: Western Defense Planning and the Origins of NATO

The Second World War cast a powerful shadow on statesmen and military planners for years afterwards.²³ Though the war ended with the introduction of atomic warfare, it remained unclear for sometime afterwards exactly how the atomic age would affect future warfare. Some prescient observers quickly grasped the implications, but military planning itself, dominated for the next generation by men who had commanded in the previous war, transformed at a slower pace.²⁴ This chapter will look at how planning for future warfare developed in the early years of the Cold War. It will also discuss how various early visions for Western security came together in the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty.

By 1947, Soviet actions in Germany, the Near East, and Eastern Europe were beginning to dramatically undermine Western confidence in Soviet postwar cooperation.

23 Certainly one can say that the influence of the generation of men who served in World War II lasted deep into the Cold War. George H. W. Bush who served as President as the Cold War ended (1989-1993) was a US naval pilot in the Pacific in World War II. Two of Richard Nixon's Secretaries of Defense, Melvin Laird and Eliot Richardson served in the military in World War II, and Ronald Reagan's first Secretary of Defense (1981-1987) Caspar Weinberger, was a US Army Captain serving on General Douglas MacArthur's intelligence staff. Roger R. Trask and Alfred Goldberg, *The Department of Defense 1947-1997* (Washington, DC: Historical Office, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1997).

24 Most famously, in 1946 the American strategic intellectual Bernard Brodie edited *The Absolute Weapon: Atomic Power and World Order* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1946) within a few months of the first use of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. For a study of Brodie's own evolution as a strategic thinker in the nuclear age, see Barry H. Steiner, *Bernard Brodie and the Foundations of American Nuclear Strategy* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1991). In France, Admiral Raoul Castex published an early article on the equalizing potential of atomic weaponry for smaller powers in October 1945. See Beatrice Heuser, *NATO, Britain, France and the FRG*, p.95. Dwight Eisenhower, who replaced George Marshall as Chief of Staff of the Army, was well aware of the need of the US military to begin thinking about the implications of atomic energy to the military field. See Louis Galambos, ed., *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, v.VII: *The Chief of Staff*, Doc.556: Memorandum to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 17 December 1945, pp.639-42. Nonetheless, the perceived need for large-scale armies in future war remained stock-in-trade for Eisenhower's successors as Chief of Staff. See General J. Lawton Collins, "The Nature of Modern War," *Military Review*, v.XXVIII, n.8 (November 1948), pp.3-7, and General Omar N. Bradley, "Creating a Sound Military Force," *Military Review*, v.XXIX, n.2 (May 1949), pp.3-6.

The fate of Czechoslovakia, pressure on states on the Soviet periphery, and the Soviet blockade of Berlin in 1948 seemed like ominous harbingers of Soviet intentions towards Europe. The Western powers, having by and large demobilized much of their wartime strength and having turned their attention to occupation duties, were also worried by the large military forces that the Soviets maintained. Western powers worried whether Soviet pressure on Berlin was a prelude to general war. During late 1947 and into 1948, leaders in the United States and Western Europe were increasingly turning their attention to providing for their own security amidst the dawning of the Cold War.

US Secretary of State George Marshall's Harvard speech on 5 June 1947 had focused attention on European economic recovery and placed less emphasis on military security. Bevin and French Foreign Minister Georges Bidault were preoccupied throughout the summer and fall of 1947 putting together the European response to Marshall's speech and organizing the Conference on European Reconstruction.²⁵ The Soviets rejected Bevin and Bidault's invitation that they participate. The US had hoped the Soviets would not participate in any case. The Soviets soon acted to curtail the relative autonomy of those Eastern European countries, such as Czechoslovakia, which

25 Bevin moved rapidly to coordinate a response to Marshall's speech with the French government. From July to September the sixteen countries which ultimately participated in the Committee on European Economic Cooperation labored to produce a report that would address the problems on coordination and assessment that the US required. On the British response, see Alan Bullock, *Ernest Bevin: Foreign Secretary 1945-1951* (London: Heinemann, 1983), pp.405-427, and John Baylis, "Britain, the Brussels Pact and the Continental Commitment," *International Affairs*, vol.60, no.4 (Autumn 1984), p.618. On the background trends in British military planning for the post-war, see Julian Lewis, *Changing Direction: British Military Planning for Post-war Strategic Defence, 1942-1947*, 2nd edition (London: Frank Cass, 2003). On the French response, see 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), pp.474-78. On the history of the Marshall Plan itself, the two standard works are Michael Hogan, *The Marshall Plan: America, Britain, and the Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1947-1952* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), and Alan Milward, *The Reconstruction of Western Europe 1945-1951* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

had shown interest in US assistance. The resurrection of the Comintern, renamed the Cominform, in September 1947, heralded a more vociferous Soviet criticism of Western cooperation and the hardening of positions between East and West.

The demise of wartime cooperation between the Soviets and the West was obvious during the Council of Foreign Ministers meeting in London from 25 November through 15 December. After several frustrating sessions where no progress was made on a German peace treaty, the conference adjourned without setting a date for a future meeting. Convinced that no further progress could be made with the Soviets, the Western powers decided that future progress on the western zones of Germany would have to proceed on a trilateral basis between Britain, France, and the US.²⁶ The breakdown of the Council of Foreign Ministers also refocused attention on the problems of mutual security. This was not least because of concerns that the Soviets might act preemptively to forestall the Western powers from proceeding with their own plans for West Germany.

French Foreign Minister Bidault approached both Marshall and Bevin at the Conference before its formal adjournment, hoping to interest the Americans in a commitment to European defense.²⁷ Bevin also stressed his theme of an association of

26 For an excellent recent treatment of the early Cold War that places the German question at the center of the Cold War, see Marc Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement, 1945-1963* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999). For his discussion of the German question in the wake of the London Conference of Foreign Ministers, and the importance of the French government coming round to the view that Germany should be included in a Western security system if the United States would commit itself as well, see especially pp.66-78.

27 Bruna Bagnato, "France and the Origins of the Atlantic Pact," Enni DiNolfo, ed., *The Atlantic Pact Forty Years Later: A Historical Reappraisal* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1991), p.83. Bidault's interest in discussions with the Americans was no doubt stoked by the lack of concrete discussions the French had elicited from the British since the signing of the Dunkirk Treaty. See Kent and Young, "The 'Western Union' concept and British defence policy, 1947-8," pp.168-69.

western powers in discussions with Marshall and Bidault before they departed London.²⁸ Though Marshall was interested in receiving a more specific British proposal, the Americans soon made it clear that, in the security realm, they were looking for initiatives from the West Europeans. Further American involvement beyond funding for the European Recovery Program (better known as the Marshall Plan) could hardly be expected from Congress at this time. American policy in 1948 followed two lines. On the political/diplomatic side, the US continued to encourage closer West European security cooperation-often citing the model of the recently signed Rio Pact as an example-while at the same time beginning the process of secretly coordinating military planning-on a constrained basis-with the Canadians and British.²⁹

On 22 January 1948, British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin delivered a speech to Parliament outlining his plans for a multilateral security organization.³⁰ Bevin had been thinking of some conception of closer Western linkages since he became Foreign Secretary in 1945.³¹ But this project did not really develop until he had spent a year-and-

28 *Foreign Relations of the United States* [hereafter FRUS], 1948, vol.III, (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974), Telegram, London to Secretary of State, 22 December 1947, pp.1-2.

29 The attitudes of the US government towards Bevin's proposals and the Western Union are the subject of *FRUS 1948*, vol.III. For the best recent treatment, see Lawrence Kaplan, *NATO 1948: The Birth of the Transatlantic Alliance* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007). Also the dated and American-centric in Timothy P. Ireland, *Creating the Entangling Alliance: The Origins of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1981).

30 The original text of the speech can be found in Hansard's *Parliamentary Debates*, 5th Series, vol.446 (London: His Majesty's Stationary Office, 1948), pp.383-409. See especially p.398: "...but between all there should be an effective understanding bound together by common ideals for which the Western Powers have twice in once generation shed their blood. If we are to preserve peace and our own safety at the same time we can only do so by the mobilisation of such a moral and material force as will create confidence and energy in the West and inspire respect elsewhere, and this means that Britain cannot stand outside Europe and regard her problems as quite separate from those of her neighbours." Bevin had outlined his foreign policy to the Cabinet on 8 January through a series of papers. See British National Archives [hereafter BNA], CAB 128/12, CM(48)2. On the background of the speech, see Bullock, *Ernest Bevin*, pp.513-22.

31 Baylis, "Britain, the Brussels Pact and the Continental Commitment," p.616.

a-half in frustrating negotiations with the Soviets in the Council of Foreign Ministers. By mid to late 1947, failure to reach agreements over Germany, frictions in the Mediterranean, and the Soviet consolidation of their hold on Eastern Europe led Bevin and others in the British Foreign Office to articulate more clearly a vision for a Western Union.³² Bevin was certainly not alone in his desire to see closer cooperation in Western Europe. Paul Henri Spaak of Belgium had been pressing the British for several years to negotiate a Western security arrangement.³³ As far back as December 1940, Foreign Minister Trygve Lie of the Norwegian government-in-exile had suggested the idea for a postwar Atlantic defense pact to the British.³⁴ On 4 March 1947 the British and the

32 Bevin's official biographer, Alan Bullock, argues in Chapter 17: "The plan realized" that the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty "represented the culmination of the policy he had pursued at least since 1947". Bullock, *Ernest Bevin*, p.655. This position—that the North Atlantic Pact as it emerged had been Bevin's aim since 1947, has been subject to a sustained critique by John Kent and others who have argued that Bevin's conception for a Western European Union aimed at building up a British led center of power in Western Europe (to which much of Africa and the Middle East would be associated), which would be strong enough to pursue an independent course of both the Soviet Union and the United States. For Kent, this strategy ultimately failed, and the British chose association with the United States in the North Atlantic Pact not as a primary policy option, but as a less than desirable fall back position. On the evolution of this critique, see John Kent, "Bevin's Imperialism and the Idea of Euro-Africa, 1945-49," Michael Dockrill and John W. Young, eds., *British Foreign Policy, 1945-56* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989); Martin H. Folly, "The British Military and the Making of the North Atlantic Treaty," Joseph Smith, ed., *The Origins of NATO* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1990); John Kent and John W. Young, "The 'Western Union' concept and British defence policy, 1947-8," Richard Aldrich, ed., *British Intelligence, Strategy and the Cold War, 1945-51* (London: Routledge, 1992); and especially John Kent, *British Imperial Strategy and the Origins of the Cold War 1944-49* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1993). John Baylis, in *The Diplomacy of Pragmatism: Britain and the Formation of NATO: 1942-1949* (London: Macmillan, 1993), concurs with Kent's position on Bevin, though this was not always reflected in Baylis' earlier essays on the subject.

33 Paul Henri Spaak was Foreign Minister of Belgium from 1939-1949, 1954, and again from 1961-1966. He would also later serve as Secretary-General of NATO. On Spaak's desire for British leadership of postwar Western European political, economic, and security cooperation, see Cees Wiebes and Bert Zeeman, "The Origins of Western Defense. Belgian and Dutch Perspectives 1940-1949," in *The Atlantic Pact Forty Years Later: A Historical Reappraisal*, p.146. A similar treatment can also be found in Cees Wiebes and Bert Zeeman, "Benelux", in *The Origins of the Cold War in Europe: International Perspectives*, ed. by David Reynolds (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), pp.172-74.

34 Olav Riste, "The Genesis of North Atlantic Defence Cooperation: Norway's 'Atlantic Policy' 1940-45," *NATO Review*, vol.29, no.2 (April 1981), pp.22-29. On the reception of this proposal by the British, see John Baylis, *The Diplomacy of Pragmatism*, pp.8-18.

French had signed the Treaty of Dunkirk, a defensive alliance aimed at preventing the resurgence of German power, on the basis of an initiative by French Premier/Foreign Minister Leon Blum.³⁵ This was the first step in Britain's reorientation towards a more formal commitment to European security.

Bevin's own vision for the West at this time worked on two levels. On the one hand, closer American association with the problems of Western security was certainly seen as desirable. But Bevin was also eager to pursue a policy which would strengthen Britain's position and world role against both the Soviets *and* the Americans.³⁶ Initially Bevin hoped to bring the Benelux (Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg) countries into an arrangement along the lines of the existing Anglo-French Treaty of Dunkirk.³⁷ Bevin aimed to create a union which would strengthen the economic, political, and military power of Western Europe.³⁸ The British government was also pursuing closer

35 Blum led a brief caretaker government in France in which he served as both Premier and Foreign Minister between December 1946 and January 1947. Hitchcock, *France Restored*, p.68. The British were initially reluctant about Blum's offer. But for pragmatic reasons-supporting the current French government to prevent a swing to the Communist left-and in keeping with Bevin's conception of a 'third force' centered on Western Europe, the Attlee government decided to agree to a treaty at this time. Baylis, *Diplomacy of Pragmatism*, pp.57-60.

36 Bevin discussed creating a union based on Western Europe and their Africa and Middle Eastern colonies that "could stand on an equality with the western hemisphere and the Soviets blocs." See BNA, CAB 128/12, CM(48)2, and CAB 129/23, CP(48)6. Also see Baylis, *The Diplomacy of Pragmatism*, pp.73-4.

37 Baylis, "Britain and the Continental Commitment", p.620 states that "the Foreign Secretary [Bevin] continued to believe that the first step towards this union would involve Britain and France signing separate bilateral treaties with Belgium, Holland, and Luxembourg on the lines of the Dunkirk model." For a rather different interpretation, which puts the impetus of the bilateral model on the French and argues instead that Bevin from the beginning sought a wider form of arrangement with the Benelux, see John Kent, *British Imperial Strategy and the Origins of the Cold War*, p.161.

38 The Treaty of Dunkirk, as pointed out above, was aimed at containing a revanchist Germany. Bevin presented his ideas to the British Cabinet on 8 January 1948. See Bullock, *Ernest Bevin*, p.513. His proposal was then sent on to the Americans and French for consideration. There is a copy of this memorandum in *FRUS*, 1948, vol.III, pp.4-6. Part of Bevin's original Cabinet Paper [CAB 129/23, CP(48)6, 4 January 1948] was expurgated from the version sent to the Americans. See Kent and Young, "The 'Western Union' concept and British defence policy, 1947-8," p.190, n.22. Matching British and French proposals were then forwarded to Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands on 16 January.

cooperation with the United States, both informally with the Western Union and in a broader Atlantic pact. It was also contemplating a Mediterranean agreement that would incorporate France, Italy, Greece, and, perhaps, Turkey and Egypt.³⁹ Within a few weeks, the British and French had prepared a draft treaty to present to the Benelux countries. In a Cabinet paper of March 1948, Bevin warned his colleagues that the Soviet Union was “actively preparing to extend its hold over the remaining part of continental Europe.”⁴⁰ These warnings and growing concerns in Western Europe regarding Soviet intentions contributed to the general feeling of crisis in the West during 1948.

When negotiations for the Anglo-French-Benelux treaty got under way in Brussels from 4-15 March, a unified front of the Benelux countries coupled with US pressure led to the acceptance of a multilateral treaty framework.⁴¹ Britain, France, and the Benelux countries signed the Treaty of Brussels on 17 March 1948. This Treaty established a fifty-year pact for economic cooperation and common defense against outside aggression known as the Western Union.⁴² Even after the signing of the Treaty, the French and Benelux powers continued to have difficulty pinning down their British counterparts to specific commitments for common defense. This despite the fact that the

39 BNA, DEFE 6/5, JP(48)28, International Security Arrangements, 15 March 1948.

40 Two important papers were presented to the Cabinet by Bevin on 5 March. The first was ‘The Czechoslovakian Crisis’, and the second was ‘The Soviet Threat to Western Civilization’. At this meeting the Cabinet authorized negotiations of security treaties with France and the Benelux countries. BNA, CAB 128/12, CM(48)19. The two papers, CP(48)71 and CP(48)72 are in CAB 129/25. Bevin’s second paper is also quoted in D. Dilks, “The British View of Security: Europe and a Wider World, 1945-1948”, *Western Security: The Formative Years*, ed. Olav Riste (Oslo: Norwegian University Press, 1985), p.52.

41 Bevin reported the Benelux countries desires for a multilateral treaty framework to the Cabinet on 12 February. BNA, CAB 128/12, CM(48)13, Min.5.

42 For a text of the Brussels Treaty, see Baylis, *Diplomacy of Pragmatism*, Appendix 3, pp.152-56, and Lawrence S. Kaplan, *The United States and NATO: The Formative Years* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1977), Appendix A, pp.222-225.

Western Union's Foreign Ministers had agreed to "simultaneously initiate military conversations designed to build up gradually a combined force and a single defensive organization."⁴³

In part the Western Union was an attempt to respond to what was perceived as a real danger, and in part it was meant to send a signal to the Americans that the West Europeans were serious about organizing their own defense, with the hopes of inducing American participation in the near future.⁴⁴ Shortly after the Treaty's signing, President Truman gave a speech in which he called the Brussels Treaty "a notable step in the direction of the unity of Europe for protection and preservation of civilization".⁴⁵ However, an invitation for U.S. participation from the European foreign ministers and initial U.S. enthusiasm for the Western Union did not immediately translate into U.S. assurances to or participation in the Union.⁴⁶ It remained to be seen if Bevin's vision for an Atlantic pact involving the United States would be realized. Before turning to the history of the origins of the Atlantic Pact, a brief review of the assessment of the Soviet threat and early emergency war plans developed by the United States and Great Britain is necessary.

43 BNA, CAB 128/12, CM(48)29, Min.2.

44 Dilks, "British View of Security," p.50, and Jacques Fremeaux and Andre Martel, "French Defence policy 1947-1949," *Western Security*, pp.97-98.

45 Quoted in Kaplan, *United States and NATO*, p.66.

46 As Leffler has shown, Secretary of State Marshall and others in the administration did not want the issue of US military participation in Europe's defense to distract US priorities from the European Recovery Program and the integration of Western Germany firmly into the Western orbit. Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, p.203. The Joint Chiefs of Staff were concerned about incurring additional responsibilities in the climate of defense retrenchment which had characterized the postwar environment. See Kenneth W. Condit, *The History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff: The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy*, vol.II: 1947-1949 (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1979), pp.360-61 [Hereafter *HJCS*].

Soviet Conventional Military Forces in the Early Cold War

Between 1948 and 1960, Western military analysts routinely estimated the size of the Soviet armed forces at around 4 million men.⁴⁷ The Soviet Army, in the wake of post-war demobilizations which Stalin announced, was estimated at 2.5 million men and 175 divisions.⁴⁸ Of the 175 divisions, 25 divisions were located in Eastern Germany. Each active division was assumed to have an associated clone division. The standing army was supported by 140 clone divisions. Upon mobilization, the clone division, which was only an empty shell in peacetime, would be filled with reservists and officered by men drawn from the associated active division. Thus, Western analysts estimated that

47 Since the end of the Cold War, particularly with the release of increasingly large volumes of material on Western intelligence in the early Cold War, Western threat assessments and NATO's early force postures have been subjected to close analysis. There is a well developed historiography dealing with Western threat assessment of the Soviets. Two important early works are Lawrence Freedman, *U.S. Intelligence and the Soviet Strategic Threat* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1977), and John Prados, *The Soviet Estimate: U.S. Intelligence Analysis and Russian Military Strength* (New York: Dial, 1982). Two former CIA practitioners have also written on the subject. See Raymond Garthoff, "Estimating Soviet Military Force Levels: Some Light from the Past," *International Security*, vol.14, no.4 (Spring 1990): 93-116, and Willard C. Matthias, *America's Strategic Blunders: Intelligence Analysis and National Security Policy, 1936-1991* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001). US intelligence estimates of Soviet order of battle drew in part on former Nazi intelligence officers. For an interesting look at this problematic relationship, see Richard Breitman, Norman Goda, Timothy Naftali, and Robert Wolfe, *U.S. Intelligence and the Nazis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). On British intelligence assessments, see Percy Cradock, *Know Your Enemy: How the Joint Intelligence Committee Saw the World* (London: John Murray, 2002). For recent analyses, see John S. Duffield, "The Soviet Military Threat to Western Europe: US Estimates in the 1950s and 1960s," *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, v.15, n.2 (June 1992), pp.208-27, and Phillip 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*, vol.22, no.3 (Summer 1998), pp.403-04. The standard 175 division figure, which was often cited in the alliances first decade plus, was publicly challenged by Robert McNamara in 1963. In his November 1963 speech to the Economic Club of New York, discussed in chapter 7, McNamara argued that the Soviet armed forces had been reduced to about 3.3 million men, and the number of active divisions at anywhere near combat manned levels was probably less than half of the 160-175 [division] figure. Remarks of Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara before the Economic Club of New York, Monday, November 1, 1963, printed in *The Department of State Bulletin*, vLXLIX, no.1277, 16 December 1963, pp.914-921.

48 The approved estimate of the US-UK Joint Intelligence Committee on 9 November 1948 stated that there were 4 million men in the Soviet Armed Forces, 2.5 million of whom were in the Soviet Army. The Soviet Army was composed of 174 line divisions in the following break down: 104 rifle, 35 mechanized, 20 tank, and 15 cavalry divisions. See NARA, RG 218, Geographic File, 1948-1950, Box 90, ABAI 5: Soviet Intentions and Capabilities.

the Soviets could have 8 million men in 320 divisions within 30 days of beginning mobilization.⁴⁹ This large manpower reserve was supported by equipment that the Soviets had retained at the end of World War II, equipment that had previously supported a 500 division wartime force. The concept of a massive Soviet army poised to overrun Europe cast a long shadow on Western defense planning.

By contrast, the Western powers had largely scrapped or destroyed military equipment at the end of the war on the premise that it was too expensive to maintain. Between July 1945 and July 1948, US Army strength fell from nearly six million men to slightly over a half million. Only ten Army and two Marine divisions remained from a wartime peak of 97 divisions. Even these were undermanned. Eight of the Army divisions were committed to occupation duties.⁵⁰ All three services saw significant reductions in operational abilities, and a large amount of energy was dedicated to demobilization and occupation duties, not training for combat.⁵¹ The British had also experienced extensive postwar demobilization, mitigated to some extent by extensive postwar colonial deployments coupled with occupation duties. Even so, total British

49 For example, NIE-3, 15 November 1950 gives 175 line divisions and 145 additional divisions that could be rapidly mobilized. This estimate is available online in the National Security Archive's Soviet Estimate and has been published in Scott A. Koch, ed., *Selected Estimates on the Soviet Union 1950-1959* (Washington, DC: Center for the Study of Intelligence, 1993), pp.165-78. See also Karber and Combs, "The United States, NATO, and the Soviet Threat to Western Europe," p.408.

50 Condit, *History of the JCS*, vol.II, pp.18-19.

51 On the postwar US Army, see Russell F. Weigley, *History of the United States Army*, enlarged edition (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), pp.485-504; and John B. Wilson, *Maneuver and Firepower: The Evolution of Divisions and Separate Brigades* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1998), pp.207-32. On the US Army's personnel demobilization, see John C. Sparrow, *History of Personnel Demobilization in the United States Army* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, facsimile edition, 1994). In the case of Navy, vessels were often mothballed rather than scrapped, though many ships still under construction at war's end did make their way to the salvage yards. Ernest R. May, John D. Steinbruner, and Thomas W. Wolfe, *History of the Strategic Arms Competition 1945-1972* (Office of the Secretary of Defense Historical Office, 1981), p.16.

uniformed strength (all services) was projected to drop from 937,000 men in March 1948 to 713,000 men a year later. By July 1948, the British Army would be down to a strength of around 305,000 men. This constituted an army significantly smaller than that at the outbreak of war in 1939.⁵²

The fear of a massive imbalance in conventional force capabilities in turn had important implications for Western strategic plans and policies. The fundamental problem was that, for the member states of the Western Union, a key goal of collective defense was to prevent their territories from being overrun by Soviet forces in a replay of the German invasions of 1940. But what help might the Western Union expect from the United States? US emergency war plans said that in the face of overwhelming Soviet conventional superiority in Europe, the best the small US occupation forces could hope to do was to maintain a fighting withdrawal from the continent.⁵³ The British, too, planned to evacuate their forces from the continent in the event of a Soviet assault. When Bevin initiated discussions with the French late in 1947, the French requested information from the British on what forces would be deployed to the continent. This created an uncomfortable position for the British, as British planning at that point still called for a retreat and evacuation of British forces in an operation designed as a less chaotic repeat

52 These figures are based on projected reductions in strength announced by Defense Minister Alexander to the British Cabinet's Defense Committee on 2 October 1947. BNA, CAB 128/10, CM(47)78, Min.3. Also cited in Bullock, *Ernest Bevin*, p.523.

53 On the evolution of US emergency war plans, see Steven T. Ross, *American War Plans*, Stephen T. Ross and David Alan Rosenberg, eds. *America's Plans for War Against the Soviet Union 1945-1950*, 15 vols. (New York: Garland Publishing, 1989), and Anthony Cave Brown, ed., *Operation: World War III: The Secret American Plan 'Dropshot' for War with the Soviet Union, 1957* (London: Arms and Armour Press, 1979).

of the Dunkirk evacuation.⁵⁴ The British were faced, for the third time in the twentieth century, with the question of whether or not they should undertake a continental commitment.

The prevailing view in the British Chiefs of Staff in early 1947 was that Western Europe was simply not defensible without the participation of the United States. They were opposed to any “continental commitment” at the time. As “The Overall Strategic Plan” of May 1947 stated, “There is now, however, no combination of European Powers capable of standing up to Russia on land, nor do we think that the probable military capabilities of such an association of European States at present justify us in relying upon such an association for our defense.”⁵⁵ The three pillars of British defense policy were to be: the defense of the United Kingdom, control over sea communications, and “a firm hold in the Middle East and its development as an offensive base.” This remained the key planning document for British defense policy from June 1947 until March 1950.⁵⁶ Thus, in the midst of British negotiations with France and the Benelux states over the Western Union, British defense policy was not in line with the type of commitment that Foreign Minister Bevin was advocating.

The debate over Britain’s commitment to defense on the continent ran through the Attlee Cabinet and even the Chiefs of Staff. Bevin, Defense Minister Lord Alexander,

54 Baylis, “Britain, the Brussels Pact and the Continental Commitment,” p.623; and Kent, *British Imperial Strategy and the Cold War*, p.163.

55 DO(47)44, The Overall Strategic Plan, May 1947, printed in Baylis, *Ambiguity and Deterrence*, pp.396-99, and Baylis, *Diplomacy of Pragmatism*, p.137. See also Lewis, *Changing Direction*, pp.315ff.

56 Richard J. Aldrich and John Zametica, “The Rise and Decline of a Strategic Concept: the Middle East, 1945-51,” *British Intelligence, Strategy and the Cold War, 1945-51*, ed. by Richard J. Aldrich (London: Routledge, 1992), p.253; Baylis, *The Diplomacy of Pragmatism*, p.84; and Paul Cornish, *British Military Planning for the Defence of Germany 1945-50* (London: Macmillan Press, 1996), pp.104-07; Lewis, *Changing Direction*, p.334.

and Field Marshal Montgomery—then Chief of the Imperial General Staff—were the leading advocates of a “Continental Commitment.” They were opposed by Prime Minister Attlee and the other Chiefs of Staff (First Sea Lord Andrew Cunningham and Air Marshal Lord Tedder). For Bevin and Montgomery, it seemed essential to undertake a continental commitment because of the centrality of the defense of Western Europe to British security. Attlee, however, was concerned with the open-ended nature of such a commitment. The Chiefs—excepting Montgomery—were much more favorable toward the application of air and sea power (their respective bailiwicks) as Britain’s contribution to European defense. Given the atmosphere of constricting defense expenditures that marked this period and Britain’s still dire economic problems, the air/sea strategy was also tailored towards Britain’s still world spanning commitments.

However, as noted above, the seeming breakdown of the Council of Foreign Ministers and the Communist takeover in Czechoslovakia spurred many in the West to feel a great urgency for defense agreements. In the United States, Secretary of Defense Forrestal, with the agreement of Secretary of State Marshall, requested that the National Security Council (NSC) begin considering the problem of associating the US more closely with West European defense.⁵⁷ While final talks regarding the Western Union

57 Rearden, *History of the Secretary of Defense*, vol.I, p.461. This resulted in Policy Planning Paper 27, presented to the NSC on 24 March 1948, which was the basis for the NSC 9 series of documents. *FRUS 1948*, vol.III, pp.61-64, 85-88. The NSC had been created by the National Security Act of 1947. The National Security Act of 1947 underwent minor modification in 1949. There were originally five statutory members of the NSC: the President, Vice President, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, and Director of the Office of Defense Mobilization. On the NSC, see: John Prados, *Keeper of the Keys: A History of the National Security Council from Truman to Bush* (New York: Morrow, 1991); and David Rothkopf, *Running the World: The Inside Story of the National Security Council and the Architects of American Power* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2005). The NSC website is available at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/>.

were winding down, Bevin invited the Americans and Canadians to enter into joint military discussions on 11 March 1948.⁵⁸ These talks were supposedly held under tight secrecy at the Pentagon beginning on 22 March.⁵⁹ Donald Maclean, a member of the British delegation, was spying for the Soviets. Thus the secret was kept better from Britain's Western Union allies than the Soviets.

During these talks, the British, Canadian, and American representative drafted a paper that aimed to give substance to Truman's declaration of support for the Western Union. The paper proposed a security pact for the North Atlantic area. General Alfred Gruenther, representing the US JCS during the talks, insisted at the fourth meeting that the proposed pact would not presume US forces would necessarily be deployed locally (in Europe) in the event of a Soviet attack. It was important for the JCS that the US, "retain the freedom to carry out action against the aggressor in accordance with [its own] strategic concepts."⁶⁰ Like their counterparts in Britain, the American service chiefs remained wary of any American continental commitment. The meetings did, however, result in the preparation of a document known as the Pentagon Paper-deliberately labeled to seem like an American planning document. It called for invitations to be extended to the UK, France, Canada, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Ireland, and Portugal (provided that they had been informed in advance and

58 Cees Wiebes and Bert Zeeman, "The Pentagon Negotiations March 1948: The Launching of the North Atlantic Treaty," *International Affairs*, v.59, n.3 (Summer 1983), pp.353-54. Getting American participation in an Atlantic Security system was the primary British aim in these talks. BNA, DEFE 6/5, JP(48)28(T. of R.), 15 March 1948.

59 The minutes of these meetings are published in *FRUS 1948*, vol.III, pp.59-61, 64-67, 69-75. See also NARA, RG 218, Geographic File, 1948-50, Box 89, Memorandum for Wedemeyer, Norstad, and Styer, 31 March 1948.

60 *FRUS 1948*, vol.III, Minutes of the Fourth Meeting, 29 March 1948, p.70. In this the US JCS would have plenty of support for the isolationist wing of the Republican Party led by Senator Robert Taft of Ohio.

were willing to participate) to enter into negotiations for a “collective Defense Agreement for the North Atlantic Area.”⁶¹ This list of countries, however, more closely reflected the desires of the United States to broaden the list of any potential security agreement beyond the more narrowly constrained Western Union and to include important ‘stepping-stone’ countries-especially Portugal (Azores), Iceland, and Denmark (Greenland)-that the US perceived as more vital to its security than some members of the Western Union.

US war plans in the period prior to the formation of NATO forecast that the Soviets would overrun most of Western Europe within the first few months of war. The relatively small US occupation forces in Germany and Austria would be evacuated as quickly as possible. US planning for a future war with the Soviets had gotten underway in March 1946, before there was clear political direction to see the Soviets as the primary future threat.⁶² By late August 1947, initial studies had progressed far enough that the JCS directed the Joint War Plans Committee to put together a plan for global war with the Soviets. The plan was to forecast the situation if war were to break out in the next three years.

The first global war plan developed was Plan BROILER.⁶³ BROILER, in slightly amended form as FROLIC, later renamed GRABBER, was approved by the Chiefs for

61 *FRUS 1948*, vol.III, Final Draft enclosed in Minutes of Sixth Meeting, 1 April 1948, pp.70-75. This discussion recognized that there were still several important hurdles to be cleared on the American end, including formal assent from Forrestal, Marshall, and Truman, as well as the need to approach and secure the approval of Senator Vandenberg, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

62 Condit, *HJCS*, vol.II, p.283.

63 Condit, *HJCS*, vol.II, p.285-88; Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, p.221-25; and Steven T. Ross, *American War Plans 1945-1950* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1988), pp.61-62. BROILER was preceded by a series of regional strategic studies under the overall codename PINCHER.

planning purposes during early March 1948. The BROILER/FROLIC/GRABBER concept was premised on a deep insecurity about the position of the Western powers vis-à-vis Soviet conventional superiority. The 17 March version of the plan (GRABBER) continued to call for the immediate evacuation of US occupation forces from continental Europe.⁶⁴ Since little could be done to prevent Western Europe and the Middle East from being overrun, it was presumed in the planning—though again there was not yet political authorization for this assumption—that the US would have little choice but to resort to an atomic bombing campaign as the centerpiece of its response to the Soviets. Those US forces which were available would largely be deployed to protect vital regions from which the air atomic offensive would be launched.⁶⁵ In the BROILER series of plans, the atomic air campaign was to be launched from a number of peripheral areas of the Soviet Union. These were to include the United Kingdom, Okinawa, and either Cairo/Suez or Karachi. However, lack of political direction and the secrecy shrouding the size of the US atomic stockpile made it difficult for planners to foresee clearly how such a war would develop.

In BROILER, for instance, the US planners foresaw a three phased concept of operations. During the first nine months of the war the US would again mobilize in the fashion of World War II while simultaneously conducting the air atomic offensive. In the

64 JCS 1844/1, Short Range Emergency Plan “GRABBER”, 17 March 1948, Stephen T. Ross and David Alan Rosenberg, eds. *America’s Plans for War Against the Soviet Union 1945-1950*, vol.6: *Plan Frolic and American Resources* (New York: Garland, 1990), unpaginated. [Hereafter *America’s Plans for War*]

65 For instance, Plan CRANKSHAFT of May 1948 stated: “...it is essential initially that Allied strategy be to avoid committing forces to oppose Soviet forces except where this is required to assure delivery of atomic weapons. Under these conditions the primary Allied considerations will be the selection and security of base areas from which the air campaign can be launched and the retention or early retaking of the Middle East oil resources. JSPG 496/10, “CRANKSHAFT,” 11 May 1948, Ross and Rosenberg, eds. *America’s Plans for War*, vol.7: *From CRANKSHAFT to HALFMOON* (New York: Garland, 1990),

second phase, which was seen as being indeterminate in length, the air campaign was to be *intensified*, and the oil resources of the Middle East were to be retaken (after having been overrun in the initial Soviet advance). A third phase, which was not forecast with any specificity, called for the completion of any national military objectives not carried out in the second phase (which included “destruction of Soviet war-making capacity and will to resist”). However, the planners felt that it was impractical to forecast beyond the initial twelve months of hostilities.⁶⁶

Late in 1947, highly secret talks about coordinating planning on the basis of a BROILER concept had been authorized by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the British Chiefs of Staff.⁶⁷ It was not until after the Pentagon Talks and the formation of the Western Union that these consultative talks between American, British, and Canadian planners got under way. These talks took place in Washington from 12-21 April 1948.⁶⁸ As a result of the March and April talks, the three powers approved a plan titled HALFMOON (the British version was codenamed DOUBLEQUICK). It was to serve as the basis for “‘unilateral but accordant’ plans in each country.”⁶⁹

66 JSPG 496/4, “BROILER,” 11 February 1948, *America’s Plans for War*, vol.6.

67 Sean M. Maloney, *Securing Command of the sea: NATO Naval Planning 1948-1954* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1995), p.56.

68 There is a minute of a general conversation in *FRUS* on Security Information between Britain, Canada and the US at the Ambassadorial level in Washington on 22 March 1948, but war plans themselves were not discussed at this meeting. *FRUS 1948*, vol.III, Minutes of the First Meeting of the United States-United Kingdom-Canada Security Conversations, pp.59-60. Also NARA, RG 218, Geographic File, 092 Western Europe (3-12-48), Box 89, Memorandum for General Wedemeyer, General Norstad, and Admiral Styer [US planning staff], 31 March 1948, and JSPC 877/6, Planners’ Conference, 16 May 1948.

69 Condit, *History of the JCS*, vol.II, p.288. The British short term war plan being developed at this time was known as DOUBLEQUICK. Maloney, *Securing Command of the Sea*, p.57. There are references in Plan DOUBLEQUICK in BNA, DEFE 6/6, JP(48)48, 4 May 1948; and Plan DOUBLEQUICK-Command Organization, JP(48)69, 15 September 1948.

HALFMOON reflected many of the assumptions and estimates of the balance of power that had informed the BROILER/FROLIC plans. However, there was a minor change in tenor in that occupation forces would no longer withdraw immediately. Instead, recognizing that the Western Union commitment now made immediate withdrawal politically problematic, the new directive called for initial withdrawal to the Rhine. From there, US forces were instructed to take all advantages to delay the Soviet advances before withdrawing from the continent.⁷⁰ Nonetheless, the HALFMOON/DOUBLEQUICK concept continued to be premised on withdrawal of British and American troops from the continent. The problem for the British now became how to reconcile their commitment to the Western Union with the Anglo-American belief that the continent would be overrun by the Soviets.

The British Cabinet on 5 March reviewed the challenges to British foreign policy from Soviet policy in Europe. The Cabinet approved Bevin's plan to orient British policy towards the continent, particularly the pursuit of negotiations for the Western Union.⁷¹ However, the problem of aligning Britain's foreign and defense policies remained. When the Joint Planners returned from the conversations with the Americans and Canadians, Montgomery felt that by approving the HALFMOON/DOUBLEQUICK concept they had placed Britain in the untenable position of having to plan for Western Union defense while agreeing with the US to evacuate the continent. This led Montgomery to pressure his fellow chiefs for a commitment. With the support of

70 JSPG 496/11, Directive for the Implementation of "FROLIC," 4 May 1948, Ross and Rosenberg, *America's Plans for War*, vol.7, Condit, *H JCS*, vol.II, p.291, and Ross, *American War Plans*, pp.90-91.
71 BNA, CAB 128/12, CM(48)19.

Defense Minister Alexander, the Chiefs worked out a compromise position where occupation forces already on the continent would stay and fight, holding the Rhine position as long as practical.⁷² No reinforcements, however, would be dispatched to their aid. As John Baylis has pointed out, this compromise position was to remain the British position throughout 1948 into the spring of 1949 (the period of the first Berlin airlift).⁷³

With both the British and American planners agreed that the huge Soviet conventional forces would overrun the continent, planning to evacuate lightly armed occupation troops to return to fight another day seemed the most prudent course. The Soviet Union itself was to be defeated through a strategic bombing campaign with both nuclear and conventional weapons. Once the industrial resources of the United States were mobilized again-a process that was estimated would take two years-landings from bases in North Africa and Britain would be launched to liberate the continent in a replay of the Second World War. At best, the US planners under the Joint Chiefs of Staffs hoped that beachheads on the continent might be held to prevent a repeat of the Normandy landings. This included holding on to part of the Brittany peninsula, southern

72 The US Joint Strategic Survey, in their review of this plan [a copy of the British COS paper "Strategy" is included in this folder], found it flawed in two respects. They argued that "several years of intensive preparation" would be required to carry out the British scheme for continental defense. At the same time they objected to the British plan because of its defensive attitude. The Joint Strategic Survey argued instead that the overall philosophy of the strategy should be offensive, with air and naval forces delivering atomic munitions to secure the capitulation of the Soviet Union at the earliest possible date. The atomic campaign was deemed to be solely the responsibility of the United States. NARA, RG 218, Geographic File, 092 Western Europe (3-12-48), Box 89, Report by the Joint Strategic Survey to the Joint Chiefs of Staff on Strategy.

73 Baylis, *Diplomacy of Pragmatism*, pp.87-88.

Italy, or perhaps creating a defensive line at the Pyrenees Mountains, which would mean some accommodation would have to be made with Franco's Spain.⁷⁴

US participation in European defense had to overcome resistance both from the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Congress. The problem with the Joint Chiefs revolved around intense arguments over roles and missions of the various services. These arguments had major budgetary implications. Secretary of Defense Forrestal was eventually so overwrought trying to mediate these arguments that he would resign and eventually commit suicide. The Chiefs were concerned that overseas commitments undertaken before sufficient US rearmament had taken place would only exacerbate an already tense competition for resources. But the main problem remained that the Americans were unconvinced as yet that the Europeans were capable of a viable defense. Without the resources and troops in place, the JCS remained loathe to contemplate committing US forces to a continental defense. In a document approved in late April regarding the defense of Western Europe, the Chiefs wrote that before the US "should risk major or global warfare...the consequences would be very grave indeed if action in advance of adequate military readiness on our part should lead unavoidably to major military commitment." They were not, however, opposed to extending "assurance of contingent military support," so long as this did not include actual use of armed forces.⁷⁵

74 The role of Spain as an emergency defense point long remained the focus of operational contingency planning. As late as October 1964, in an exercise named Steel Pike, the US Navy, Marines, and Spanish armed forces practiced an amphibious assault in Spain. It involved 80 ships and 60,000 making it the largest amphibious exercise ever held till then. Norman Polmar, *Chronology of the Cold War at Sea 1945-1991* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1998), p.87.

75 NARA, RG 218, Geographic File, 092 Western Europe (3-12-48), Box 89, JCS 1868/1, 22 April 1948, "The Position of the United States with Respect to Support for Western Union and Other Related Free Countries".

The emergency war plans that were being developed by the US JCS in late 1947 and early 1948 were both deeply pessimistic regarding the defense of Europe and the Middle East, and constrained to an extent over concerns about the use of nuclear weapons.⁷⁶ There were two important aspects to the nuclear question. One was the issue of custody: should weapons be retained in civilian control in peacetime (by the Atomic Energy Commission) or should they be transferred to military control? The second question was whether or not military planning could count on the use of nuclear weapons in wartime. If not, it made little sense for emergency planning to be premised on the use of nuclear weapons.

By September 1948, the NSC-without President Truman ever formally taking a position himself-approved NSC 30, “United States Policy on Atomic Warfare.” NSC 30 was based on the calculation that American monopoly of the atomic bomb counterbalanced the “ever-present threat of Soviet military power” and provided the best hope of creating an atmosphere in which European recovery could take place. It stated that the National Military Establishment (as the Department of Defense was then known) should plan to utilize atomic weapons promptly after the outbreak of hostilities, but left the decision to employ their use to the President.⁷⁷ Indeed, since late July, Forrestal-confident of Truman’s position in an emergency-had instructed the JCS to give high

76 Admiral Leahy, the liaison between the White House and the JCS, complained to Forrestal on 11 June 1948 that the JCS were “working in the dark” when it came to developing emergency war plans because they lacked an authoritative statement on basic U.S. national security objectives. Rearden, *HOSD*, vol.I, p.339.

77 HSTL, President’s Secretary’s Files, Box 177, NSC 30, United States Policy on Atomic Warfare, 10 September 1948.

priority to planning which involved the use of atomic weapons.⁷⁸ A subsequent update of the HALFMOON/ FLEETWOOD concept, know as TROJAN, was approved in January 1949. TROJAN contained an atomic targeting annex with a list of 70 Soviet cities which were targeted for atomic bombardment. Moscow and Leningrad were included in the list of 20 priority targets.⁷⁹ A compromise over the custody dispute was also worked out. The US military services were given control of the weapons, and the AEC retained control over the weapons' nuclear cores. As the atomic stockpile in the 1950s grew, however, increasingly these weapons came under military control with nominal AEC supervision.⁸⁰

President Truman and Congress were interested in fiscal restraint in order to balance the budget. Military opinion, however, favored considerably larger appropriations for defense. Even after the Czech coup in February, the supplementary increases for defense fell short of what the JCS argued was needed to meet the United States security needs.. A large percentage of these supplemental appropriations went to procuring new air wings, which exacerbated the argument between the Navy and Air Force over assignment of missions in the global war plans. As Steven Rearden points out, this debate only intensified until the buildup brought about by the Korean War assuaged the three services with the dramatic expansion of US forces.⁸¹ The same types

78 Truman told Forrestal on 18 September that "he prayed that he would never have to make such a decision, but that if it became necessary, no one need have misgivings but what he would do so." Quoted in Rearden, *HOSD*, vol.I, p.436.

79 Condit, *H JCS*, vol.II, pp.293-94.

80 Rearden, *HOSD*, vol.I pp.431-32.

81 The Administration's difficulties with the Chiefs and Congress are well treated in Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, pp.221-225. On the internal debates within the JCS, they are a number of good histories. See especially Condit, *HJCS*, vol.II, pp.165-89; Michael Palmer, *Origins of the Maritime*

of debates would emerge again in Britain after the 1952 Global Strategy Review and in the US after Eisenhower's New Look was adopted.

In Congress, the key was to sell a bipartisan foreign policy which retained the support of the influential Senator Arthur Vandenberg (R, MI), Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. A key step on this road was the Vandenberg Resolution, passed by the U.S. Senate on 11 June 1948. It paved the way for American involvement in a collective defense system based on self-help and mutual aid consonant with Articles 51 and 53 of the United Nations Charter.⁸² The Vandenberg Resolution was followed by the approval of NSC 9/3, which set initial US policy towards the Western Union.⁸³ Under the rubric of the Vandenberg Resolution, the Exploratory Talks on Security began in Washington on 6 July 1948.⁸⁴ In addition, the JCS dispatched a seven-man joint mission, directed by Major General Lyman Lemnitzer (later SACEUR in the 1960s), to serve as observers at the military planning sessions of the Western Union.⁸⁵ The purpose was in part to ensure that the Western Union powers were taking steps to effectively organize and coordinate their defense. This was one of the necessary preconditions of the Vandenberg Resolution before closer US association was pursued.

One of the problems that re-emerged in the late summer of 1948 was the split in opinion between the Western Union members and the United States over proposed initial membership in any Atlantic pact. As pointed out in the Pentagon Talks, the US favored

Strategy: The Development of American Naval Strategy 1945-1955 (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1988), pp.43f; and Rearden, *HOSD*, pp.389-422.

82 Kaplan, *United States and NATO*, pp.70, 75.

83 NSC 9/3, The Position of the United States with Respect to Support for Western Union and Other Related Free Countries, 28 June 1948, *FRUS 1948*, vol.III, pp.140-43.

84 For the minutes of these talks, see *FRUS 1948*, vol.III, pp.148ff.

85 Condit, *HJCS*, vol.II, pp.366-67.

the inclusion of a number of additional European members. A State Department Policy Planning Paper of late March 1948 argued that the US should immediately press for the inclusion of Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland and Portugal. Eventually the treaty was to be extended to include Italy, Ireland, Switzerland, Germany, Spain, and Austria.⁸⁶ The Western Union powers were concerned that an expansion of membership would mean diluted aid and support from the US.⁸⁷ Thus, considerable difficulties—including the scope of membership and the nature of the alliance—meant that there were still significant hurdles to be cleared before any Atlantic alliance was called into existence.

Despite the fact that the Berlin Blockade brought the need for close Western cooperation sharply into focus, an Atlantic treaty did not emerge in 1948. Once the Vandenberg Resolution was adopted, the US State Department had the go ahead required to begin negotiations for an Atlantic Pact. Despite the remaining concerns of the JCS towards increased US commitments, the primary hold-up in the fall was a split in the State Department between staunch advocates of the Atlantic Pact as a military alliance, such as Undersecretary of State Lovett and Assistant Secretary John Hickerson, and those who took a more circumspect view. The latter included George Kennan, the influential head of State's Policy Planning Staff and Charles Bohlen, a Soviet expert and State Department counselor. The Exploratory Talks on Security at last got under way in

86 *FRUS 1948*, vol.III, Report Prepared by the Policy Planning Staff Concerning Western Union and Related Problems, 23 March 1948, pp.61-64. The rationale behind the inclusion of the Scandinavian countries will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4. Portugal was important because of her sovereignty over the strategically important Azores Islands, considered a vital stepping stone across the Atlantic in US emergency war plans of the time. Most of these countries were discussed at the Second Meeting of the United State-United Kingdom-Canada Security Conversations, though Spain, Germany, and Austria were excluded. This is explained by lingering European hostility towards Franco's Spain and the fact that the latter two countries were still under occupation. See *Ibid.*, p.65.

87 Kaplan, *The United States and NATO*, pp.82-83.

Washington between Canada, the United States, and the five Western Union powers in September 1948. These talks resulted in the Washington Paper of 9 September. Negotiations adjourned for the next three months while the respective powers reviewed the progress of the fall negotiations and awaited the outcome of the US elections. Many expected that Truman might be replaced by a Republican administration, which might well take a more circumspect view of the North Atlantic pact idea.⁸⁸

By the end of November Truman had been re-elected and the Brussels Pact states had signaled their willingness to progress along the lines of the Washington Paper by sounding out Denmark, Iceland, Norway, and Portugal regarding participation in the negotiations. In January 1949, the ailing George Marshall was replaced by Dean Acheson as Secretary of State. Acheson brought renewed energy to the negotiations. He was intent on seeing the pact realized.⁸⁹ By the spring of 1949 most of the problems had been satisfactorily worked out to allow twelve nations-Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and the United States-to affix their signatures to a North Atlantic Treaty.

The North Atlantic Treaty was signed on 4 April 1949, and ratified by its initial twelve signatories between 3 May and 24 August 1949. It established a treaty of twenty years duration (to be reviewed after ten years time) that guaranteed the territories of the member states (but not overseas colonial possessions) against outside attack. Article 5

88 For instance, the inclusion of Italy in an Atlantic pact provoked some concern amongst the British. On the general negotiation of the Treaty, see Ireland, *Creating the Entangling Alliance*, pp.82-114, and Kaplan, *United States and NATO*, pp.77-120.

89 Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1969), pp.250-53.

stated that “an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all”.⁹⁰ During the year following the signing, a series of negotiations over the structure of the alliance helped to turn the North Atlantic Treaty into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.⁹¹

⁹⁰ North Atlantic Treaty at <http://www.nato.int/docu/basic/txt/treaty.htm> and in Kaplan, *United States and NATO*, Appendix C, pp.227-230.

⁹¹ Kaplan, *United States and NATO*, chap.7.

Chapter 2: NATO's Early Strategic Face

This chapter will discuss the transformation of the North Atlantic Treaty into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.⁹² The construction of the alliance's military structure and elaboration of force planning goals for the defense of Western Europe was central to the creation of a viable organization. DC 13, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Medium Term Defense Plan, was the first NATO plan for the defense of Western Europe. It was approved by the North Atlantic Defense Committee in April 1950.⁹³ This plan was a medium term defense plan which provided a target for a NATO buildup over a period of time. It was not an emergency plan for the defense of Europe. Due to US and British skepticism about NATO's initial potential, this medium term defense plan, rather than an emergency defense plan, served to focus the attention of NATO's member countries.⁹⁴

The force goals laid out in DC 13 were premised on a large scale conventional build-up by the NATO members. After the outbreak of the Korean War, there initially was a period when it seemed that NATO might rely on large-scale conventional forces to defend Western Europe. The enthusiasm for a realistic conventional defense option peaked with the adoption of the Lisbon force goals by the North Atlantic Committee at its meeting in February 1952. The Lisbon force goals long remained an important

⁹² See also Appendix II: A Note on NATO Organization.

⁹³ Pedlow, *NATO Strategy Documents*, pp. 107-77. Pedlow has written that, "the adoption of DC 13 on 1 April 1950...marked the end of the initial formulation of NATO's strategy." Pedlow, "The Evolution of NATO Strategy", pp.xiv-xv.

⁹⁴ The motives for using the Medium Term Plan have been carefully analyzed by Andrew M. Johnston, "The Construction of NATO's Medium Term Defence Plan and the Diplomacy of Conventional Strategy, 1949-50," *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, v.12, n.2 (June 2001), pp.79-124.

benchmark for NATO's military planners. Once the expense of this force structure became clear, however, a gap between force goals and forces provided emerged.⁹⁵

Within a year of the Lisbon meeting of the North Atlantic Council, Britain and the United States both independently increasingly emphasized the use of nuclear weapons to augment NATO forces, in part to solve the persistent problem of the gap.⁹⁶ Though the other NATO members were aware that US war plans were premised on conducting a nuclear air campaign against the Soviets, the idea of introducing nuclear weapons into NATO planning to augment defensive strength proved much more problematic.

The outbreak of the Korean War and the Truman administration's adoption of NSC 68 provided critical impetus to speed the implementation of DC 13. NSC 68's emphasis on matching Soviet military power through a symmetrical response was reflected in NATO through a major emphasis on conventional forces in Europe. It was in this context that NATO's first Supreme Allied Commander, General Dwight Eisenhower, and his Deputy SACEUR, Field Marshal Montgomery, tried to forge NATO into an effective defensive force. The initial phase of this project is traditionally seen to have climaxed with the Lisbon meeting of the North Atlantic Council (NAC) in February 1952. The long-term implications of the force build-up in many ways created a pervasive dilemma for NATO. This dilemma was whether or not there was a level of conventional

95 The problem of closing this gap led to considerable expenditure of effort by many well-intentioned people, but often proved to be a tremendously frustrating effort. One of the early attempts at NATO to close the gap was the Temporary Council Committee of 1951. Its efforts have recently been analyzed by Johnston, "The Construction of NATO's Medium Term Defence Plan and the Diplomacy of Conventional Strategy, 1949-50," pp.79-124; and Mark Rice, "Creating the Battle Ready Alliance: The Lisbon Conference, Western Rearmament, and the Evolution of NATO" (Thesis, Ohio University, 2005).

96 The idea of a nuclear air campaign against the Soviets in the event of World War III was of course a key part of US war plans. Nuclear target lists had been a part of US emergency war plans since the TROJAN plan of January 1949.

deterrence which had any lasting utility. Shortly after the Lisbon force goals were proclaimed, the member nations began to retreat from them. This created a long-running debate as to whether or not the abandonment of the Lisbon force goals set the alliance on a path of reliance on nuclear weapons. It also left an analogous legacy of confusion over the utility of conventional forces in NATO that persisted in the debates over alliance security in the decades to come.⁹⁷

Form into Substance

While Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty was a considerable compromise for the United States towards the European desire to associate the US with European defense, Article 3—the provision which countenanced “self help and mutual aid” to develop the ability to “resist armed aggression”—was also of considerable importance to the European signatories. After the ratification of the North Atlantic Treaty by the Senate on 21 July, the Truman administration moved quickly to introduce a mutual assistance program for Congressional approval. Congressional opinion, though accepting the need for military assistance to give substance to the treaty, sought to leave a strong stamp on the provisions for military assistance. The Mutual Defense Assistance Act signed into law by President Truman on 6 October 1949 had a number of important provisions before aid could be delivered to the Europeans. The Act provided that each aid recipient enter into bilateral agreements which would provide shared facilities and basing rights intended to improve the coordination of the alliance defense efforts. Assistance was to be supervised by

⁹⁷ For an appreciation of this dilemma in American foreign policy more broadly, see Christopher M. Gacek, *The Logic of Force: The Dilemma of Limited War in American Foreign Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).

Military Assistance Advisory Groups dispatched to the recipient nations.⁹⁸ Finally, nine-tenths of the aid earmarked in the \$1 billion appropriation was to be withheld until an integrated defense concept for the alliance was approved by the NATO Defense Committee.

The shift in American policy in 1949 was towards bolstering European security through reassurance by means of a security treaty, but it did not yet represent a substantive commitment to the defense of the continent. Britain, likewise, remained wary of a continental commitment during 1949. Neither British nor American defense budgets in 1949 or 1950 made any significant provision for the build-up of forces to provide for an effective defense on the European continent. American military aid to the NATO allies under the Mutual Defense Assistance Program was recognized by the Joint Chiefs as being of an interim nature only.⁹⁹ If the US wanted to avoid a continental commitment of its own, it was going to take a sustained commitment to European rearmament and skillful diplomacy to convince the Europeans to accept a division of responsibilities in which they provided the “hard core of ground forces”. The first round of assistance earmarked in MDAP-which included about \$1 billion for America’s NATO allies-was aimed primarily at improving European morale. It seemed highly unlikely that the five year, \$30 billion build-up that the JCS projected to create a viable conventional

⁹⁸ Kaplan, *The United States and NATO*, pp.126-30.

⁹⁹ Chester Pach suggests in his study of the US military assistance program that initially the JCS foresaw the need for a \$13 billion dollar aid package spread over 4 years; it spiraled to \$30 billion over 5 years when it came to implementing the NATO Medium Term Defence Plan. In either case, these levels were far in excess of the scope suggested by the first MDAP appropriation. Chester J. Pach, Jr. *Arming the Free World: The Origins of the United States Military Assistance Program, 1945-1950* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), p.209, 229.

defense in Europe was going to be possible at a time when the Truman administration was arguing for a \$13 billion ceiling on US defense expenditures.

For America's new NATO allies, the notion of a fighting withdrawal from the continent was entirely unacceptable. At the same time, military planners on both sides of the Atlantic were aware that, given the massive imbalance of forces between the NATO members on one hand and the Soviets on the other, anything more than a delaying action with the forces available in 1949 was impossible. France and the Benelux countries, however, could hardly be expected to countenance war plans which accepted their occupation by Soviet forces prior to their re-liberation. Western Union planning called for a defensive line to be held on the Rhine. Even this defense plan caused concern amongst the Danes and Dutch (and the emerging West German state, but West German concerns were muted by the fact that in the early years of the alliance West Germany was not yet a sovereign state nor a member of the alliance). A defense on the Rhine would leave most of their territory open to being overrun by the Soviet advance. Just how far to the east NATO was going to be able to hold back a Soviet offensive was a lingering concern for Alliance planners.

The first important hurdle to be cleared, once the basic structure of the alliance had been worked out, was to establish a strategic concept which would meet US Congressional stipulations for the release of \$900 million in MDAP funds. But discussion of a strategic concept inevitably provoked the question of whether or not the alliance aimed to mount a true defense of Western Europe-a highly costly provision-or accept something less. According to Paul Nitze, who served as George Kennan's

successor as director of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff, this was a decision no one really ever made.¹⁰⁰ What emerged as the alliance's first strategic concept thus retained considerable ambiguity on the question of ends.¹⁰¹

The US JCS had begun work on their position regarding the NATO strategic concept in August 1949. JCS attitudes toward the NATO build-up, however, were strongly conditioned by domestic budgetary constraints. In January 1949, President Truman had informed Congress that he meant to establish a ceiling on defense spending for "the foreseeable future" at around \$14.5 billion.¹⁰² Nonetheless, NATO discussions got under way in early October during the first meeting of the Military Committee, chaired by General Omar Bradley. The Military Committee quickly produced a very generalized document titled "Strategic Concept for Defense of the North Atlantic Area". It was approved by NATO's Defense Committee in December, and subsequently approved by the NAC on 6 January 1950.¹⁰³ This proved sufficient to release the MDAP funds and get the initial wave of limited NATO rearmament under way.

The US JCS approved a system of planning in January 1950 for the development of three series of annual war plans. These included an emergency war plan, a medium term plan for two years out, and a long-range plan for eight years down the road. The

100 See discussion with Acheson, Harriman, Nitze and other in HSTL, Acheson Papers, Box 80, Princeton Seminars, 10-11 October 1953. This specific comment can be found on the transcript for Reel 1, Track 1, p.7.

101 On the initial stage of NATO strategy development and the Medium Term Defense Plan in Johnston, "The Construction of NATO's Medium Term Defence Plan and the Diplomacy of Conventional Strategy, 1949-50." See also Robert L. Beisner, *Dean Acheson: A Life in the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p.160.

102 Hogan, *A Cross of Iron*, p.267.

103 *FRUS 1949*, vol.IV, DC 6/1, "Strategic Concept for the Defense of the North Atlantic Area," pp.352-56. It is also available online at www.nato.int/archives/strategy.htm.

emergency war plan was designed to establish what course of action would be followed if war broke out in the short term with forces currently available. The medium term plan was designed to provide budgetary and mobilization guidance. The long term plan was an exercise in forecasting and a guide to future defense research and development.¹⁰⁴ This system of planning also developed an analog in NATO planning.

DC 13 was the first NATO Medium Term Defense Plan. It had been developed by the Regional Planning Groups (RPG, see Appendix II) on the basis of instructions from the NATO Standing Group (SG). The plan had been prepared for a planning date of 1 July 1954, as had been set out in the Standing Group's instructions.¹⁰⁵ The document was approved for planning purposes by the NATO Defense Committee on 1 April 1950.¹⁰⁶ It laid out a strategic concept for NATO in the event of a full-scale war with the Soviet Union. The plan included an appreciation of the nature of the Soviet threat, possible courses of action to be followed by the Soviets if hostilities occurred, projected force levels, and operations to be undertaken by the NATO alliance to counter Soviet aggression. The considerable concern regarding Soviet intentions-as well as capabilities-that characterized the period during and immediately following the formation of NATO is readily apparent in the section of DC 13 pertaining to the Strategic Intentions of the Soviet Union. It stated that the objective of the Soviets was the establishment of

104 JCS 2089, Program for Planning by the Joint Chiefs of Staff Organization, 7 January 1950, in Ross and Rosenberg, *America's Plans for War*, vol.15, unpaginated.

105 The concurrent US medium term plan, codenamed REAPER, also had a planning date for 1 July 1954. This was the date that NSC 68 projected as the time by which the Soviets would have established a significant nuclear arsenal. REAPER was initially reviewed by the JCS shortly after the outbreak of war in Korea, and subsequently redrafted, and approved in December 1950. The REAPER series underwent a series of revisions, was finally renamed as HEADSTONE, and remaining in effect through late 1952. See Ross and Rosenberg, *America's Plans for War*, vol.15, Introduction.

106 DC 13, "North Atlantic Treaty Organization Medium Term Plan," 1 April 1950, pp.1-4.

communism throughout the world directed from Moscow. Further, it stated that “Soviet leaders will not hesitate to attack NATO countries at such time as it appears profitable for them to do so.”¹⁰⁷

DC 13 was based on a number of planning assumptions. These included that the Soviets would aim to drive across Western Europe to the Atlantic seaboard, that they would launch air attacks against all NATO states, and that they would attempt to sever NATO’s sea lines of communication through combined sea and air attacks. DC 13 also stated that, “All types of weapons, without exception, might be used by either side.”¹⁰⁸ A four-phase conflict was envisioned. In the first phase, the task of NATO forces would be to stabilize the Soviet offensive into Western Europe while NATO (predominantly the U.S. aided by Great Britain) initiated a strategic bombing campaign. Again, this strategic bombing campaign was to be carried out “promptly by all means possible with all types of weapons, without exception.”¹⁰⁹ In the central front, DC 13 called for a defensive line in Germany to be held “as far to the east...as possible”.¹¹⁰ The northern and southern flanks of the NATO region were to be supported by sea power. DC 13 included substantial force goals. The land force goals were extensive, projected requirements called for 18 ²/₃ armored divisions and 71 ¹/₂ infantry divisions. Naval forces were also sizable, including 12 fleet carriers, 19 escort carriers, 2 battleships, 29 cruisers, 920 destroyers and large escorts, 107 submarines, and nearly 2,400 maritime aircraft. Over 7,000 bombers and nearly 600 light bombers were also called upon to support the land

107 DC 13, p.30.

108 DC 13, p.9.

109 DC 13, p.11.

110DC 13, p.13.

battle in central Europe and the flanks.¹¹¹ These considerable requirements presaged an extended campaign beyond the initial atomic bombardment phase.

These extensive requirements outlined in DC 13 represented an amalgamation of desired military force goals, and never came close to being realized. Generally speaking, the short term plans are of the most interest, as they represent what the military planners intended to do with forces that existed when war broke out. Medium term plans are more problematic as documents, representing as they do force levels which were deemed militarily desirable, but which might or might not correspond to future budgetary allowances. This certainly seems to have been the case with DC 13, which one could almost see as a best-case wish list that resulted from the wishes of the military authorities contributing to the various Regional Planning Group estimates. In an analysis of Western European defense in the spring of 1951, Field Marshal Montgomery wrote that the figures in DC 13 were “not the result of any inter-service planning at Fountainsbleau [headquarters of the Western Union],” and indicated that he himself was unaware of how these force levels had been generated.¹¹² Andrew Johnston has recently argued that the MTDP was “a paradox: a conventional strategy designed to mask the construction of rules governing the balance of decision-making power within NATO which maintained American peripheralism against the integrative pressures of the alliance.”¹¹³

111 DC 13, Appendix A, p.66.

112 DDEL, Pre-Presidential Papers, Principal File, Box 82, FM/36, Note by Field Marshal Montgomery, 27 March 1951.

113 Johnston, “The Construction of NATO’s Medium Term Defense Plan and the Diplomacy of Conventional Strategy, 1949-50,” p.81.

At the beginning of May 1950, Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson instructed Chairman Bradley of the JCS to study a number of issues to expedite progress and demonstrate US leadership in NATO. Johnson wanted to see the rough estimates for NATO's Medium Term Defense Plan (MTDP) refined. He expected stronger leadership from Bradley and the Standing Group, especially to convince France and the Benelux countries to concentrate on their contribution to the MTDP ground force requirement. Johnson also wanted the JCS to reconsider the hitherto restrained participation of the US in NATO's RPGs, particularly the Western European RPG. Finally, he wanted studies carried out on the advantages of forming a NATO command organization and on the relationships West Germany, Spain, and Sweden should have with NATO.¹¹⁴

While the Joint Chiefs of Staff took this directive in hand, the Joint Strategic Plans Group cautioned against providing refined estimates for forces to implement the MTDP until the United States medium term war plan was completed.¹¹⁵ This cautious approach reflected general concern in the US military establishment that the initial MDTP force goals were excessive-particularly given the budgetary constraints that the US military was then operating under-and needed "radical revision downward in order to insure that only militarily irreducible demands are imposed on the economies of the various North Atlantic Treaty Countries."¹¹⁶ But this need for economy was soon to

114 NARA, RG 218, Geographic File, 1948-1950, 092-WE (3-12-48), Box 99, Memorandum for Bradley, 3 May 1950.

115 NARA, RG 218, Geographic File, 1948-1950, 092-WE (3-12-48), Box 100, Memorandum for the Director, Joint Staff, 7 June 1950.

116 NARA, RG 218, Geographic File, 1948-1950, 092-WE (3-12-48), Box 100, Memorandum for the Director, Joint Staff, 1 June 1950 and Box 99, JCS 2073/22, Enclosure B.

undergo a radical change in the wake of the North Korean invasion of South Korea on 25 June 1950.

The unexpected Soviet detonation of an atomic device in August 1949, announced the following month, surprised policymakers in Washington. In response, Truman accelerated development of the US atomic energy program. In January 1950, he made the wrenching decision to begin development of the hydrogen bomb.¹¹⁷ Concern over the implication of Soviet nuclear weapons also led to important reappraisals of US foreign and strategic policies. Questions over the value of the US nuclear deterrent-questions which bedeviled the NATO alliance throughout its history-began to be asked. With the Soviets now in possession of atomic weapons, policy makers struggled to determine the implications of the end of the US nuclear monopoly.

In January 1950, Truman authorized Dean Acheson to begin a study on the implications of the Soviet possession of nuclear weapons for Western security. Acheson turned over the drafting of this document to Paul Nitze, who Acheson had picked to replace the more moderate George Kennan as director of State's Policy Planning Staff. Supported by advocates of an expanded military establishment in the Department of Defense and Leon Keyserling, a Keynesian economist who had recently replaced the more fiscally conservative Edwin Nourse as the Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, Nitze produced the document which became NSC 68.¹¹⁸ As previous historians

¹¹⁷ Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, pp.326-28.

¹¹⁸ There is an extremely extensive literature devoted to NSC 68. A copy of the document can be found in *FRUS, 1950*, vol.1, pp.235-92. On interpretations of the document, see Ernest R. May, ed., *American Cold War Strategy: Interpreting NSC 68* (Boston: Bedford Books, 1993). For a succinct recent treatment, see

have shown, NSC 68 followed a line of increasing vociferous rhetoric about the impending dangers posed by American defense shortcomings in the face of the Soviet threat. Faced with commitments that far outweighed present capabilities, the United States had to accept an increased burden to defend the free world. Otherwise the country would be faced with the unacceptable choices of a pre-emptive nuclear attack on the Soviets or retreating into isolation leading to a garrison state.¹¹⁹

NSC 68 made no specific budgetary recommendations.¹²⁰ Indeed, its avoidance of cost estimates was a deliberate move to avoid the acrimonious debates over defense that had characterized the Truman administration. In July 1950 President Truman requested \$13.5 billion for defense in fiscal 1951.¹²¹ This came after a long wrangle with his Chiefs of Staff in which Dwight Eisenhower had played an agonizing role mediating between the services as unofficial chairman of the JCS. But this was before the Korean War. Korea, not the threat outlined in NSC 68, broke the resistance of Truman and other fiscal conservatives in the administration. This was to have important implications not just in the Far East, but especially in Western Europe, where pressure for an expanded military program to meet the MTDP goals became a key US objective in NATO. When

Michael J. Hogan, *A Cross of Iron: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of the National Security State 1945-1954* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp.291-304. Melvin Leffler argues that NSC 68 was no radical departure, but rather a continuation of the “assumptions that had been driving U.S. foreign policy during the Truman administration.” For the continuity argument, see Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, pp.355-360. Paul Nitze takes a similar tack in his own account, see *From Hiroshima to Glasnost: At the Center of Decision, A Memoir* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1989), pp.93-98.

119 Hogan, *A Cross of Iron*, p.297.

120 Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, p.357.

121 On Truman’s budget ceiling, see Hogan, *A Cross of Iron*, pp.302-303, and Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, p.305.

the Chinese intervened in the war in November, it led to further accelerations of the U.S. defense efforts and greater pressure on NATO allies to follow suit.¹²²

As a result of the massive increase in defense expenditures during the Korean War build-up, the US was spending 17.8 percent of GNP on defense in 1952-53 compared to 4.7 percent of GNP the year before conflict broke out.¹²³ One historian of the period has argued that Truman's decision to approve NSC-68 in September 1950 committed "the nation to a buildup of wartime proportions."¹²⁴ By December 1950, as a result of Korea and the build-up implicit in NSC 68, he had requested additional appropriations which brought the total to \$48.2 billion, a 257 percent increase over the original appropriations.¹²⁵ This build-up was not limited to the United States alone, but included the Western Allies as well.¹²⁶ The British Cabinet had endorsed an additional £100 million in defense appropriations within a month of the outbreak of Korea, and subsequently committed to a three year, £3.6 billion defense program.¹²⁷ This was supported by a \$4 billion military assistance supplement that Truman had sent to Congress in August, 80 percent of which was earmarked for NATO countries.¹²⁸ This was the beginning of a substantial rearmament drive. In addition to providing for the

122 Condit, HOSD, v.II, pp.243-60; and David T. Fautua, "The 'Long Pull' Army: NSC 68, the Korean War, and the Creation of the Cold War U.S. Army," *The Journal of Military History*, v.61, n.1 (January 1997), pp.93-120.

123 Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, p.156.

124 Alonzo Hamby, *Man of the People: A Life of Harry S. Truman* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p.549.

125 Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, p.113.

126 The European buildup, which was predicated heavily on US military assistance, was substantial, but generally lagged well behind US hopes for the European contribution. For a sense of the scale of increase, see *FRUS 1951*, vol.III, Status NATO Financial and Production Planning to Implement MTDP [Medium Term Defense Plan], Including US Aid, p.6.

127 BNA, CAB 128/18, CM(50)50, Min.2, and CM(50)72, Min.7.

128 Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, p.371.

prosecution of the war itself, it also made it seem possible that sufficient forces could be fielded for a conventionally based defense of Western Europe.

The summer of 1950 witnessed a definite sense of urgency by US and West European leaders to push ahead with the development of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. President Truman instructed Secretaries Acheson and Johnson to give priority at the upcoming NAC meeting in September to “strengthen effectively the defense of Europe and to determine the nature of the contribution by Germany.” In pursuance of these instructions, he asked them to consider whether the US should commit additional troops to Europe, whether to support the creation of a Supreme Commander and combined staff for NATO, and what position the US should take with respect to the creation of a European defense force.¹²⁹ In a joint response to the President, Acheson and Johnson recommended that US forces in Europe should be increased to 4 infantry divisions, 1 ½ armored divisions, and 8 tactical air groups. This force was to be matched by substantial European efforts. It was also to remove any lingering doubts that the United States was committed to the defense of Europe, rather than its liberation. Additionally, they recommended that the US should be prepared to provide a Supreme Commander, but on the conditions that he was requested by the Europeans and that they “provide sufficient forces, including adequate German units, to constitute a command reasonably capable of fulfilling its responsibilities.”¹³⁰

129 *FRUS 1950*, vol.III, President to the Secretary of State, 26 August 1950, pp.250-51.

130 *FRUS 1950*, vol.III, Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense to the President, 8 September 1950, pp.273-78. This letter was subsequently reviewed by the NSC and upon Presidential approval circulated as NSC 82, “US Policy Regarding Strengthening the Defense of Europe and the Nature of Germany’s Contribution Thereto”, see p.290.

In order to make a conventional defense of Western Europe viable, it was clear to many that a West German military contribution was desirable. But the notion of revived German militarism worried many. Developing a system in which West Germany could participate in Western defense proved difficult. The US government was an early supporter of West German rearmament. NSC 9/3, the planning document which was the basis for US coordinated planning with the Western Union in 1948, had called for the extension of the Brussels Pact to-among other regions-western Germany and Austria.¹³¹ That a West German contribution was desirable was apparent to military authorities in almost all West European countries as well.¹³² Despite the military logic, the political acceptability, both in Western Europe and in West Germany itself, of a rearmed Germany proved to be very hard to come by. The very notion of German rearmament so soon after the war raised profound concerns in both East and West.

The Truman administration made the acceleration of the NATO defense effort and the inclusion of a West German contribution the central features of its approach to NATO in the fall of 1950.¹³³ Secretary of State Acheson pushed hard for French and British acceptance of this urgency during a series of Tripartite and NAC meetings in

131 Condit, *HJCS*, vol.II, p.366.

132 Even French *military* authorities had come round to this view by 1948. Political opinion, however, remained more circumspect. See Trachtenberg, *Constructed Peace*, p.73.

133 The Joint Chiefs had been pushing in this direction since May (before Korea), but Truman and the State Department had been concerned that any discussion of West German re-armament was premature. Truman was in many ways the most reluctant convert in the U.S. On a cover memorandum to Acheson reviewing the JCS recommendations for German re-armament (NSC 71), Truman had described the paper as decidedly militaristic and written in his own hand that NSC 71 and NSC 72 (A paper calling for a defense arrangement with Spain) that "Both [were] wrong as can be." He requested that Acheson prepare replies to both, which were duly submitted for NSC consideration on 30 June. HSTL, President's Secretary's Files, NSC, Box160, 60th Meeting of the NSC. Leffler considers that Defense-State differences over German rearmament were more a matter of tactics, with both agreeing to its desirability, but with State more sensitive about West European sensibilities. Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, pp.383-90. See also Beisner, *Dean Acheson*, pp.360-65.

September.¹³⁴ Acheson presented the administration's plan to Foreign Secretary Bevin and Foreign Minister Schuman as a package deal. It was the result of Pentagon planning and the Department of State's desire for a streamlined proposal. The commitment of additional American troops, the appointment of an American commander, and further financial aid to Western Europe were tied to West European acceptance of German rearmament.¹³⁵ Despite Acheson's tough tactics and support from George Marshall, back in government as Secretary of Defense after Truman sacked Louis Johnson, the Americans were unable to budge French resistance to West German rearmament in September. Yet, the French recognized that a purely negative approach on their part was untenable, a policy reinforced by British attitudes after September, which increased the pressure for a counter-proposal.¹³⁶ Ultimately Acheson and Marshall recognized the "single package" was unrealistic. The NAC communiqué thus only called for the creation of a unified NATO force and extended the NAT defense commitment to Western Germany, without any commitment to integrate West German forces. This force was to

134 Acheson remained in New York for talks from 11 to 28 September. Many of the most important discussion were Tripartite Talks between Acheson, Schuman, and Bevin. For documentation of these discussions, see *FRUS 1950*, vol.III, pp.285-88, 293-353 and Roger Bullen and M.E. Pelly, eds, *Documents on British Policy Overseas*, Ser.II, vol.III (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1989), pp.26-122. See also the accounts in Bullock, *Ernest Bevin: Foreign Secretary*, pp.804-11, David Clay Large, *Germans to the Front: West German Rearmament in the Adenauer Era* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina Press, 1996), pp.85-91.

135 Acheson's most recent biographer has attributed the combativeness of Acheson's presentation to his "own concern about NATO's skeletal character in the face of what he took as new Soviet belligerence." Beisner, *Dean Acheson*, p.366. Acheson himself portrayed himself as a late convert to the Pentagon's "one package" proposal and wrote in his memoirs that he was inclined to accept, *ex post facto*, that it was a mistake. Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, p.440.

136 While the French "planned to stand firm in total opposition to any German contribution to western defense" prior to the September meeting, proposals were already under consideration at the French Foreign Ministry which would concede some role to the Germans. See Hitchcock, *France Restored*, pp.136, 140.

be commanded by a Supreme Commander, appointed as soon as there was sufficient assurance of the availability of national forces for an integrated defense.¹³⁷

In order to head off the problems of German rearmament introduced by Acheson in New York in September 1950, the French countered with the Pleven Plan for a European Defence Community. This plan was announced by French Prime Minister Rene Pleven in a speech before the Chamber of Deputies on 24 October 1950. He called for the creation of a European national army, to be placed under a European minister of defense who would report to a European parliament. West Germany would be invited to participate with units of the “smallest possible” size (battalions).¹³⁸ The plan, which raised eyebrows in Washington, London, and Bonn, proved to be quite successful at stalling West German rearmament. Though the European Defense Community treaty was signed in May 1952, three subsequent French governments refrained from submitting the Treaty to the French National Assembly. These governments were concerned that support for the treaty to be ratified did not exist. When the treaty was finally put before the assembly in 1954, only to be rejected, this concern was justified. Determined nationalist sentiment in France, especially amongst deputies with Gaullist sympathies, found the provisions for ceding France’s control of its military forces to a supranational authority unacceptable. The problem of establishing a framework for the German contribution to Western defense bedeviled NATO for the next four years and was not ultimately resolved until 1955.

137 *FRUS 1950*, vol.III, “Resolution on the Defense of Western Europe,” 26 September 1950, Secretary of State to Acting Secretary of State, pp.350-52.

138 Hitchcock, *France Restored*, p.144 and Large, *Germans to the Front*, pp.92-93.

Despite the sense of urgency that the Korean War had created for Western defense planning, implementing the force build-up envisioned in DC 13 and working out a solution to West Germany's participation in Western defense proved difficult. A NATO Military Committee document of December 1950 stated:

...the means of converting these plans into an effective and efficient defense of the NAT area have been lacking. Existing forces are not fitted to resist a Russian offensive. They are inadequate; they are not organized, equipped, or trained for the battle they may have to fight, they are not supported by the necessary infrastructure; and they are not adequately backed by reserve formations. No means exist for welding even such national units as are now in being into a force which would provide the maximum defense capability, or for exercising unified command over any forces which might be available.¹³⁹

In order to address these problems, the newly formed NATO Military Committee recommended the creation of an integrated command and control structure. This recommendation put those aspects of the September proposals that had not been objectionable into motion.¹⁴⁰ A clearly delineated command and control structure was essential not only for the coordination of defense plans, but also to ensure that the alliance would function if ever put to the test.¹⁴¹ Three major commands were initially recommended. The first was to be the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe. The second was a commander for the Allied Naval Forces, Mediterranean. The third was to be a Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic. The Military Committee hoped the latter would

139 *FRUS 1950*, vol.III, DC 24/3, The Creation of an Integrated European Defense Force, The Establishment of the Supreme Headquarters in Europe, and the Reorganization of the NATO Military Structure, 12 December 1950, pp.548-64.

140 *FRUS 1950*, vol.III, DC 24/3, The Creation of an Integrated European Defense Force, The Establishment of the Supreme Headquarters in Europe, and the Reorganization of the NATO Military Structure, 12 December 1950, pp.548-64. See also Maloney, *Securing Command of the Sea*, pp.103-4.

141 The allies, especially the British and Americans, naturally looked to their respective experiences in allied command during the Second World War. On wartime allied command, see Forrest C. Pogue, *The Supreme Command* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1954), and Maloney, *Securing Command of the Sea*, chap.1.

be appointed as soon as possible after the selection of the first SACEUR.¹⁴²

Considerable Anglo-American friction over the nature of these two major maritime commands was to delay the appointment of the first Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic and the first Commander-in-Chief Allied Forces, Mediterranean for some time.¹⁴³ The subsequent meeting of the NAC endorsed these recommendations.

Eisenhower's NATO Crusade

The defense of Western Europe, being at the heart of the Western European Union and NATO, made agreement on the need for a Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) a relatively uncontroversial matter. The decision to appoint General Dwight D. Eisenhower as the first occupant of this post, with his immense prestige both in Europe and the US, helped further simplify the first essential command.¹⁴⁴

Eisenhower was appointed by the NAC in December 1950. He arrived in Paris on 1 January 1951 to conduct a tour of the European member states, and officially declared his command activated on 2 April 1951.¹⁴⁵ British General Bernard Montgomery, who had

142 *FRUS 1950*, vol.III, DC 24/3, p.554.

143 This dispute is discussed in considerable detail in Maloney, *Securing Command of the Seas*, pp.112-37.

144 Paul Spaak was lobbying for Eisenhower's appointment in early October. Spaak and other Europeans argued that the appointment of Eisenhower, with his great prestige, would be helpful in stimulating the Western European defense effort. *FRUS 1950*, vol.III, Ambassador in Belgium to the Secretary of State, pp.361-62. Maloney, *Securing Command of the Seas*, pp.100-112. The British Joint Planning Staff subsequently described Eisenhower's appointment as the "most notable step" taken toward increasing Western defense preparations which followed the outbreak of the Korean War. BNA, DEFE 6/16, JP(51)90(Final), p.2.

145 President Truman had invited Eisenhower, who was then serving as President of Columbia University, to Washington to discuss his plans for the appointment in October 1950. The official NATO decision was made at the Brussels meeting of the North Atlantic Committee on 18-19 December 1950. The best account of Eisenhower's tenure as SACEUR is Thomas M. Sisk, "Forging the Weapon: Eisenhower as NATO's Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, 1950-1952", *Eisenhower: A Centenary Assessment*, ed. by Günter Bischof and Stephen E. Ambrose (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995), pp.64-83. Also Stephen Ambrose, *Eisenhower*, vol.1: *Soldier, General of the Army, President Elect 1890-1952*

previously been chairman of the Western Union's Commanders-in-Chief Committee, served as the first Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe. Montgomery was to remain in this post until his retirement in 1958.¹⁴⁶ Both figures would play important roles in the development of NATO planning in the decade to come.

Eisenhower's chief goal as Supreme Commander was to weld together small, disparate national forces into an alliance which could sustain a viable defense of Western Europe. His job was as much political and diplomatic as it was purely military, which remained the case for all future SACEURs. He had to encourage Europeans to accelerate their rearmament efforts. In the meantime, he had to try to develop defense plans with inadequate forces. In a situation where there were never enough resources to meet individual nations requirements for defense, Eisenhower had to try and convince the twelve member nations of NATO that their individual security concerns could best be met by combining their efforts in the NATO project.

Eisenhower's initial tour of the European NATO capitals ran from 7 to 25 January 1951.¹⁴⁷ He visited each of the European NATO capitals, and held discussions with Allied military and West German officials before returning to North America. There he met with Canadian officials before retiring briefly to West Point to prepare reports for Congress and the White House. During his talks with President Truman at the White House on 31 January, Eisenhower laid out a preliminary strategic concept for the defense

(London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984), pp.495-6. Full transcripts from Eisenhower's initial tour are located in DDEL, DDEPrePP, Principal Files, Box 201.

146 On Montgomery's tenure as Deputy Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, see Hamilton, *Monty: Final Years of the Field Marshal*, pp.779-835, 842-53, 867-79.

147 For documentation on this trip, see *FRUS 1951*, vol.III, pt.1, pp.392-449, and Louis Galambos, ed., *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol.XII: *NATO and the Campaign of 1952* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970), pp.17-35, *passim*.

of Western Europe. Two weeks prior to his presentation to Truman, Eisenhower had written Truman's Special Adviser, W. Averell Harriman, that he thought, "our purpose should be to make Norway, Denmark and Holland hedgehogs-all supported by a large naval and air force commanding the North Sea and surrounding waters."¹⁴⁸ During his subsequent meeting with Truman, Eisenhower expanded this concept to both of NATO's flanks. Eisenhower wanted Europe defended with 50 to 60 divisions on the central front (Germany) supported by heavy concentrations of sea and air power on the flanks. If the Soviets moved against the center, they were to be hit "awfully hard from both flanks." Air bases in Britain and Scandinavia (for the North Sea) and in Italy, North Africa, and the Near East (for the Mediterranean) were to serve as staging bases for the air power to be deployed to the two flanks.¹⁴⁹ It remained to be seen if the NATO allies could generate forces sufficient to meet these requirements.

But to what extent did Eisenhower's strategic concept fit into existing emergency war plans? And was it a practical strategy? Eisenhower's concept called for the application of sea power as an adjunct of the land battle in Europe. The standing emergency war plans at this time in the United States and Britain were OFFTACKLE and GALLOPER, respectively.¹⁵⁰ They continued to call for an air campaign against the Soviet Union at the earliest practical date as the primary overall strategic objective. In

148 Galambos, ed., *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol.XII, Doc.16, p.26. Eisenhower wrote a number of letters to Harriman on general NATO matters to ensure that certain matters were brought to the President's attention, lest certain problems get swallowed up in the Washington bureaucracy. See Eisenhower's letter to Harriman, Doc.45, 24 February 1951.

149 *FRUS 1951*, vol.III, pt.1, pp.454-55.

150 For OFFTACKLE (JCS 1844/46) see Ross and Rosenberg, eds., *America's Plans for War Against the Soviet Union, 1945-1950*, vol.12: *Budgets and Strategy* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1989). For GALLOPER, BNA, DEFE 6/11, JP(49)134.

OFFTACKLE, carrier airpower was to “supplement and support the strategic air offensive to the extent of their capabilities, and as available.” While recognizing the importance of holding a defensive line “preferably no farther to the west than the Rhine,” it was recognized that logistically this was not going to be attainable in 1950 or 1951. As a fall back position, OFFTACKLE called for holding a substantial bridgehead in Western Europe, or failing that, returning as soon as possible to Western Europe.¹⁵¹ Planners considered the latter option most likely due to the existing imbalance of conventional forces. Given this, retaining Great Britain and North Africa as base areas was considered all the more important. The USN itself was not particularly enthusiastic about OFFTACKLE, which envisioned the loss of the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East to Soviet advances. Hitherto, Navy strategists had advocated using forward deployed carrier airpower in the Mediterranean to attack the industrial and oil infrastructure of the southern Soviet Union. Instead OFFTACKLE outlined a more circumscribed role in defense of the sea lanes and protection of possible future bridgehead positions.¹⁵² The British, for their part, were frustrated that OFFTACKLE called for the redeployment of forces (D+6 month forces) which had been earmarked for the Cairo-Suez base complex to the western Mediterranean (for deployment in either Spain or North Africa).¹⁵³

151 The basic concept for holding bridgeheads/hedgehogs had been floated in the PINCHER series of strategic plans in 1946. In the Concept of Operations for PINCHER it was suggested that US occupation forces could withdraw “to a position capable of being defended by comparatively small forces against greatly superior enemy forces. The value of such an area would be very great, especially if the area contained major ports and/or bases. The desirable characteristics of such an area are found in the Scandinavian, Danish, Iberian and Italian Peninsulas.” See JPS 789, Concept of Operations for “PINCHER”, 2 March 1946, p.9 in Ross and Rosenberg, *America’s Plans for War Against the Soviet Union*, vol.2: *Design for Global War*.

152 Baer, *One Hundred Years of Seapower*, pp.316-17.

153 BNA, DEFE 6/17, JP(51)75, 12 April 1951, Emergency Plans 1951/1952.

As the standing emergency war plans at the beginning of Eisenhower's tenure as SACEUR, OFFTACKLE/GALLOPER did not reflect the considerable *potential* of expanded forces brought about by post-Korean War rearmament. For the United States Navy, Korea provided an impetus to call up many ships from the vast Reserve Fleets and begin a process of modernization which had stalled during the postwar defense retrenchments. The promise of a considerably expanded carrier fleet provided the opportunity for the application of naval airpower to support NATO defense in a way that had not been possible in the OFFTACKLE concept. Newly appointed SACEUR Eisenhower quickly seized on this potential in his articulation of a new role for naval power in defense of Europe's flanks.

Eisenhower's flank strategy called for the employment of carrier air power in a manner which was neither a strategic air offensive nor a traditional sea control mission. After Eisenhower's preliminary visit with the British, the Chiefs of Staff instructed the Joint Planning Staff to analyze the utility of using naval airpower to support the landward flanks and its implications on maritime strategy in the Atlantic and Mediterranean. The British JPS assumed that the hedgehogs which Eisenhower discussed would include regions with strong defenses, such as mountains, water obstacles, or poor communications. In the north, they identified the Troms/Narvik region, the Trondelag area in central Norway, and Jutland and Zealand in Denmark. In the Mediterranean, the

northeast Italian frontier, the Italian peninsula, Sicily, Greece, and Crete were also considered as possible “hedgehogs.”¹⁵⁴

The planners assumed that carriers would operate in groups of four, deploying an average of 350 combat aircraft per carrier group. Eisenhower had told the British that the majority of the USN’s twenty-six carriers would be made available to SACEUR for operations to support his flanks.¹⁵⁵ Thus, the British considered that both the northern flank and the Mediterranean would have two active carrier groups, with a fifth available for deployment to either flank. Since both the carrier group itself and any potential hedgehog would require combat air patrols, it was estimated that about 100 offensive sorties a day could be launched from each carrier group, with such an operational tempo maintained for three to four days. In the North Sea, the British were particularly concerned that the ease with which the region could be mined—indeed some mines from the Second World War were still not cleared—would severely hamper the operation of carrier groups south of 57° N (especially south of a line running from Flamborough Head to northern Denmark).¹⁵⁶ Since naval aircraft then had a practical range of about 300 miles, it would be very difficult for carrier air power to be used to support the land battle

154 BNA, DEFE 6/16, JP(51)29(Final), 7 March 1951, “Defence of the Flanks of the Western European Campaign,” p.4.

155 Ibid., pp.8, 11, 14. The number 26 seems to have been generated from the planned tripling of the US Atlantic Command’s carrier forces to provide in part for a ‘Strategic Reserve’. Eisenhower had been told by the USN that there would be “26 carriers large than the escort type” activated from the US Reserve Fleet. Eisenhower, acting on information provided from Admiral Carney, believed that many of these would be on station in the Mediterranean, and that sizable reinforcements would arrive quickly on his flanks. As it turned out, the reactivation program moved somewhat less grandiose, with 11 large carriers operational by June 1950 and 17 by June 1951. An additional ten aircraft carriers were undergoing modernization and conversion. Galambos, ed., *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol.XII, Doc.98, p.149.

156 Ibid., pp.6, 9.

in either southern Denmark or in Germany.¹⁵⁷ Northern Denmark and southern Norway could be supported to a limited extent, and northern Norway for longer periods excepting the winter months when darkness made air operations impractical. In the Mediterranean the danger from Soviet submarines, aircraft, and aerial mining was negligible, hence carrier airpower could be used more effectively.¹⁵⁸ Nonetheless, the British did not foresee aircraft carriers operating in the tight confines of either the Adriatic or Aegean Seas. This meant that while most of the northern Italian front and Greece could be covered at the outer limits of aircraft ranges, the Turkish straits could not (while neither Greece nor Turkey were yet members of NATO, their Western alignments and anti-Soviet policies made their defense of interest to NATO planners). In all these cases, the British felt that carrier airpower could only hope to achieve temporary local air superiority. The biggest concern with Eisenhower's concept of using airpower to defend "hedgehogs" on the flanks was that it would distract from the missions of controlling the seaborne lines of communication and attacking the threat of the Soviet submarines at their source.¹⁵⁹

When the British JPS memorandum was forwarded to Eisenhower for consideration, it provoked a strong, though private, response to his Chief of Staff Alfred Gruenther. Eisenhower considered the British criticism that using carriers instead of land-based aircraft for defense of the land battle to be patently obvious. But with the

157 The report concluded that "Germany and Southern Denmark [could be supported by carrier air] in emergency only at the limit of their range or by disembarking to suitable airfields."

158 The report stated that only 6 ocean going submarines were expected to be operating in the Mediterranean. The threat from airpower was considered very minimal, as the Soviets were unlikely to divert aircraft away from the front in Central Europe and because they would initially lack airfields suitable located for operations in the Mediterranean.

159 Ibid., pp.2-3, 14-15.

slow build-up of the NATO infrastructure, Eisenhower considered “it nothing short of criminal to avoid planning for the use of whatever assets we may have upon the outbreak of an emergency.”¹⁶⁰ Regarding the sea control mission, Eisenhower felt that smaller escort carriers were more efficient for antisubmarine duties in the Atlantic. While he recognized the US Navy’s enthusiasm for carrier air might be misplaced, Eisenhower felt that there was no need to belittle assets before they were put to the test.¹⁶¹ In addition, one should not neglect the important political dimension served by Eisenhower’s flank defense strategy. NATO assets were clearly going to be insufficient to provide a viable defense of Europe in the short-term. With the priority of the front in central Germany, it was clear-even with the ambitious goals laid out in the MTDP-that shortcomings on the flanks would persist. Since there was little question of US or UK forces becoming available to support the nations on the flanks, the suggestion that considerable naval and air resources would be applied to support those nations might well have served a valuable psychological role in convincing countries like Norway, Denmark, Italy, and later Greece and Turkey, that membership in the alliance would enhance their security as well.

By January 1952-after long, contentious discussions between the Americans and the British-an agreement on naval commands was at last worked out. This agreement meant that a command structure to implement Eisenhower’s strategy for support of NATO’s flanks could at last be activated. The British had acquiesced to an American SACLANT, but only after the additional position of NATO Channel Command

160 Galambos, ed., *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol.XII, Doc.98, pp.149-50. On the NATO infrastructure buildup, see Condit, *HOSD*, vol.II: *The Test of War*, pp.377-80.

161 Galambos, ed., *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol.XII, Doc.98, p.150.

(CHANCOM) was created. The position of CHANCOM was held by a Royal Navy admiral who also held the UK national command of CINC Portsmouth. Admiral Sir Arthur Power of the Royal Navy was the first person to hold this position. To avoid difficulties between SACLANT and CHANCOM, it was agreed that SACLANT would retain command of offensive carrier, ASW hunter-killer, and amphibious operations passing through the CHANCOM area of responsibility. CHANCOM retained authority for local convoy protection, mine sweeping, and coastal operations.¹⁶² To assuage British pride, CHANCOM was placed directly under NATO's Military Committee, which placed it on an equivalent basis with SACLANT and SACEUR in the NATO chain-of-command. Admiral Lynde McCormick, who was simultaneously US Commander-in-Chief Atlantic (CINCLANT), became the first NATO commander to hold the title Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic on 30 January 1952.¹⁶³ He was succeeded by Admiral Jerauld Wright, who served as CINCLANT and SACLANT from 1954 until early 1960.¹⁶⁴ In the fall of 1952 and again in 1953, NATO's naval forces conducted two major exercises to test the concept of flank defense and demonstrate support for the NATO members on the flanks.¹⁶⁵ However, the concept of defending the flanks by

162 Maloney, *Securing Command of the Sea*, p.147.

163 For the official appointment, see Dennis Merrill, gen. ed., *Documentary History of the Truman Presidency*, vol.17: *The Origins and Establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 1948-1952* (University Publications of America), pp.298-99. Also Maloney, *Securing Command of the Sea*, p.

164 Wright had served as the US Naval Deputy to the NATO Standing Group under General Bradley from September 1950 until June 1952. During the following year-and-a-half, Wright continued to be intimately involved in NATO matters in the position of US Commander in Chief, Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean (CINCELM). David M. Key, Jr., *Admiral Jerauld Wright: Warrior Among Diplomats* (Manhattan, KS: Sunflower University Press, 2001), pp.252-55 and 390-92.

165 These were exercises MAINBRACE and MARINER. MAINBRACE's publicly stated purpose was to test the ability of NATO's maritime forces to reinforce the Northern Flank in a hypothetical situation where Soviet forces had already overrun the central front in Germany and were poised for an invasion of Denmark and Norway. Sokolsky, *Seapower in the Nuclear Age*, p.21. In MARINER, nine NATO nations (Belgium,

employing large-scale naval power would find itself out of step with the trajectory of strategic thinking by the mid-1950s. Ironically, Eisenhower would later become one of the biggest critics of the employment of maritime power in general war.¹⁶⁶ It was not until decades later, once flexible response had become NATO official strategy, that the strategy of employing maritime power in defense of NATO's flanks underwent something of a renaissance.¹⁶⁷

Eisenhower's efforts as SACEUR did indeed boost European confidence. This new found confidence can be said to have reached its peak at the NAC ministerial conference in Lisbon, held in February 1952.¹⁶⁸ The Lisbon meeting was important for several reasons. It was the meeting at which Greece and Turkey were formally accepted

Canada, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal the United Kingdom, and the United States) contributed a force of 300 ships, 1,000 aircraft and approximately 500,000 men for the exercise. Rear Adm. H. E. Horan, "Principal Naval Exercises in 1953", *Brassey's Annual 1954* (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1954), pp.285-89. On the general eclipse of this type of maritime strategy, see Michael Palmer, *Origins of the Maritime Strategy: The Development of American Naval Strategy 1945-1955* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1988).

¹⁶⁶ Eisenhower valued naval power for its usefulness in limited war situations, but during the course of his Presidency he became increasingly skeptical of the role of carrier air power in general (nuclear) war. During a discussion over the revision of the basic national security policy in early 1956, the Joint Chiefs of Staff pressed for the insertion of language into the document which would delineate the roles of the Army and Navy in a future war. This quickly raised President Eisenhower's concern. For him, the chief role of the US Army after a nuclear exchange would be to help secure order in the United States. As to the USN, Eisenhower could only add, "God only knew what the Navy would be doing in a nuclear attack." DDEL, DDEP (Ann Whitman File), NSC Series, Box 7, 277th NSC Meeting, 27 February 1956. At a meeting with senior defense advisors in November 1957, Eisenhower voiced his "growing suspicion that the carrier has about run its course." He saw ICBMs and the hydrogen bomb as threatening the existence of the carrier in general war, particularly in enclosed seas like the Mediterranean. DDEL, DDE Diary Series, Box 28, Folder: November '57 Staff Notes, Memorandum of Conference with the President, 11 November 1957 (dated 16 November). See also a follow up conversation with Secretary McElroy of 15 November (dated 18 November) in the same folder.

¹⁶⁷ See John B. Hattendorf, *The Evolution of the U.S. Navy's Maritime Strategy 1977-1986*, Newport Paper 19 (Newport, RI: Naval War College, 2004); and Richard Hegmann, "Reconsidering the Evolution of the US Maritime Strategy 1955-1965", *Journal of Strategic Studies*, v.14, n.3 (September 1991), pp.299-336.

¹⁶⁸ For documentation of the Lisbon NAC meeting, see *DCER*, vol.18, Doc.426: Report by the Department of External Affairs on the Lisbon Meeting of the North Atlantic Council; and *FRUS 1952-1954*, vol.V, pp.111-98. Further US documentation and preparatory material is located in NARA, RG 59, Conference Files (1949-1972), Boxes 15-16.

as NATO members. The meeting in Lisbon also endorsed the creation of a permanent secretariat. Once it was established, the North Atlantic Council began to sit in permanent session. Though meetings of Foreign Ministers continued, each of the member states was henceforth represented by a Permanent Representative at the ambassadorial level to deal with the day-to-day political decisions of the alliance. With the establishment of a permanent secretariat, under the direction of Lionel Hastings (Lord Ismay) of Great Britain, the NAC's headquarters were moved from London to Paris.¹⁶⁹ Henceforth, the NAC and Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) were both located in Paris.¹⁷⁰ The Lisbon meeting of the North Atlantic Council endorsed firm targets for 1952, and established planning goals for NATO forces in 1953 and 1954. The 1952 force goals endorsed at Lisbon called for 25 divisions and 461 major combatant vessels in-being. By 1954 these forces were expected to be raised to 41 1/2 divisions and 504 combat vessels in-being. The much quoted 90 division goal for 1954 referred to the force in-being plus reserves which were to be available within 30 days of mobilization.¹⁷¹ These ambitious force goals were never achieved. Nonetheless, they remained important benchmarks for military planners for many years to come.¹⁷²

169 For NATO's first Secretary General-Lord Ismay's own account, see *NATO: The First Five Years 1949-1954*. It is available in electronic form at <http://www.nato.int/archives/1st5years/index.htm>.

170 SHAPE was initially located in Rocquencourt, just outside Paris. After the French withdrawal from the integrated military command structure in 1966, NATO headquarters and SHAPE relocated to Belgium in October 1967. When NATO headquarters were moved to Brussels, General Lyman Lemnitzer, then SACUER, had hoped SHAPE would be located in Brussels as well, but the Belgian government, fearing SHAPE's importance as a military target in a future war, instead offered a former Belgian army base in Mons, fifty kilometres from Brussels. See "History of SHAPE and Allied Command Operations", www.nato.int.

171 Walter S. Poole, *HJCS*, vol.IV: 1950-1952 (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1980), p.293.

172 In May 1956, Admiral Arthur Radford, then Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff pointed out that General Al Gruenther, then SACEUR, was "still basing his recommendations on the Lisbon goals." DDEL, DDEP, NSC, Box 7, 285th Meeting of the NSC, 17 May 1956, p.17.

Nuclear Inklings

Important changes in strategic thinking were beginning to develop which would challenge the rationale behind the type of conventional force buildup that underlay the Lisbon force goals and the EDC. The Korean War gave a tremendous impetus to the Western defense buildup, but the ambitious force goals laid down at Lisbon quickly proved beyond the means of many of the European powers. Beyond just the economic implications, the basis of military strength was undergoing rapid changes as well. This was particularly true in the realm on nuclear weapons development.

Nuclear weapons developments moved in two directions in the 1950s. In order to prevent the Soviets from gaining a commanding lead in weapons development, President Truman had authorized the development of thermonuclear weapons. The first US thermonuclear device was detonated in 1952. It was more than a thousand times more powerful than the fission bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.¹⁷³ The thermonuclear bomb ushered in what one historian has argued was an even more sweeping departure in military strategy than the advent of fission weapons in 1945.¹⁷⁴ When there had only been fission weapons, military planners and civilian policy makers had been capable, if not always comfortable, contemplating their actual use in wartime. The advent of thermonuclear weapons was going to bring about a shift, where the use of the weapons became less and less palatable. On the other hand, there was an ongoing effort to produce lighter fission weapons with reduced yields that would be better suited

173 On the history of the US thermonuclear program, see Defense Threat Reduction Agency, *Defense's Nuclear Agency 1947-1997* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2002), pp. 74-75, 95-98, and Richard Rhodes, *Dark Sun: The Making of the Hydrogen Bomb* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995).

174 Trachtenberg, "A 'Wasting Asset,'" *History and Strategy*, p.135.

for battlefield use. The first generation American bombs, the Mark III bomb of the “Fat Man” type, weighed 10,000 pounds and required a team of thirty-two men two days to assemble and load into the specially modified B-29s.¹⁷⁵ By 1953 two lighter, but more powerful bombs, the 3,000 pound Mark V and 2,700 pound Mark VII, were entering service, but both were still only deliverable from the air as gravity bombs.

In the spring of 1951, Secretary of Defense George C. Marshall and Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Lovett concurred that there was a need for tactical atomic weapons in the US stockpile.¹⁷⁶ A similar conclusion was reached by Project VISTA. This was a study conducted by scientists from the California Institute of Technology and members of the Department of Defense’s Weapons Systems Evaluation Group. It began as an effort to improve air-ground coordination in the Korean War, but transformed into a study of the future battlefield in NATO Europe. The conclusions of the report advocated development of fission implosion weapons in the 1-5 kiloton range for battlefield use. The authors of Project VISTA argued that thermonuclear weapons should not be immediately employed against Soviet cities, and should instead be reserved as a deterrent. These recommendations were poorly received by the US Air Force, and the report was effectively shelved.¹⁷⁷ The US Army, however, continued to explore battlefield employment of nuclear weapons.¹⁷⁸

175 Rosenberg, “Origins of Overkill”, p.14.

176 Condit, *HOSD, v.II: The Test of War 1950-1953*, pp.469-70.

177 David C. Elliot, “Project Vista and Nuclear Weapons in Europe,” *International Security*, v.11, n.1 (Summer 1986), pp.163-83. James Gavin later served as Army Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations, G-3, and Chief of Research and Development. He participated in Project VISTA as a member of the Weapons System Evaluation Group. See James M. Gavin, *War and Peace in the Space Age* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958), pp.129-35. For the first review of conclusions by the VISTA group, see VISTA, Notes taken by Garrison Norton, 12 November 1951, DDCS, 1997, F51, 661. There is also a copy in

It was not until 1954 that the 1,000 pound Mark XII would be available for battlefield deployment. It was light enough to be fitted to Air Force fighter bombers, Navy attack planes, guided missile warheads, long-range artillery (280 mm guns), and be used in atomic land mines and anti-submarine depth charges.¹⁷⁹ By June 1954, there were five Army 280mm gun batteries operational in Europe and four HONEST JOHN rocket deployed in US Army forces in Europe.¹⁸⁰ According to a briefing given by General Lauris Norstad in 1961, in May 1952 NATO could plan for the use of *only* 20 nuclear weapons. By July 1954 this number had risen to 125. In the period before 1954, the use of nuclear weapons by the United States Air Force's Strategic Air Command was anticipated by the NATO allies. It remained unclear, though, what role nuclear weapons would play in the direct defense of NATO Europe. This was due to the limitations of deployed delivery systems and warheads, as well as the nascent stage of doctrine for the use of nuclear weapons on the battlefield. It would take many years before these

DDEL, Norstad Papers, Box 41. For the February version, see Epitome of the Summary of the Final Report of Project Vista, 12 February 1952, DDRS 1996, F45, 584. Some of the results of the VISTA story were leaked, and appeared in an article by Hanson Baldwin, "Experts Urge Tactical Air Might; Score Stress on Big Atom Bomber", *New York Times*, 5 June 1952, p.13. I discuss this in more detail in Robert T. Davis II, *The Challenge of Adaptation: The US Army in the Aftermath of Conflict, 1953-2000* (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2008), pp.13-14.

178 The best examples of this were in the DESERT ROCK series of tests held at Frenchman's Flat, Nevada in the 1950s. The exercise was publicly known as DESERT ROCK after Camp Desert Rock. The first round of nuclear tests were conducted in November 1951 under the codename BUSTER-JANGLE. The bomb dropped on 1 November (BUSTER) was a 20-kiloton weapon. However, two 1.2 kiloton weapons (JANGLE) were detonated later in November. For more on the BUSTER-JANGLE test series, see *Defense's Nuclear Agency 1947-1997* (Washington, DC: Defense Threat Reduction Agency, 2002), pp.80-86. Also, Gladwin Hill, "4 of Atom Unit Hail the Tactical Bomb", *The New York Times*, 3 November 1951, p.6, and "Troops Endure Giant A-Bomb in Desert Test", *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 2 November 1951, p.11. On the US Army's pursuit of battlefield atomic capability, see John J. Midgley, *Deadly Illusions: Army Policy for the Nuclear Battlefield* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986).

179 Rosenberg, "Origins of Overkill," p.30.

180 DDRS, 2001, F189, 2458, NSC 5509, Pt. 1: Department of Defense Report to National Security Council on Status of United States Military Programs as of 31 December 1954.

problems were adequately addressed within the alliance. To some extent, a fully satisfactory doctrine for the employment of these weapons was never achieved.

The strategic implications of these new weapons and the strains of the post-NSC 68 military buildups provoked searching re-appraisals of military strategy. The long-term sustainability of defense spending and re-assessments of the nature of the Soviet threat were both key components of these re-appraisals. This process would eventually culminate in the Eisenhower administration's New Look, but the first major NATO ally to undertake a major re-assessment of its economic and strategic priorities was Great Britain.

The British Global Strategy Review of 1952

In October 1951 Winston Churchill, Britain's wartime Prime Minister, returned to office at 10 Downing Street after six years in opposition.¹⁸¹ Churchill himself had famously proclaimed the coming of the Cold War while out of power in his "Iron Curtain" speech in Fulton, Missouri in 1946. But by the time Churchill returned to 10 Downing Street, at the age of 77 and suffering from declining health, his own approach to the Cold War had undergone significant revision. With the ending of the US atomic monopoly in 1949, Churchill had grown less confrontational in his Cold War rhetoric and come to stress the importance of an easing of Cold War tensions. Churchill's 1951 government included many figures from his wartime administration. They included Anthony Eden, his long-serving wartime Foreign Secretary and increasingly eager heir

181 On Churchill last administration, see Klaus Larres, *Churchill's Cold War: The Politics of Personal Diplomacy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), Anthony Seldon, *Churchill's Indian Summer: The Conservative Government, 1951-55* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1981) and John Young, *Winston Churchill's Last Campaign: Britain and the Cold War, 1951-5* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

apparent. Early on the two were largely in accord on many aspects of British foreign policy, but their personal relationship and policy outlooks became increasingly strained as Churchill soldiered on in the Prime Ministership. Churchill, in particular, focused his efforts at trying to restore the personal diplomacy of wartime. On the one hand, he saw improving the “special relationship” with the United States as an important feature, but he also hoped to convince the Soviets to renew summit diplomacy. His dedication to the idea of a summit was to become particularly pronounced after Stalin’s death in early 1953.

Upon returning to power, Churchill’s government inherited a massive buildup from the previous Labour government that would see British spending on defense increase from 4.7 percent of GNP in 1949-50 to 9.9 percent in 1952-53.¹⁸² The massive increases in defense expenditures meant that by the fall of 1950 the British Treasury was warning of a balance of payments deficit approaching £600 million.¹⁸³ Committed to maintaining Britain’s position as a world power and the development of an independent nuclear deterrent, Churchill and his government had to confront a balance of payments crisis which threatened agonizing choices over future policy.¹⁸⁴ These ongoing financial difficulties were an important component of the Churchill administration’s subsequent attempts to re-appraise Britain’s global strategy.

182 Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, p.156.

183 Christopher Staerck and Gillian Staerck, “The realities behind Britain’s Global Defence Strategy” in *British Foreign Policy, 1955-64: Contracting Options* (Houndmills, England: Macmillan, 2000), p.35.

184 The financial position, described as “grave” was outlined at Churchill’s first Cabinet meeting in a note from the Permanent Secretary to the Treasury. BNA, CAB 128/23, C(51)1, Min.5, 30 October 1951.

During his period out of office from 1945 through 1951, Churchill had often spoken about the potentials of the American nuclear monopoly, which he saw as creating a unique potential for the U.S. to deter Soviet aggression and to pressure the Soviets to accept a more cooperative attitude in Europe. At his most private, he occasionally suggested that perhaps the US should exploit their nuclear advantage while they could.¹⁸⁵ However, between the testing of the first Soviet nuclear device in 1949 and the first US thermonuclear weapon in 1952, Churchill's attitude towards nuclear weapons and, more generally, the use of force, began to undergo a significant shift.¹⁸⁶ As he became increasingly educated about the destructive potential of the new weapons, Churchill—who abhorred Communism—became a dedicated advocate of “peaceful coexistence,” a term coined by his Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden in June 1954. As Churchill came to terms with the massive destructive power of thermonuclear weapons, he underwent a fundamental change in his strategic outlook.¹⁸⁷ This meant the West had to adopt a posture of peaceful cooperation with the Soviet state, a far more accommodating position than he had advocated during the tense period of the Cold War in 1948-51.¹⁸⁸

185 Jonathan Rosenberg, “Before and After the Bomb: Winston Churchill and the Use of Force,” *Cold War Statesmen Confront the Bomb: Nuclear Diplomacy since 1945*, John Lewis Gaddis, et. al., eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.186.

186 Rosenberg, “Before and After the Bomb,” pp.171-72, 187.

187 Churchill for many years remained profoundly shaped by his experiences coming of age in the late Victorian era, which imbued him with a romantic conception of war that he had long held on to. For more on Churchill's strategic outlook before the dawning of the nuclear age, see Tuvia Ben-Moshe, *Churchill: Strategy and History* (Boulder, CO: Reinner, 1990).

188 Churchill's advocacy of summitry in his final administration can partly be understood in light of his thinking about the consequences of global warfare. Rosenberg, “Before and After the Bomb”, pp.188-89.

During Churchill's first visit to the United States since returning to office, his first priority was to restore the special relationship with the United States.¹⁸⁹ In a visit arranged just three months after returning to 10 Downing Street, Churchill ranged over a wide number of matters with his American hosts. This included policy in the Far East, Middle East, and Europe, as well as a discussion of British economic difficulties.¹⁹⁰ Churchill and Eden hoped to moderate American policy toward China, secure more American support for Britain's position in the Middle East, and try to improve Britain's position with regard to atomic weaponry. Churchill considered the erosion of the wartime co-operation in atomic matters to be one of Labor's great policy failures.

Despite Truman's attempts to welcome Churchill with a degree of informality with initial meetings aboard the presidential yacht *Williamsburg*, the visit itself did little to secure any of Churchill's wishes. Truman and Acheson for their part, though gracious hosts, were wary that Churchill's attempt to revive the "special relationship" would complicate relations with the other NATO powers. Churchill's visit to Washington was broken into two phases, from 5-8 January, then again on 17-18 January. In the interim, Churchill visited his friend Bernard Baruch in New York and made an official visit to Ottawa. When Churchill returned to Washington from Ottawa on the 17th, he delivered an address to a joint session of Congress. The following morning, Churchill received a briefing on the SAC plans for war with the Soviets, but this was the sole US concession

189 Young, *Winston Churchill's Last Campaign*, p.54. David Dutton has suggested that Eden also regarded the revival of the 'special relationship' with considerable favor in 1951, but that he came away from the January 1952 visit to Washington with a much more pessimistic appraisal of Britain's ability to influence US policy, particularly in her present state of economic difficulties. David Dutton, *Anthony Eden: A Life and Reputation* (London: Arnold, 1997), pp.329-30.

190 For the American record of these exchanges, see *FRUS 1952-1954*, vol.VI, pt.1, pp.730-859. Also Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, pp.596-603, and Young, *Winston Churchill's Last Campaign*, pp.73-87.

on shared atomic information.¹⁹¹ It was later described by Air Marshal Slessor as telling “us [the British government/military] considerably less than we already knew about the plan.”¹⁹² Despite a certain frustration with the information provided on 18 January, the British were able to secure further information in a subsequent meeting of senior officials on 5 February.¹⁹³ The British were soon to begin re-appraising their own strategic thinking about the Cold War conflict.

The British Chiefs of Staff had requested that the Joint Planning Staff begin reviewing the Global Strategy Paper in late January. Then in early March, Defense Minister Viscount Alexander of Tunis, informed the Chiefs that a fundamentally new approach to the Global Strategy Paper, rather than a mere updating of this existing document was in order. During a preliminary meeting of the Chiefs of Staff and Foreign Office officials on 31 March, Sir William Slim informed the attendees that impending cuts in the service estimates would necessitate a re-examination of British global strategy. Slim already appreciated that the necessity of fighting a Cold War should take priority over preparing for a hypothetical hot war. Hence, preparation for a hot war should take second place to waging the cold war. Due to concerns over long-term economic viability, Slim worried that there “was a real danger of building up forces which we should be unable to maintain.” The meeting even posited that the biggest danger of war could

191 Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, p.601, writes only that “The British group spent the morning [18 January] at the Pentagon, where Lovett briefed them on our nuclear armament and provided luncheon.” According to the editors of the relevant FRUS volume, no record of this briefing has been found. *FRUS 1952-1954*, vol.VI, pt.1, p.846.

192 On Air Marshal Slessor appraisal of the briefing, see Twigg and Scott, *Planning Armagedon*, p.37, esp. note 111.

193 There is a British version of this briefing in BNA, DEFE 32/2, contained in the appendices to memorandum COS.331/14/2/52.

possibly be the “insistence by the Americans on a ‘show-down’ when they found that they could no longer afford to maintain the weapon they had forged.”¹⁹⁴

In order to draw up a new global strategy paper, Chief of the Imperial General Staff Sir William Slim, Air Marshal Sir John Slessor, and First Sea Lord Rhoderick McGrigor withdrew to the environs of the Royal Navy College at Greenwich-at the suggestion of McGrigor-from 28 April till 2 May. As a result of these deliberations and further editorial work suggested by Sir Ian Jacob, Churchill’s personal choice for chief staff officer at the Ministry of Defense, a polished draft was ready for forwarding to Churchill by mid-June.¹⁹⁵

The pressure for economy in defense expenditure permeates the paper.¹⁹⁶ In laying out the economic factors, the Chiefs embraced the notion that “over-expenditure on rearmament, leading to the ruin of the economy of Western Europe, would be to play the Communist game and to present Russia with a bloodless victory.”¹⁹⁷ The Chiefs saw little chance of the countries of Western Europe fulfilling the goals for land and air forces recently laid down at Lisbon. Reflecting British geographer Halford Mackinder’s classic view of the importance of Eurasian heartland, the report stated that, “The fact is that the

194 BNA, DEFE 32/2, Meeting held on 31 March 1952, Sir William Slim in the chair.

195 Grove, *Vanguard to Trident*, pp.83-4, and General Sir William Jackson and Field Marshal Lord Bramall, *The Chiefs: The Story of the United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff* (London: Brassey’s, 1992), pp.281-83.

196 In the end, the Chiefs wrote that the reductions recommended “can be undertaken only by incurring real and serious risk. These risks are only justifiable in the face of the threat of economic disaster.” 1952 Global Strategy Paper, par.140. The citations for this paragraph are taken from the partial printed version of Defense Policy and Global Strategy reprinted in Baylis, *Ambiguity and Deterrence*, appendix 6. For a useful analysis of the history which stresses both the continuities and departures of the 1952 Global Strategy Paper, see John Baylis and Alan Macmillan, “The British Global Strategy Paper of 1952,” *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, v.16, n.2 (June 1993), pp.200-226. The original can be found in BNA, CAB 131/12, D(52)26, 17 June 1952. There should be a version in DEFE 5/40, COS(52)361, but when the author looked at the file it was still not available.

197 1952 Global Strategy Paper, par.13 in Baylis, *Ambiguity and Deterrence*, p.406.

Free World cannot hope, spread out as it is in an attenuated ring round the great mass of Russia and China, to contain the enemy by land forces deprived of support by atomic weapons.”¹⁹⁸ But the pessimism regarding the geopolitical position of the Free World was countered by hope that atomic weapons would provide the West with a reliable deterrent and the conclusion that “[general] war is unlikely provided that the Cold War is conducted by the Allies in a patient, level-headed, and determined manner.” The crux of the matter in the Global Strategy Paper remained how much reliance could be placed on the atomic deterrent alone. As Baylis and Macmillan have pointed out, the paper recognizes that atomic deterrence cannot be relied upon alone “and the need for conventional forces [are] still made clear. This was no crude statement of massive retaliation.”¹⁹⁹ Military men are called upon to plan prudently to be prepared should war break out. Memories of the lack of preparedness prior to World War II only reinforced this tendency. Determining the scope and potential duration of a future war, however, was the fundamental problem faced by the Chiefs. Pressure for economy in expenditure, a pressure that would remain throughout the history of the alliance, meant that there were never really “purely” military considerations made regarding future plans for war. If there was to be a long drawn out war *after* the initial strategic air campaign, with a potential replay of World War II in which Allied forces liberated the continent from the Soviets, it would require substantially more conventional forces, particularly land and sea forces, than if one presupposed that the initial strategic air campaign would be decisive. On this matter the Global Strategy Paper was unclear, no doubt reflecting the differences

198 1952 Global Strategy Paper, par.41 in Baylis, *Ambiguity and Deterrence*, p.412.

199 Baylis and Macmillan, “The British Global Strategy Paper of 1952,” p.219.

of opinion amongst the service chiefs themselves. The Chiefs expected that the initial phase of a future war would be short-perhaps lasting only a few weeks-and of “unparalleled intensity.” The implication was that Britain and the Allies “should concentrate on measures that will contribute both to their defence in the opening phase and to the violence of the initial assault upon the enemy.” But while such an approach had a certain logic to it, the Chiefs also felt that the Alliance was not yet prepared to draw out the full implications of this conclusion. The Allies “could hardly plan exclusively for a short war.”²⁰⁰ As recently as February, General Omar Bradley, Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, had told the British that he himself foresaw that a general war would be both long and tremendously destructive to western civilization. He did not share the US Air Force’s enthusiasm that strategic air power utilizing atomic weapons could win a quick, decisive victory.²⁰¹ On the matter of the conventional-nuclear force balance, the Global Strategy Paper came out in favor of emphasizing air strike forces and *reducing the build-up* of land and tactical air forces in Western Europe.²⁰²

Once the paper was complete, it was briefed both to members of the Churchill government and with the American Joint Chiefs of Staff. At a meeting between Prime Minister Churchill, Foreign Secretary Eden, and the British Chiefs of Staff on 18 June 1952, Churchill was informed by General Sir William Slim that the British Chiefs were fairly convinced that the U.S. Strategic Air Command’s plan for an atomic bomber

200 1952 Global Strategy Paper, par.32-33 in Baylis, *Ambiguity and Deterrence*, p.410.

201 BNA, DEFE 32/2, Strategic Air Plan with Annexes, Reference COS 331/14/2/52 contains a summary letter and British version of a memorandum of conversation between British Ambassador Sir Oliver Franks, and Air Chief Marshal Sir William Elliot with H. Freeman Matthews, Paul Nitze, and R. Gordon Anderson from the US Department of State, and Chairman, JCS Omar Bradley held at the Department of State building in Washington, DC on 5 February 1952.

202 1952 Global Strategy Paper, par.38, 92 in Baylis, *Ambiguity and Deterrence*, pp.411, 413.

offensive would deliver a “crushing and effective atomic attack.”²⁰³ Reflecting some of the language in the paper, Churchill mused that the US atomic offensive might prompt the Soviets to overrun Western Europe. This would allow them to intermingle their troops with the Allies NATO was trying to defend. Western Europe could then be held hostage to prevent the US from prosecuting their strategic air campaign. Churchill also commented on the long war-short war debate when he suggested that “if adequate attention was paid to these U-boat and mining bases, and if all went well, there was little prospect of the war at sea being very prolonged.”²⁰⁴ The British COS were confident that the prospect of an atomic battlefield would greatly limit the offensive potential of Soviet seapower and contribute to the successful defense of Western Europe, in particular through the ability to deal heavy blows to Soviet tactical air forces through the use of small atomic bombs on airfields.

The British views on the changing nature of warfare in the atomic age were communicated to the US Joint Chiefs of Staff and State Department representatives in a series of meeting between 29-31 July 1952.²⁰⁵ While the British representatives reported that the US Joint Chiefs were in general agreement with their views, the Americans felt that the British underestimated the risk of war into 1954. In addition, the US Joint Chiefs

203 BNA, DEFE 32/2, Confidential Annex to COS(S)(52)7th, Defence Policy and Global Strategy, 18 June 1952.

204 Ibid.

205 Discussions in Washington on Global Strategy with the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff and the State Department, BNA, DEFE 5/41, COS(52)443, 18 August 1952. The British had prepared a shortened version of the Global Strategy Paper for distribution to select Commonwealth nations and to the US JCS. See BNA, DEFE 5/40, COS(52)362, Defence Policy and Global Strategy, 15 July 1952 (Abbreviated for limited distribution). Eleven copies of the British Global Strategy paper were received by General Bradley from Air Marshal William Elliot around 11 July for US JCS review. NARA, RG 218, Chairman's Files (Bradley) 1951-1953, Box 5, SM-1679-52.

also felt that the US stockpile would be insufficiently large by 1954 vis-à-vis the Soviet stockpile to be considered a sufficient deterrent. The main point of disagreement was whether or not this re-appraisal suggested a change in the status of conventional forces set out at Lisbon. The British felt that it certainly did, while the American Chiefs argued that they could not support a reduction in conventional forces through 1954. The impact of nuclear weapons on conventional force levels was to remain at the heart of NATO debates about strategy for many years to come.

With the election of Dwight Eisenhower in November 1952, the British had to wait and see what attitudes the new administration would adopt towards NATO and the prosecution of the Cold War. Approaching the final NAC meeting of the Truman administration, Dean Acheson sensed that “momentum in Europe was being lost and retrogression [particularly regarding the EDC Treaty’s ratification] had set in to the point of threatening disaster.”²⁰⁶ The European NATO Allies proved unwilling to embrace firm force goals for 1953 until the new administration’s policy became clear, leading to a “somewhat sterile meeting in Paris” at the end of 1952.²⁰⁷

In January 1953 Churchill had a chance to visit with President-elect Eisenhower at his campaign headquarters in New York before traveling on to Washington for talks with President Truman. Though they discussed little in the way of substantive matters, Churchill stressed his desire for a return to the intimacy of the wartime Anglo-American relation. Eisenhower, while looking forward to the maintenance of close relations,

206 Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, p.708.

207 Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, p.709. Also Leighton, *HOSD*, v.III: *Strategy, Money, and the New Look*, pp.552-53.

informed Churchill that relations between the two countries would have to follow established channels. However, Eisenhower did not discourage Churchill's thoughts about a singular approach to Stalin which were to cause the new administration difficulty down the road. Churchill was not entirely excited by Eisenhower's reserved attitude about the 'special relationship' or his thoughts about meeting Stalin one-on-one in a neutral capital such as Stockholm.²⁰⁸

Prior to Churchill's visit to the United States, Stalin had granted a Christmas interview with American journalist James Reston in which he announced that he was willing to regard favorably a meeting with President Eisenhower. Though this interview contrasted with the tone of anti-Western propaganda that often came out of Moscow, Western diplomats and statesmen were cautious as to whether this represented a new approach, was simply an attempt by Stalin to take the measure of the new American leader, or an attempt to sow dissension in the Western alliance. However the speech stimulated some thought that perhaps the Soviets themselves were adopting a new approach to the Cold War. With Stalin's death three months later, this line of thought won new impetus, particularly with Churchill.²⁰⁹ Initially, however, most in the West were not disposed to accept immediately that a change in leadership signaled a fundamental change in policy.

208 Churchill had been delighted at the prospects of reviving a close relationship with the US once Eisenhower was elected. During December Churchill began making inquiries about visiting the President-elect in January 1953, and only once these arrangements were made did he contact the White House about a visit with President Truman. See Young, *Winston Churchill's Last Campaign*, p.110, 113-20, For the US record of the Eisenhower-Churchill talks, see Memcon on Dulles' report on the conversations in *FRUS 1952-1954*, vol.VI, Doc.373, pp.881-85.

209 Young, *Winston Churchill's Last Campaign*, pp.115-17.

In late 1952 and early 1953, both the British and American governments—as indeed most of the NATO allies—were facing increasing difficulties with the re-armament programs that had been adopted in 1950 and 1951. In Britain, problems over future defense estimates were coming to a head in early November, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer found himself ranged against the Minister of Defense, the Service Ministries, and the Chiefs of Staff in his attempts to restrain defense expenditures. As he told the Cabinet on 7 November 1952, “The financial position of this country and the fall in productivity made it impossible to contemplate a rising curve [as the existing defense program did] of defence.” Ranged against this was firm conviction from Minister of Defence Alexander on down to the Chiefs of Staff that any further cuts would make it impossible to meet Britain’s commitments. Churchill closed the discussion by setting out a figure of £1,610 million, which was £10 million more than the Chancellor of the Exchequer had established as a maximum limit, and promising ministerial guidance for a further radical review of British expenditures in the years after 1953.²¹⁰

This “Radical Review” began as a ministerial committee under the guidance of Cabinet Secretary Sir Norman Brook. The British Chiefs of Staff kept close watch on these deliberations, and they undoubtedly influenced their thinking towards NATO in this period.²¹¹ Indeed, with the United Kingdom’s global commitments under review, squaring the circle with NATO force goals was increasingly difficult for the British. During a COS meeting in early December it was “agreed that the whole question of force requirements was getting out of hand as they were so far removed from any possible

210 BNA, CAB 128/25, C(52)94, 7 November 1952.

211 Grove, *Vanguard to Trident*, p.91.

attainment.”²¹² The position taken by the British Chiefs was that the NATO national governments needed to tell NATO what forces would be made available based on their national budgets. These figures, perhaps adjusted slightly upward to prevent complacency, and not the strategic requests of the NATO Supreme Commanders, should be the basis of NATO strategic plans. If this procedure were followed, the NATO Supreme Commanders would then be able to develop a strategy based on what forces they would in fact have, not what they desired. The North Atlantic Council could then be appraised by the Supreme Commanders of the potentials and risks that the alliance faced with the forces in being.²¹³

As will be seen in the next chapter, the incoming Eisenhower administration quickly had to confront pressure for reductions in US expenditures, prompting a review of security and defense policy not unlike the 1952 British Global Strategy Review. In light of the massive budget deficits inherited from the Truman administration, the Eisenhower administration and the balanced-budget conscious Republican majority in Congress would soon press for major cuts in expenditures. Thus 1953 witnessed both countries undertaking major strategic reappraisals. This, of course, had important implications for NATO as well. Both were influenced by economic realities, growing appreciation of the dangers of confrontation in the nuclear age, and the desire of both Eisenhower and Churchill for fresh initiatives in the Cold War.

212 BNA, DEFE 5/44, COS(53)61, 2 February 1953, with reference to COS(52)164, Minute 5.

213 Ibid.

Chapter 3: New Looks at NATO

During most of the 1950s, the governments of both Great Britain and the United States placed increasing reliance on nuclear weapons in their respective national security policies. This emphasis on nuclear weapons, and the related shift away from large-scale conventional forces, was an important feature of both the British Global Strategy Reviews and President Eisenhower's New Look national security policy. Given the central roles these powers played in determining NATO strategy, it is not surprising that both powers attempted to apply aspects of these "new looks" (as they will both be referred to in this chapter) to NATO strategy. During the period after the 1952 Lisbon NAC meeting, especially once the Eisenhower administration assumed office, the New Look gained increasing acceptance within NATO. At the same time, the European NATO members, especially on the continent, retained a strong interest in maintaining a US and British troop commitment on the continent. Over time, the political and psychological importance of this commitment would in many ways eclipse the purely military value of these forces. Growing acceptance of the New Look in NATO was marked by the approval of two new strategy documents, MC 14 and MC 48, in 1954. The New Look appeared to reach its apogee at NATO in 1957, when two further iterations of these documents were adopted. This chapter analyzes the modes by which the New Look was introduced into NATO strategy, and discusses the implications of this shift for the alliance's defense posture.

Throughout the period from 1946 through 1950, the American nuclear monopoly had in fact rested on a relatively small number of atomic bombs similar to those dropped

on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. One implication of this was that atomic weapons were overlaid onto existing conventional conceptions of waging war. But during the 1950s, the development of larger-yield fission weapons, thermonuclear weapons of much greater destructive capability, and the development of a wide range of tactical nuclear weapons meant that conceptions of a future war began to undergo profound changes.²¹⁴ This was not an entirely even or straightforward process. The decade of the 1950s was one in which the view of World War III as a replay of the Second World War overlaid with a air-atomic campaign came unraveled.

As was seen in the last chapter, no sooner were the Lisbon force goals adopted than they came under criticism by many within the alliance. But if a conventional defense of Europe was seen as impractical, it remained to be seen how nuclear weapons could be integrated into alliance strategy. On the policy level, the Eisenhower administration's New Look manifested itself in NSC 162/2, the basic national security document of 1953 which emerged after several months of intense policy review.²¹⁵ The

214 President Eisenhower shift in thinking about nuclear weapons provides fascinating case study in how this shift occurred. Having served as one of the primary architects of total war as practiced by the United States in World War II, he had little few qualms about the employment of massive aerial bombardment to bring about the defeat of Nazi Germany. As NATO's first SACEUR and in the first year of his presidency, he advocated the development of nuclear weapons which were tailored for a war-fighting capability. But as the magnitude of American vulnerability, even had he been able to countenance a first-strike pre-emptive attack on the Soviets, became clear in 1954 and 1955, Eisenhower own thinking about nuclear weapons underwent an important change. He shifted away from thinking about nuclear weapons as tools for fighting war in last resort, and instead worked to develop a strategy to make the use of such weapons as unthinkable as possible. Campbell Craig, *Destroying the Village: Eisenhower and Thermonuclear War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998) is a provocative account of the way in which Eisenhower's thinking about nuclear war evolved.

215 NSC 68 itself had undergone revision in the Truman administration, but NSC 135/1, the last statement on Basic National Security Policy (BNSP) of the Truman presidency reaffirmed the basic conclusions of NSC 68. HSTL, Truman's Secretary's File-NSF, Box 185, 122nd NSC Meeting, 3 September 1952. There were two interim versions of the BNSP issued before the Eisenhower administration's review of

thinking of the British Global Strategy Review and Eisenhower's New Look found their expression in a new NATO strategy document, MC 48, which was adopted late in 1954. The failure to achieve the Lisbon Goals precluded a purely conventional defense of NATO Europe. MC 48 embraced the use of tactical and strategic nuclear weapons to redress the conventional imbalance with the Soviets. There are varying interpretations, discussed below, as to whether MC 48 ultimately derives from the British or American strategic re-appraisals of 1952-53. Throughout the remainder of the decade, the US, Britain, and the other NATO members continued to struggle to come to terms with the implications of the nuclear age. However, a significant shift in the nature of military strategy of the NATO countries became evident. The commitment to a nuclear defense of NATO also created enduring complications for the alliance that colored the whole subsequent history of Western defense cooperation. This chapter examines the attempts by the NATO allies to come to terms with strategy in the nuclear age and the problems this created for the alliance.

At the first NAC meeting after Stalin's death in March 1953, the Western Foreign Ministers affirmed the need—having taken due account of recent Soviet “moves and gestures”—for continued efforts at collective defense and again endorsed the need for the European Defense Community.²¹⁶ Prior to the NAC meeting, the British Cabinet agreed that it would be unwise to assume any change in Soviet policy or to suggest a major departure in Western defense policy. There was interest, however, in determining if the

policy options had been completed. These were NSC 149/2 and NSC 153/1. NSC 162/2, discussed below, was approved on 30 October 1953. See *FRUS 1952-54*, vol.II, pt.1, pp.577-97.

216 The Final Communiqué for the 23-25 April 1953 NAC Meeting in Paris is available at: <http://www.nato.int/docu/comm>.

Americans were ready yet to discuss a new approach to determining NATO force requirements.²¹⁷ Despite the fact that the British had not challenged the agreed position at the April NAC meeting, major cuts in British defense spending were being contemplated. At a special meeting called on 18 June and chaired by Churchill, Defense Minister Alexander and Minister of Supply Duncan Sandys came out in favor of deep cuts in British defense spending. Sandys advanced a view, which was a natural outgrowth of the changed thinking about the duration of any future war occasioned by the Global Strategy Review of the previous year, that UK military forces should be designed only for peacetime duties or forces relevant for the first six weeks of a global war. This would invalidate the need for many categories of reserve forces, and especially naval forces designed for a protracted conflict at sea.²¹⁸

As was seen in the previous chapter, despite their concerns over the “Radical Review,” the British Chiefs had recognized in December 1952 that something had to be done to reform the force requirement planning process in NATO. NATO’s new Secretary General Lord Ismay had circulated a NATO paper in early 1953 which stressed the psychological dangers to the alliance if the gap between requirements and existing

217 BNA, CAB 128/26, CC(53)28, Min.6, 21April 1953.

218 Admiral Sir Rhoderick McGrigor of the Royal Navy, naturally enough, was most concerned with the implications of Sandys’ views, and launched a rearguard action in defense of the concept of “broken back” warfare. This concept was based on the idea that hostilities at sea were liable to outlast those on land, even in an era of nuclear exchange, became the classic fallback position for both the British and American navies in the following decade. Despite considerable opposition, it proved impressively tenacious when it came to its legacy regarding NATO naval force planning. McGrigor would persist in this critique during his tenure as First Sea Lord. See for instance his criticism of SACEUR’s conception of the two-phase war in SG 241/3 (the precursor of MC 48) in BNA, DEFE 5/54, COS(54)300. See also Grove, *Vanguard to Trident*, pp.91-93.

forces continued to increase.²¹⁹ There was tension at NATO, however, as SACEUR Matthew Ridgway, Eisenhower's successor, consistently pushed for the greatest possible attainment of the Lisbon force goals.²²⁰ During Ridgway's tenure as SACEUR, SHAPE produced a controversial study. The study attempted to take account of the implications of Soviet nuclear capabilities and what they meant for NATO force requirements. SHAPE planners concluded that NATO would require even greater conventional force levels that had been envisioned in the Lisbon goals.²²¹ According to a report by the Director of Plans to the British Chiefs of Staff, the Ridgway study called for an additional 10 divisions and 3000 aircraft on D-day above existing requirements, "though the ultimate requirement is less than at present." This was disappointing, as the British COS "originally hoped that consideration of atomic weapons would reduce requirements and lessen the wide gap which exists between capabilities and requirements."²²²

219 This was issued as NATO document C-M(53)87. It is discussed in BNA, DEFE 7/743.

220 Ridgway was convinced that unless the Lisbon's goal were met, "this Command [SACEUR] will continue critically weak in its capability for accomplishing its presently assigned mission, and NATO nations in Europe will continue exposed to the peril of decisive military defeat with all that that connotes." NARA, RG 218, Geographic File 1951-53, 092-Western Europe (3-12-48), Box 103, JCS 2073/578, reference to SHAPE/411/53, 11 April 1953. In a 1972 interview, Ridgway stated: "I never ceased to plead for a greater fulfillment of commitments made at Lisbon in February of '52". Senior Officer Debriefing Program, Conversations between General Matthew B. Ridgway, USA, Ret. And Colonel John M. Blair, USA, Fourth Interview, 24 March 1972, p.21. See also Walter Mills, "General Gruenther's Headaches", *Collier's*, 11 July 1953, p.10.

221 DDEL, Norstad Papers, Box 41, SHAPE/411/53, 11 April 1953. General Norstad was sent a copy by SACEUR's Chief of Staff General Alfred Gruenther with instructions that it was to be considered "most sensitive" and given only the "most limited distribution."

222 BNA, DEFE 5/48, COS(53)382, 1956 Force Requirements. The Ridgway study was designated as SHAPE 704/53, 10 July 1953. Robert C. Richardson, a member of the SHAPE planning team and Colonel in the USAF during the Ridgway-Gruenther years at SHAPE, later wrote that the requirements went up since "under the plan the classic NATO conventional formations and force concentrations were retained. Every time a nuclear weapon was fired at them, a whole unit or airbase was wiped out, and therefore entire army units or airwings would have to be brought in as replacements." Richardson recalled that these results ensured that the study's recommendations "never saw the light of day." Brigadier General Robert C. Richardson, III, USAF, (Ret.), "NATO Nuclear Strategy: A Look Back," *Strategic Review*, v.IX, n.2

In light of Ismay's recommendations, the British Atlantic Official Committee (a subcommittee of the British Cabinet) authorized the Foreign Office, in consultation with the Chiefs of Staff, to draft a paper on a "new look" for NATO on 6 July 1953. This policy underwent redrafting over the following month. The British Chiefs argued that with the new American JCS still getting their own strategic reviews underway (discussed below), the initial approach should take place at a higher political level. Following this advice, the Cabinet authorized the transmission of its position through its Ambassador in Washington Sir Roger Makins.²²³ Lord Hood had written in July 1953 that the intention of the New Look would be to suggest that NATO forces were not designed in the first instance to repel Soviet aggression (as had been the case in the Lisbon force goals), but to maintain the maximum practical deterrent. Makins was instructed by the Foreign Office to point out to the Americans the British view that henceforth, "NATO planning should be based on the assumption that roughly the present level of forces in aggregate, plus German forces" would constitute available NATO forces. Economic realities made it impractical to expect any further narrowing of the gap between force goals and forces available. Further, even this level of forces would be in part dependent upon the US recognizing the need for end-item aid and off-shore procurement.²²⁴ The Cabinet approved this document, titled "A Revised Policy Directive for the North Atlantic Treaty

(Spring 1981), p.38. Also Michael O. Wheeler, "NATO Nuclear Strategy, 1949-90," in *A History of NATO-The First Fifty Years*, Vol.3, ed. by Gustav Schmidt (New York: Palgrave, 2001), p.126.

223 The paper was presented to the Cabinet by Lord President of the Council Lord Salisbury, as Eden was not to resume his duties at the Foreign Office until October. BNA, CAB 128/26, CC(53)50, 25 August 1953 and CAB 129/62, C(53)234, 17 August 1953.

224 BNA, DEFE 7/743. See especially COS(53)91st Meeting, 21 July 1953, contained therein.

Organization” on 25 August 1953, two days before the US National Security Council discussed the incoming Joint Chiefs of Staff’s own version of the “New Look.”

Eisenhower’s New Look

Eisenhower’s priorities upon entering office including bringing the Korean War to a rapid conclusion, supporting containment and foreign aid, and maintaining as first priority on relations with Europe and the NATO. He hoped to make large cuts in US conventional forces while strengthening the nuclear-deterrent capabilities of the United States.²²⁵ The Eisenhower administration inherited a \$72.9 billion budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 1954. This budget, reflecting the buildup which had taken place during Korea, was projected to create a deficit of \$9.9 billion for FY 1954, with the cumulative deficit for wartime orders which had not been delivered was estimated to reach approximately \$56 billion by mid-1957.²²⁶ Eisenhower hoped to place US defense planning on a “long haul” basis which would provide for a sound economy. This conformed to both the Republican 1952 party platform which advocated fiscal conservatism and Eisenhower’s personal beliefs. This included a sense that a sound economy was essential to the preservation of the American way of life during the duration of the cold war confrontation with the Soviet Union.²²⁷ He rejected the conception of a “year of maximum danger” which had framed planning assumptions regarding defense since the adoption of NSC 68. During

225 Stephen E. Ambrose, *Eisenhower*, vol.2: *The President* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984), p.34. For Eisenhower’s version of his New Look, see Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Mandate for Change 1953-1956* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1963), pp.445-58.

226 Richard M. Leighton, *HOSD*, v.III, pp.65-67.

227 This conviction preceded Eisenhower’s decision to run for President, and was manifest as early as 1950. See Samuel F. Wells, Jr., “The Origins of Massive Retaliation,” *Political Science Quarterly*, vol.96, no.1 (Spring 1981), p.40.

the first year of his Presidency, Eisenhower worked to secure a consensus in the US national security apparatus for a shift towards a new approach to US grand strategy.²²⁸

President Eisenhower initially viewed the National Security Council as a key source of “advice, recommendations, and planning for all phases of the Cold War.”²²⁹

Though the NSC did not fully live up to Eisenhower’s expectations, it remained an important forum for debate of administration thinking throughout his presidency.²³⁰ His NSC meetings were attended by the Vice President Richard Nixon, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, Secretary of Defense Charles Wilson, Secretary of the Treasury George M. Humphrey, their deputies, the members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the director of the CIA Allen Dulles, and other people invited to participate as appropriate. Eisenhower had high regard for Dulles and Humphrey, in particular, among his Cabinet

228 Eisenhower had a long familiarity with the development of nuclear weapons and strategy. As Army Chief of Staff in 1946 he had overseen the Manhattan Engineer District, had encouraged the development of the first JCS nuclear war plans in 1947, and as SACEUR had encouraged planning for the use of tactical nuclear weapons in NATO to offset the huge Soviet conventional superiority in Europe. David Alan Rosenberg, “The Origins of Overkill: Nuclear Weapons and American Strategy, 1945-1960”, *International Security*, vol.7, no.4 (Spring 1983), p.27. There is a rich historiography on Eisenhower and his approach strategy and nuclear weapons. Amongst the more important works are Robert R. Bowie and Richard H. Immerman, *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Saki Dockrill, *Eisenhower’s New-Look National Security Policy, 1953-1961* (Basingstoke, England: Macmillan Press, 1996);); Andrew P. N. Erdmann, “War no longer has any logic whatever: Dwight D. Eisenhower and the thermonuclear revolution,” in *Cold War Statesmen Confront the Bomb: Nuclear Diplomacy since 1945*, edited by John Lewis Gaddis, et. al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Douglas Kinnard, *President Eisenhower and Strategy Management: A Study in Defense Politics* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1977); Steven Metz, “Eisenhower and the Planning of American Grand Strategy”, *Journal of Strategic Studies*, v.14 (March 1991), pp.49-71; Steven Metz, *Eisenhower as Strategist: The Coherent Use of Power in War and Peace* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 1993); and Arthur Radford, *From Pearl Harbor to Vietnam: The Memoirs of Admiral Arthur W. Radford*, ed. by Stephen Jurika, Jr. (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1980), esp. chap.23.

229 Ambrose, *Eisenhower*, vol.2, p.25.

230 Eventually Eisenhower became frustrated by the cumbersomeness of the NSC. This was more in the case in his second term. This led him to rely more on conversations with a smaller group of advisers. Nonetheless, the NSC remained an important body for the airing of official thinking throughout his Presidency.

secretaries. To coordinate the NSC staff, Eisenhower created a Planning Board under the direction of General (retired) Robert Cutler. General Paul T. Carroll and later, General Andrew Goodpaster, served in the newly created position of White House Staff Secretary.²³¹ The close relationship between Eisenhower and Dulles was especially important to the development of the administration's foreign policy. Though Dulles occasionally rankled friends and allies, Eisenhower maintained a unique partnership with him until Dulles' death from cancer in late May 1959.²³²

Independently from the British re-appraisal in the Global Strategy Review of 1952, Eisenhower directed his National Security apparatus to undertake a sweeping review of its own shortly after coming to office.²³³ He told the National Security Council in February 1953-in language reminiscent of the flank strategy he had proposed as SACEUR-that the aim of US policy should be to:

231 Ambrose, *Eisenhower*, vol.2, p.25, 217. Carroll was replaced by Goodpaster in October 1954. Goodpaster was a West Point graduate with a PhD in International Relations from Princeton. According to Ambrose, Goodpaster went on to become Eisenhower's "closest adviser and confidant." Goodpaster would later serve as SACEUR between 1969 and 1974.

232 In his recent biography of Dulles, Richard Immerman has written: "As president and secretary of state, they cultivated a relationship based on mutual respect and trust that may well be unparalleled in twentieth century and perhaps in all U.S. history...Eisenhower always made the decisions, but always after consulting Dulles." Richard H. Immerman, John *Foster Dulles, Piety, Pragmatism, and Power in U.S. Foreign Policy* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1999), p.46.

233 This point has been well-developed by Andrew Johnston. Johnston points out that "no one has been able to find a clear line through the Eisenhower administration's deliberations in the summer and fall of 1953 back to the [British 1952 Global Strategy Paper]". Johnston points out that the 1952 political campaign rhetoric in the US obscured the fact that much of what would become known as the New Look was already evident in the deliberations of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1952. Thus, when Air Marshall Sir John Slessor travelled to the US to try press the US JCS on the logic of strategic air power, he found they needed little convincing. For Johnston, the interesting point is that while military planners in both Great Britain and the United States embraced the rationale of strategic air power, "a strategic consensus eluded the United States and Great Britain because of their conflicting perceptions of how NATO's division of labor was supposed to operate." Andrew M. Johnston, "Mr. Slessor Goes to Washington: The Influences of the British Global Strategy Paper on the Eisenhower New Look," *Diplomatic History*, vol.22, no.2 (Summer 1998), pp.361-98.

build redoubts throughout the free world, to be manned as far as possible by indigenous armed forces. We are trying to give all these nations of the free world the courage to undertake this great task in order that our own forces might be brought back to our own country to constitute a kind of mobile reserve.²³⁴

President Eisenhower also hoped to push the budget back towards balance as soon as overseas commitments could be reduced. At the same time, Eisenhower understood that US commitments abroad played an important role in sustaining support for US policies with allies and preventing the drift of neutral states closer to the Soviet orbit.

Eisenhower was keenly interested in exploring options for invigorating the US prosecution of the Cold War.²³⁵ Part of this review was conducted in an exercise known as Project SOLARIUM. Under the direction of National War College Commandant Lt. General H. A. Craig, three teams were to investigate a particular arc of possible policy options, then present their case to the NSC in the strongest possible terms.²³⁶ The SOLARIUM reports were distributed to the NSC in late July 1953.²³⁷ This analysis, as well as Eisenhower's selection of a new slate of members for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was meant to allow for a sweeping re-appraisal of national security policy. Admiral

234 DDEL, DDEP (Ann Whitman File), NSC Series, Box 4, 132nd NSC Meeting, 18 February 1953.

235 Eisenhower's desired a cold war strategy that made use of a broad range of elements of national power beyond mere military force. For a valuable study Eisenhower's broad conception of how to approach the cold war, see Kenneth Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2006).

236 Task force A advocated a continuance of the Truman administrations containment policy, Task force B stressed the importance of nuclear deterrence, and Task force C advocated a more aggressive "roll back" of Communism through the use of propaganda, covert operations, and maximum application of military power in pursuit of political aims. Though Eisenhower tried to stress common themes in the individual task forces, it proved difficult drafting a set of composite recommendations. Nonetheless, Project SOLARIUM helped articulate the strategic choices available to the new administration. *FRUS 1952-54*, vol.II, Memorandum by President to Secretary of State, 20 May 1953, pp.349-350. For good accounts of the SOLARIUM exercise, see Dockrill, *Eisenhower's New-Look National Security Policy, 1953-1961*, pp.33-35, and Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, pp.123-43.

237 DDEL, DDEP, NSC Series, Box 4, 157th Meeting of the NCS, Item 5, Thursday, 30 July 1953. For the full reports, see DDEL, White House Office, OSA for NSA: NSC Series, Subject Series, Box 9.

Arthur Radford replaced General Omar Bradley as Chief of Staff, General Nathan Twining became the Air Force Chief of Staff, General Matthew Ridgway (recalled from his duty in Europe as SACEUR) became the Army Chief of Staff, and Admiral Robert Carney became the Chief of Naval Operations, and General Lemuel Shepherd, USMC, whose tenure did not expire until 1955 remained as the only holdover.²³⁸

As part of his New Look Eisenhower desired that his new chiefs provide him with an assessment of the current strategic concepts; roles, missions, and composition of the services; the development and impact of new weapons; and review the US military assistance program. Eisenhower wanted this report to be based on the chief's personal views, not an elaborate staff study within the Department of Defense. When initial attempts to carry this out at the Pentagon met with difficulty, Admiral Radford, incoming chairman of the JCS, proposed making use of Secretary of the Navy Anderson's official yacht, the *Sequoia*, to provide an atmosphere free from distraction. He and his fellow chiefs embarked on a trip down the Potomac beginning on Thursday, 6 August 1953, prepared to stay aboard until they had completed a reply to Eisenhower's request. After two frustrating days of discussion, a paper which all five of the chiefs could agree to came together on Saturday. The final paper was a thin veneer, however, which glossed over problems which would re-emerge throughout the Eisenhower era. This paper was then presented to Eisenhower-then vacationing in Denver-in person by Radford. Subsequently, it was submitted to the NSC for consideration.²³⁹

238 Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, pp.181-82.

239 For Radford's own account, see *From Pearl Harbor to Vietnam*, pp.320-22.

The presentation of the JCS New Look to the NSC took place on 27 August at a session presided over by Vice President Nixon.²⁴⁰ The central thrust of Radford's presentation was that within given resources, US security could best be effected through a considerable reduction of US forces abroad, particularly in the Far East and Central Europe. This would allow the creation of a strategic reserve in the United States. While Radford's report represented the consensus position of the three Chiefs of Staff and Radford, many of the later fractures within military opinion were already evident. General Twining was an enthusiastic supporter of the New Look, and would remain so throughout his tenure as Air Force Chief of Staff and later as Radford's successor as Chairman of the JCS. Admiral Carney's comments on the report, however, were more reserved. He made sure to point out his belief that air and naval forces alone were insufficient to deter ground attack, an implicit warning against shifting too far towards a peripheral strategy. General Ridgway, recently returned from his duties as SACEUR, was even more emphatic, arguing that he could not buy into deterrence on the basis of "any single military arm." He also feared that the new concept might easily be misconstrued by the NATO allies as an abandonment of Europe, to which he added with rhetorical flourish that "the consequences would be terrifying." Ridgway thus returned to the long standing clash between air power enthusiasts and the other military branches. This was only the opening salvo in Ridgway's dissent from the New Look. It was a

240 DDEL, DDEP, NSC Series, Box 4, 160th NSC Meeting, 27 August 1953.

dissent shared by many in the US Army, and one that became increasingly vociferous over time.²⁴¹

Nonetheless, Radford's report was well received by the National Security Council. Secretary of the Treasury Humphrey was a strong supporter, describing the report as "terrific" and the most important document which had yet been produced by the administration. Though well received, the problem which the Council confronted was how to sell this redeployment to America's allies. Radford had stated that the Chiefs explicitly rejected a retreat to a Fortress America concept, but as Ridgway had passionately suggested, the new concept could easily be misconstrued as such. It was generally agreed that the Chief's report would require delicate diplomatic handling. John Foster Dulles himself foresaw the challenge. He stated that "there was no denying that NATO was sick at the present time" and realized that a clear American appreciation of strategy and force goals would need to be prepared for the December NAC meeting. Eisenhower subsequently endorsed Radford's report as a "crystallized and clarified statement" of US national security objectives and authorized the State Department to proceed with appropriate action to implement the concept.²⁴²

The Eisenhower administration's reassessment of national security policy resulted in the adoption of NSC 162/2 to replace NSC 68 and its successors. Eisenhower gave

241 Ridgway had a good deal to say about his disapproval for the New Look in his memoirs. See Matthew B. Ridgway, *Soldier: The Memoirs of Matthew B. Ridgway* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956). For the best analytical treatment of Ridgway's dissent, see A. J. Bacevich, "The Paradox of Professionalism: Eisenhower, Ridgway, and the Challenge to Civilian Control, 1953-1955," *The Journal of Military History*, v.61, n.2 (April 1997), pp.303-33.

242 DDEL, DDEP, NSC Series, Box 4, 160th NSC Meeting, 27 August 1953.

formal approval to NSC 162/2 on 30 October 1953.²⁴³ Like previous strategy documents of the Cold War period, it continued to see Soviet power as the primary threat to the nations of the free world. While stating that general war in the foreseeable future was unlikely, unless through miscalculation, it continued to argue for a strong security posture to counter the risk of Soviet aggression. This meant in particular an emphasis on an “adequate offensive retaliatory strength and defensive strength” to be based on a “massive atomic capability.”²⁴⁴ It also stated that though the risk of atomic reaction should serve to inhibit localized aggression by the Soviets, it was possible that the increasing Soviet atomic capability could serve to diminish the effectiveness of the U.S. deterrent against Soviet aggression on the periphery.²⁴⁵

The Eisenhower administration’s basic national security policy, embodied in NSC 162/2, placed great emphasis on the importance of maintaining and strengthening the NATO alliance. The successful implementation of US strategy depended on, “our essential allies [being] convinced that it is conceived and will be implemented for the purpose of mutual security and defense against the Soviet threat.”²⁴⁶ The challenge the Eisenhower administration faced was to convince the NATO allies to accept a defense strategy premised primarily on the US strategic nuclear deterrent. As this strategy de-emphasized conventional forces, it created new difficulties for the alliance. Two types of difficulties emerged. One was over the question of allied contributions to the defense

243 For the text of NSC 162/2, see *FRUS 1952-54*, vol.II, pt.1, pp.577-97. Also Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, p.146, and Dockrill, *Eisenhower’s New-Look National Security Policy*, chap.2.

244 *FRUS 1952-54*, vol.II, NSC 162/2, “Basic National Security Policy”, 30 October 1953, p.591.

245 *FRUS 1952-54*, vol.II, NSC 162/2, p.581.

246 *FRUS 1952-54*, vol.II, NSC 162/2, p.583.

effort. Was the alliance to be divided into the nuclear haves and have nots? Another was over whether or not traditional military arms still had a role to play in Western defense. This problem was particularly acute for both the Army and the Navy.

In December 1953, the administration outlined its New Look to NATO. General J. Lawton Collins presented the administration's views to the NATO Military Committee, while Secretary Dulles took the case to the NAC ministerial meeting. At a meeting of the National Security Council shortly before the US delegation departed, Secretary Dulles stressed that the U.S. had four major points to emphasize with the Europeans: 1) The need to bring about a long-haul conception of defense requirements against the Soviet threat; 2) Educating the Europeans on the implications of "new" atomic-weapons; 3) U.S. willingness to share information on the capabilities and implications of atomic weapons; and, 4) The administration's desire to see Germany integrated into the West European defense effort.²⁴⁷ Upon his return from Paris, Dulles was confident that the meeting had been "as successful as any such meeting ever held."²⁴⁸ He felt that the NATO allies had been introduced to the administration's conception of the long-haul. Yet there was lingering concern that the Europeans had not come round to understanding the administration's thinking on atomic weapons and warfare in the atomic age.²⁴⁹

The New Look at NATO

When then General Eisenhower had stepped down as SACEUR on 30 April 1952 to turn his attention to the Presidential election campaign he had hoped to be replaced by

247 *FRUS 1952-54*, vol.V, Pt.1, 174th Meeting of the NSC, 10 December 1953, p.450.

248 Seemingly each successive Secretary of State or Defense had one of these, usually early in their term of office.

249 *FRUS 1952-54*, vol.V, Pt.1, 177th Meeting of the NSC, 23 December 1953, p.480.

his long-serving Chief of Staff, General Alfred Gruenther.²⁵⁰ Instead he was replaced by General Matthew B. Ridgway, a hard-bitten paratrooper who had endeared himself to the Truman Administration when he assumed command of United Nations forces in Korea following General MacArthur's dismissal. Eisenhower's appointment of Ridgway as Army Chief of Staff in the summer of 1953 paved the way for Gruenther—the US Army's youngest four-star general and a former member of Eisenhower's wartime staff—to become SACEUR in July 1953.²⁵¹ Despite his relative youth, Gruenther had considerable NATO experience. In January 1951 he had been sent to Paris from his position as Director of the Joint Staff of the US JCS to serve as part of the US advanced planning group for NATO. Upon the activation of SHAPE, he served as Chief of Staff to both SACEURs Eisenhower and Ridgway.

Gruenther faced no easy task upon becoming SACEUR. It was apparent during Ridgway's tenure as SACEUR that European defense efforts were slowing down, and that the sense of urgency from 1950 had dissipated. The unresolved issue of a West German contribution to a European Army also remained unanswered, making completion of NATO defense plans difficult. As we have seen, the British were themselves eager to

250 Dockrill, *Eisenhower's New-Look National Security Policy*, p.22. When Gruenther wrote Eisenhower regarding his retirement planning in the summer of 1953, Eisenhower informed him that: "There is no one in sight who can command the respect and confidence that you command in Europe. Without this indispensable foundation on which to stand, nobody in the world could bring about the successful development of the NAT." Organization Eisenhower, Dwight D. Personal To Alfred Maximilian Gruenther, 5 August 1953. In *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, ed. L. Galambos and D. van Ee, doc. 370. World Wide Web facsimile by The Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission of the print edition; Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, <http://www.eisenhowermemorial.org/presidential-papers/first-term/documents/370.cfm>.

251 For a contemporary portrait and appraisal of the challenges he faced, see Walter Mills, "General Gruenther's Headaches," *Collier's*, 11 July 1953, pp.9-11. Unfortunately no book length treatment of Gruenther exists.

press for revision of NATO strategy that would bring force planning more in line with economic constraints. Gruenther had to reconcile the pressure for “new looks” from the US and Great Britain with existing NATO strategy and plans, while continuing to press the Europeans to meet the force goals which had been adopted at Lisbon.

As the NATO defense build-up slowed, it made the possibility of a West German contribution to NATO’s front-line strength increasingly attractive in some quarters. The Eisenhower administration made the West German contribution to NATO’s defense a high priority in its European policy. Despite considerable pressure from President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles, progress towards EDC ratification seemed frustratingly slow. When Pierre Mendès-France became Prime Minister of France in June 1954, he promised to achieve satisfactory conclusion to three pressing problems: French colonial over-extension, economic instability, and ratification of the EDC.²⁵² EDC ratification soon proved to be beyond Mendès-France’s political acumen, leaving Britain and the United States to contemplate other approaches to integrating a West German component into Western defense. The solution which the British pushed for, and which proved the solution, was to integrate West Germany’s military contribution directly into NATO. The old Western Union framework was expanded to include both West Germany and Italy. Ultimately, the failure of the French National Assembly to ratify the EDC led to the admission of West Germany into NATO in 1955.²⁵³

²⁵² Large, *Germans to the Front*, p.209.

²⁵³ On the EDC and German rearmament, see Edward Fursdon, *The European Defense Community: A History* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1980); Large, *Germans to the Front*; Kevin Ruane, *The Rise and Fall of the European Defence Community: Anglo-American Relations and the Crisis of European Defence*

Upon assuming command at SHAPE, General Gruenther formed a “New Approach” group to consider the problem of integrating nuclear weapons into NATO strategy.²⁵⁴ A similar analysis of NATO strategy was initiated by Joint Chiefs Chairman Admiral Radford in the United States in early October 1953.²⁵⁵ In December 1953, JCS issued a document which authorized U.S. military planners to make “provision of tactical atomic support for U.S. or allied military forces in general war or in a local aggression.”²⁵⁶ That same month, the North Atlantic Council “invited the Military Committee to press on with their reassessment of the most effective pattern of military strength for the next few years.”²⁵⁷ This review continued through the summer of 1954, when it was submitted to the Standing Group for consideration.

In January 1954, Dulles gave his now infamous address to the Council on Foreign Relations which brought “massive retaliation” into the public lexicon.²⁵⁸ This public airing of a policy of brinkmanship soon had the NATO allies clamoring for more information on just what the New Look and massive retaliation implied about NATO and the defense of Western Europe. Dulles revisited the New Look implications regarding

(London: Palgrave, 2000); Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, pp.73-78, 103-125, and Pascaline Winand, *Eisenhower, Kennedy, and the United States of Europe* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1993), pp.25-82.

254 Gruenther’s “New Approach” study is carefully treated in Robert A. Wampler, “Ambiguous Legacy: The United States, Great Britain and the Foundations of NATO Strategy, 1948-1957,” (PhD, Harvard University Press, 1991), pp.561-564, 570-76. See also Gregory W. Pedlow, “The Evolution of NATO Strategy, 1949-1969,” p.xvii.

255 Memo from Admiral Arthur Radford to JCS, 9 October 1953, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Microfilm), Reel 4.

256 Quoted in Rosenberg, “Origins of Overkill,” p.31. Rosenberg states that the wording of NSC 162/2, which stated that “the United States would consider nuclear weapons to be as available for use as other munitions” was taken by the Joint Chiefs as sufficient authorization to begin planning in this regard. See *FRUS 1952-1954*, vol.II, NSC 162/2, p.593.

257 M.C. 48 (Final), 22 November 1954, in Pedlow, ed., *NATO Strategy Documents*.

258 John Lewis Gaddis, “The Unexpected John Foster Dulles,” in *John Foster Dulles and the Diplomacy of the Cold War*, ed. by Richard H. Immerman (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp.52-53.

nuclear weapons and strategy at the NAC meeting in Paris on 23-24 April 1954. NSC 162/2 had argued that the military strength of Western Europe, even with the projected West German troops in an EDC framework, would be insufficient “to prevent a full-scale Soviet attack from overrunning Europe.”²⁵⁹ During a closed door session of the council, Dulles gave an uncirculated speech which argued that, “having due regard for the necessity of maintaining a strong, stable economic foundation, the security posture of the free world can be adequate only if based on the integration of effective atomic means within our overall capability.”²⁶⁰ Dulles went on to state that due to the existing imbalance in conventional forces and the fact that the alliance members defense build-ups were leveling off, it had become essential to regard atomic weapons as part of the conventional defense of the NATO area.²⁶¹ If the alliance failed to embrace the Eisenhower administration’s wider conception of the use of atomic weapons, it ran the risk of inviting Soviet attack from its “self-imposed military inferiority.”²⁶²

MC 48

Scholars have usually seen MC 48, or “The Most Effective Pattern of Military Strength for the Next Few Years,” as the beginning of the nuclearization of NATO. As subsequent research has shown, however, NATO strategy from the formation of the alliance countenanced the use of atomic weapons in the event of all out war with the

259 *FRUS 1952-54*, vol.II, NSC 162/2, p.585.

260 *FRUS 1952-54*, vol.V, Pt.1, Statement by the Secretary of State to the North Atlantic Council, Closed Ministerial Session, Paris, April 23, 1954, p.511.

261 *Ibid.*, p.512.

262 *Ibid.*, p.513.

Soviet Union.²⁶³ But MC 48 did mark a clear change in intensity, if not form, from the more conventional orientation of the Lisbon Force Goals. Marc Trachtenberg has written that, “In adopting MC 48, NATO was embracing a strategy of extremely rapid escalation. No strategy up to that point, and indeed no NATO strategy since, placed such a heavy and unequivocal emphasis on rapid and massive nuclear escalation.”²⁶⁴ Trachtenberg also suggests that MC 48 led to “one of the most extraordinary features of the NATO system...the effective delegation to SACEUR of authority to initiate nuclear operations in an emergency.”²⁶⁵ MC 48 was an important point of departure from the more conventionally oriented NATO strategies that preceded it. From 1954 on, its fundamental premises would frame the basis of the NATO strategy debate.

General Gruenther’s “New Approach” study was delivered to the Standing Group in July 1954.²⁶⁶ The Standing Group combined Gruenther’s study with studies produced by other NATO commanders to produce the first draft of “The Most Effective Pattern of NATO Strength for the Next Few Years,” initially designated SG 241/3.²⁶⁷ Due to the importance of this document for NATO strategy, it was reviewed closely by authorities in both Britain and the United States. The NATO Military Committee approved SG 241/3

263 Robert E. Osgood, *NATO: The Entangling Alliance* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1966), pp.102-146; Robert A. Wampler, “Conventional Goals and Nuclear Promises: The Truman Administration and the Roots of the NATO New Look,” in *NATO: The Founding of the Alliance and the Integration of Europe*, ed. by Francis H. Heller and John R. Gillingham (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1992), pp.353-380. For more recent interpretations, see Duffield, *Power Rules*, pp.75-111; Heuser, *NATO, Britain, France and the FRG*, pp.33-37; and Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, pp.159-79.

264 Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, p.159.

265 Ibid, p.166.

266 Wheeler, “NATO Nuclear Strategy, 1949-90,” in *A History of NATO*, vol.3, p.127.

267 For instance, “The Strategic Concept for the Defense of the North Atlantic Area, dated 19 October 1949, listed in its section ‘Military Measures to Implement Defense Concept’ that one of the basic undertakings was to “insure the ability to deliver the atomic bomb promptly.” Pedlow, *NATO Strategy Documents*, MC 3, p.5. See also Wheeler, “NATO Nuclear Strategy, 1949-90,” pp.121-140.

on 22 November 1954. It was issued as MC 48.²⁶⁸ MC 48 received ministerial approval by the North Atlantic Council on 17 December 1954. This document closely reflected Eisenhower's stress on the role of nuclear weapons in a future war.²⁶⁹

MC 48 placed heavy emphasis on the ability of the alliance to "initiate immediate defensive and retaliatory operations including the use of atomic weapons" in the event of a Soviet attack.²⁷⁰ In order to provide an effective deterrent, MC 48 continued to call for well-organized, trained, and equipped forces-in-being in Europe. Based on the Capabilities Plan submitted by SACEUR, MC 48 also stated that it was clear that, in order to offset Soviet conventional superiority, NATO forces-in-being "must be equipped with an integrated atomic capability."²⁷¹ This clearly suggested that tactical nuclear weapons were to be integrated in NATO battlefield concepts. The challenge of working this out in practice still had to be faced.

MC 48 stressed the importance of preventing a surprise Soviet nuclear attack, with great stress laid on NATO's ability to respond quickly to an alert. The need for a

268 Pedlow, "The Evolution of NATO Strategy, 1949-1969," p.xvii.

269 There is a considerable range of opinion as to MC 48's origins. A US government internal history, titled "An Analysis of the Evolution of NATO Defense Concepts" from 1961, otherwise unattributed, stated that "MC 48 was almost entirely based on a SHAPE defense plan with a concept of operation which, not only exploited fully atomic firepower in the defense of Europe, but also envisioned extensive, if not radical, changes in the organization, deployment and employment of NATO forces, so as to maximize the effectiveness of new weapons, and survivability." DDEL, Norstad Papers, Box 97, Folder: Atomic Nuclear Policy 1960-62. John Duffield takes a similar point of view, arguing that MC 48's origins were in the SHAPE "New Approach" group, *Power Rules*, p.77. Nigel Hamilton, Montgomery's sympathetic biographer, saw Montgomery himself as the 'architect' of the New Look at NATO, *Monty: Final Years of the Field Marshal*, pp.842-53. For Trachtenberg, MC 48 reflected above all else Eisenhower's own personal thinking, *A Constructed Peace*, p.160. Beatrice Heuser, on the other hand, has suggested that MC 48 more closely reflected the thinking in the British Global Strategy Review of 1952, *NATO, Britain, France and the FRG*, p.35. Given the close intersection of the key figures, with Gruenther and Montgomery having served under Eisenhower at SHAPE before he became President, it seems somewhat erroneous to credit any single figure for the development of the MC 48.

270 MC 48, "The Most Effective Pattern of NATO military Strength for the Next Few Years," 18 November 1954, p.7, NATO Archives.

271 MC 48, p.10.

very rapid response raised the problem of keeping NATO's military authorities responsible to civilian control, while at the same time not undermining the alliance's defense capability. NATO's civilian control over the military-vested in the North Atlantic Council-remained an important principle enshrined in the NATO concept. How was SACEUR to be able to respond effectively in the event that the NAC could not be quickly convened in order to grant him authorization to release NATO nuclear forces to blunt the Soviet attack? This problem remained unanswered in MC 48.²⁷² The heightened reliance on nuclear weapons also highlighted the difference between contributions of the NATO members; countries who only possessed a conventional contribution might quickly feel marginalized in the decision making process.²⁷³ John Duffield has argued that MC 48 was unclear on a number of important matters. Nuclear armed US forces were not distributed evenly across the NATO frontline. This made some regions appear more vulnerable than others to any potential Soviet assault. In addition, MC 48, despite its increased emphasis on nuclear forces, did not dispel or even greatly reduce the strategic requirements for conventional forces, leaving open the problem which had bedeviled NATO force planning since the Lisbon goals of squaring means with ends.²⁷⁴

Inevitably the accelerating production of atomic weapons and delivery systems by both the U.S. and Soviets eroded-or at least portended the end of America's strategic

²⁷² Duffield, *Power Rules*, pp.88-89.

²⁷³ As Beatrice Heuser points out, as early as October 1945, Admiral Raoul Castex, a French prophet of the nuclear age had talked about the great "equalising power of the atom." The attainment of nuclear independence subsequently became an article of faith for French governments, even before De Gaulle's return to power in 1958. Heuser, *NATO, Britain, France and the FRG*, pp.95-96.

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

deterrent and necessitated a reappraisal of MC 48. MC 48, like the Lisbon Goals before it, failed to resolve a number of important issues within the alliance. In addition, the very nature of warfare that MC 48 foresaw made it ever more difficult for the US to convince its allies of the utility of large expenditures for conventional forces. Even within the Eisenhower administration, there was a fair amount of unease at higher levels over reliance on massive retaliation as early as late 1954. Secretary Dulles wrote in November of that year that, “The US and NATO should explore urgently the possibility of maintaining sufficient flexibility in NATO forces to exclude excessive dependence on atomic weapons.”²⁷⁵ In a memorandum to President Eisenhower in January 1956, Dulles wondered if growing Soviet nuclear power so threatened American retaliatory power that the premise of American deterrence was being undermined. He went on to posit that as US allies recognized this, it could lead to the dissolution of the collective security pacts that the US considered essential to the defense of the free world.²⁷⁶ By mid-1957, Dulles was arguing that the decreasing efficacy of the American strategic weapons for deterrence short of all-out war meant the US needed increased flexibility in its military forces. For Dulles this meant the application of tactical nuclear weapons, deployed and prepared to be used in a conventional manner.²⁷⁷

In the spring of 1954, the British revisited the 1952 Global Strategy Review. In a directive to the British Chiefs of Staff, Minister of Defense Harold Macmillan wrote that:

²⁷⁵ *FRUS 1952-1954*, vol.2, p.773. Quoted in Duffield, *Power Rules*, p.114.

²⁷⁶ Rosendorf, “John Foster Dulles’ Nuclear Schizophrenia,” *Cold War Statesmen Confront the Bomb*, p.78.

²⁷⁷ Rosendorf, “John Foster Dulles’ Nuclear Schizophrenia,” p.81.

Since the [1952] Report was written, the application of new scientific knowledge to the development of weapons of war has proceeded at an unexpectedly rapid rate, both in the Western Nations and in Soviet Russia. This is particularly the case in the atomic field...²⁷⁸

Macmillan requested that the Chiefs then undertake a review of Global Strategy and suggest new force levels and postures consonant with the review. A report on United Kingdom Defense Policy, approved by the Chiefs of Staff in December 1954, stated that:

- (a) Russia is most unlikely to provoke war deliberately, particularly during the next three or four years when she will be vulnerable to nuclear attack by the Allies and will be unable to effectively strike against the United States,
- (b) Even when Russia is able to attack the United States, the deterrent will remain, since global war would probably result in mutual annihilation.
- ...
- (e) It is most probable that the present state of “cold war,” under even graver conditions, will continue for a long time with periods of greater or less tension.²⁷⁹

The report went on to argue simply because global war was unlikely did not mean the Allies could relax, and that, in fact, “the greater the deterrence, the less the risk.” What this meant was that there was an urgent need to revise plans to make them consonant with global warfare based on nuclear weapons. The primary nuclear deterrent would only be effective if used as “an immediate and overwhelming counter-offensive.” But conventional land, sea, and air forces for the defense of the European continent and maintaining the sea lanes of communication were still seen as an essential component of the deterrent. The contribution of German forces to this conventional deterrent was seen as a “most important factor” in achieving sufficient forces.²⁸⁰ The Chiefs concluded by

278 BNA, DEFE 5/52, COS(54)116, Defence Policy and Global Strategy: Directive by the Minister of Defence to the Chiefs of Staff”, 9 April 1954.

279 BNA, DEFE 5/55, COS(54)394, United Kingdom Defence Policy, Memorandum by the United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff, 23 December 1954.

280 Ibid.

arguing that future military power would be based on the “ability to wage war from the moment of attack with up-to-date nuclear weapons.” The course of any future war was to be determined largely by the initial nuclear exchange. Though the COS expected that the war’s outcome would be heavily determined by this initial exchange, they continued to place emphasis on the destruction of the Russian fleet, merchant marine, and naval bases at the outset of the war.

During 1955 the Cold War seemed to undergo somewhat of a thaw. The Soviet made finally acceded to the Austrian State Treaty, restoring the small state’s independence and securing its status as a neutral power in the heart of Europe. In addition, Soviet announcements of unilateral conventional force reductions during 1955 and 1956 stirred hope for many that real progress might be made in disarmament.²⁸¹ The 1955 Geneva conference seemed to many a sign of decreasing tensions.²⁸² As Dulles informed the National Security Council in October 1955, NATO had come into existence because of a genuine fear of Soviet actions (he cited the takeover of Czechoslovakia and the invasion of Korea). But by 1955 he felt that fear had largely dissipated.

281 On Khrushchev’s troop reductions and how they were perceived in the West, see Matthew Evangelista, “‘Why Keep Such an Army?’ Khrushchev’s Troop Reductions,” *Cold War International History Project Working Paper No.19* (Washington, DC: 1997); Raymond L. Garthoff, *Assessing the Adversary: Estimates by the Eisenhower Administration of Soviet Intentions and Capabilities* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1991), pp.1-30; and Robert J. McMahon, “The Illusion of Vulnerability: American Reassessments of the Soviet Threat, 1955-1956,” *The International History Review*, vol.XVIII, no.3 (August 1996), pp.591-619.

282 There are a number of useful essays on the Geneva Summit in Günther Bischof and Saki Dockrill, eds., *Cold War Respite: The Geneva Summit of 1955* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000).

Increasingly Europeans felt their security rested in the massive retaliatory capability of the US, not in the maintenance of extensive conventional forces.²⁸³ US Ambassador to Britain Winthrop Aldrich reported in January 1956 that at “the same time the apparent diminution of Soviet Union as a military threat, symbolized by Geneva summit meeting...tended to confuse British public opinion and cause it to question whether American and British leadership are coping adequately with old enemy in a new guise.”²⁸⁴ For many members of the NATO alliance, MC 48 had held the promise of reduced expenditures on conventional forces. The improved cold war climate in 1955 contributed to declining emphasis on military preparedness in the West. Yet the force goals articulated by NATO commanders continued to call for considerable forces-in-being. Those reductions that were accepted in the “minimum force requirements” were largely taken out of reserve forces. In the case of land forces, these reserves had often not yet even been formed.²⁸⁵ The reason that MC 48 did not relax the numbers demanded for forces-in-being was twofold. On the one hand, it was seen as important to maintain a large shield of conventional forces that would force the Soviets to mobilize their own forces for a planned invasion. This would provide valuable warning for NATO forces. Also, NATO forces-in-being would force the Soviets to concentrate their attack, thus-in theory-making them more susceptible to destruction by nuclear weapons.

At the same time, there was growing concern in the Eisenhower administration about the perceived vulnerability of the United States to a Soviet surprise attack. This

283 DDEL, DDEP, NSC Series, Box 7, 262nd Meeting of the National Security Council, Thursday, October 20, 1955.

284 *FRUS 1955-57*, vol.XXVII, Tel. from Embassy in UK to Dep. Of State, 24 January 1956, p.614.

285 Duffield, *Power Rules*, pp.117-118.

perception of vulnerability would encourage the Eisenhower administration to continue to stress the importance of maintaining a viable nuclear deterrent. Indeed, to some extent the perception of vulnerability would lead to the development and deployment of an increasing array of nuclear delivery vehicles. In February 1955, a panel of prominent scientists and outside experts undertook a review of the implications of technological developments on the future of US security. It was formally known as the Technological Capabilities Panel. The panel was initially chaired by MIT President James R. Killian, Jr., and it soon became better known as the Killian Panel. David Rosenberg has argued that the panel's report was an "important benchmark in the evolution of Eisenhower's thinking about nuclear strategy."²⁸⁶ It stressed the need for urgent improvement in intelligence and tactical warning systems. It also encouraged the dispersal of offensive and defensive (such as tactical nuclear air defense missiles) nuclear weapons to military forces to prepare them for instantaneous response. While the report stated that the US ICBM program was developing along satisfactory lines, it pointed out that ICBMs were unlikely to be of military significance prior to 1965. The Killian Report recommended that the US embark on the development of an intermediate range ballistic missile (IRBM) with a range of around 1,500 miles as a stop gap until the ICBM program was fully online.

A study conducted by the Department of Defense's Weapon Systems Evaluation Group (WSEG) reinforced the sense of impending vulnerability in the nuclear age. The WSEG report raised the disturbing prospect that though the potential U.S. atomic

²⁸⁶ Rosenberg, "Origins of Overkill," p.38.

offensive of 1956 had the capability of destroying 118 out of 134 major Soviet cities, producing over 60 million deaths, and essentially destroying the industrial capacity of the Soviet bloc, the US could not guarantee that the Soviets could not be prevented from launching a sizable nuclear counter-attack. To do this would require at least doubling the number of targets to be hit.²⁸⁷ This evaluation began to call into question the premise that the US could launch a successful pre-emptive attack against the Soviet Union.²⁸⁸ By the end of 1955, President Eisenhower had approved an acceleration of the ICBM program and the establishment of an IRBM program.²⁸⁹ Befitting the emphasis on strategic deterrent capability in the New Look, both were to be given highest priority amongst Pentagon programs.²⁹⁰

The decision to develop IRBMs as well as ICBMs meant that the Eisenhower administration would have to seek locations to deploy the former on the territory of allies that were within range of the Soviet Union. Basing nuclear weapons on foreign soil, though, raised the question of who would decide when the weapons could be launched. In a broader sense, it confronted the US administration with the challenge of determining a policy for nuclear weapons sharing within the NATO alliance. Implicit in Eisenhower's strategy for building up Western Europe as an independent center of power capable of defending itself was a notion that the Allies would eventually have to have nuclear

287 Rosenberg points out that this evaluation of the Soviets was based on a "potential, rather than actual, dispersion of the Soviet bomber force". In addition, estimates of Soviet bomber capability at this time were predicated on the notion that the Soviets would send many of their older propeller driven TU-4s (a Soviet version of the B-29) on one-way missions against the U.S. "Origins of Overkill," p.39.

288 Though Marc Trachtenberg points out that it was not until 1963 that the NSC's Net Evaluation Subcommittee came to the conclusion that a preemptive strike was no longer a viable option. Trachtenberg, *Constructed Peace*, pp.182-83.

289 On Eisenhower era missile development programs, see Watson, *HOSD*, vol.IV, pp.157-202; 361-402.

290 Robert A. Divine, *The Sputnik Challenge* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp.23-24.

weapons under their own control. Indeed, as the allies came to terms with the implications of MC 48, many of them increasingly argued that they needed a degree of say in the deployment of weapons that might potentially be used in defense of, and perhaps on, their own territory. There was a general feeling of resentment amongst the European allies that the United States expected them to provide the frontline troops while preserving for itself control over the deployment and use of weapons critical to their defense. Eisenhower was very sympathetic to the allied desire to participate in their own nuclear defense, and frequently inveighed against the limitations imposed upon him by the Atomic Energy Act (McMahon Act).²⁹¹ Important modifications in the act in 1954 allowed the administration to share details about the external effects of the weapons with the allies, but still tied Eisenhower's hands far more than he would have liked.

Acceptance of Massive Retaliation?: Towards MC 14/2 and MC 48/2

In Britain and the United States the question of the utility of conventional forces in NATO's defense in general war stimulated continued reappraisals of NATO strategy in 1956-57. Both Prime Minister Eden and President Eisenhower, among others, recognized that should general war break out, it was unlikely that any nation would be capable of carrying out any sort of military operations after an initial exchange of large numbers of thermonuclear weapons. Some went so far as to wonder whether there was any role for conventional forces, whether ground or naval, in general war at all. However, once it came time to present the matter to the alliance as a whole, the United States and Great Britain parted company on the best methods to pursue their respective

²⁹¹ Ambrose, *Eisenhower*, vol.II, pp.145-146.

policies. In Britain, the pressing need to attain substantial economies in defense pushed the Eden government to consider severely restricting or abandoning defensive (conventional forces) capability in general war altogether, and instead focus on the need to maintain a deterrent force (though determining the sufficient size of the deterrents raised its own problems). In the United States, the New Look had also led to a shift towards deterrence at the expense of conventional defense forces. Indeed, Eisenhower's own thinking often reflected the same trends that manifested themselves in the British discourse. But because of their perceived deleterious effects on the broader Allied defense effort, and the decision to keep the West Germans tied tightly to the Allied camp, by the fall of 1956 Eisenhower and his advisors came to oppose the full implications of this most recent British attempt to push NATO strategy further towards the "new look."

When Winston Churchill retired from the Premiership in April 1955, he was replaced by his long-serving Foreign Minister Anthony Eden.²⁹² In late 1955, Eden initiated another of the periodic post-war British defense reviews.²⁹³ During 1956 the British Chiefs of Staff undertook to study the question of Britain's long-term defense.²⁹⁴ Ongoing difficulties with the economy prompted Chancellor of the Exchequer Harold Macmillan and Minister of Defense Walter Monckton to send a joint memorandum to Prime Minister Eden on 20 March 1956. They wrote:

292 For a recent appraisal of Eden, see David Dutton, *Anthony Eden: A Life and Reputation* (London: Arnold, 1997). Eden had trained for and spent much of his career on Foreign Affairs, serving at the Foreign Office for seventeen and a half years before he became Prime Minister, p.247.

293 Earlier important defense reviews included the Labor Government's 1948 review and the 1953 and 1954 "Radical Reviews." See Grove, *Vanguard to Trident*, pp.39, 47-51, 90-93, 108-110.

294 See a series of reports on the Long Term Defense Review: BNA, DEFE 5/64, COS(56)44; DEFE 5/65, COS(56)74 and COS(56)81; DEFE 5/69, COS(56)236; DEFE 5/73, COS(57)34; and DEFE 5/74, COS(57)47.

We have an uneasy feeling that at present we are spending a great deal of money to provide defenses which are not effective, and in some important respects are little more than a façade. To do this we are placing so heavy a burden on our economy that defense may well be a weakness rather than a strength.²⁹⁵

Both Macmillan and Monckton thought that continuing on with studies and reductions on a piecemeal basis was no longer sufficient; instead there should be a “reappraisal at the highest level of the whole basis on which our defense policy should rest.”²⁹⁶ This reappraisal would consider whether or not it was time for the British government to recognize that defense against thermonuclear attack might not be practical. If this was the case, the emphasis of defense should switch from *defense* in global war to a focus on the requisite strength of the *deterrent* and the need for conventional forces to prosecute limited war.²⁹⁷ They requested that the Prime Minister convene a meeting of senior ministers in the near future to address these questions. During the remainder of Eden’s government, Macmillan and the Treasury would consistently press for radical reductions in defense expenditures in order to improve Britain’s difficult economic position. Monckton, however, soon retreated from his early support of Macmillan’s desire for economy, and instead argued that until new strategic guidance had been laid down by the government, it would be difficult to prune any further from the defense budget.²⁹⁸

Eden was certainly keenly aware of the need to take defense matters in hand, but he also was maintaining a heavy diplomatic load in the spring and early summer of 1956.

295 BNA, PREM 11/1778, Memorandum for the Prime Minister on Defense Policy, 20 March 1956.

296 Ibid.

297 Ibid.

298 In a note of 14 July 1956, for instance, Macmillan spelled out the “grim facts”, calling for reductions of military personnel down to a level of 500,000 men, restricting the strategic bomber force to 150 aircraft, abandonment of both supersonic bombers and MRBMs, and drastic cuts in the Royal Navy. BNA, PREM 11/1778, Note from Macmillan to Eden, 14 July 1956.

In April, Premier Bulganin and Nikita Khrushchev, the First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, made a ten-day official visit to Britain. It was not until after this visit that the Prime Minister's office was able to again turn its attention to the need for a long-term review of defense. On 1 May, Eden's influential Permanent Secretary, Sir Norman Brook, sent Eden a minute on how he thought the government could best proceed. Brook informed the Prime Minister that he had pulled together a small group of officials from the Foreign Office, the Ministry of Defense, and the Treasury to draft a paper on the essential objects of British policy on political, military, and economic matters. He hoped that the Prime Minister would agree to chair a small committee, including the Foreign Secretary, Minister of Defense, and perhaps one or two other ministers which could review the "strategic hypotheses on which existing defense programs are based."²⁹⁹ Sir Norman Brook recognized that planning was already based on the hypothesis that global war was the least likely contingency, but hoped that planning could be based on the hypothesis that global war was *unlikely at all* in the foreseeable future. He thought the British needed in both Europe and the Middle East to rely less on traditional military power, especially ground forces.

At the same time, Brook recognized that any attempt to adjust NATO policy had to proceed cautiously. This was because, given the general lessening of international tension that had developed over the previous year, too radical a shift in NATO strategy "might go so fast that it leaves the Atlantic Alliance without any firm foundation."³⁰⁰ In

299 BNA, PREM 11/1778, Minute from Sir Norman Brook to Prime Minister Eden on Defense Policy, 1 May 1956.

300 Ibid.

this regard, Brook hit on the primary problem that would bedevil the subsequent British attempt to revise NATO strategy. This was the degree to which translating British thinking on defense into a new strategy for NATO created a diplomatic/political problem within the NATO alliance. Though the Eisenhower administration was generally sympathetic to the British position as it developed in the summer of 1956, President Eisenhower proved unwilling to jeopardize the nascent West German rearmament and integration into NATO, and ultimately rejected the full implications of the British strategy view as they developed.

Interestingly, the Eisenhower administration was moving in a direction in May that was largely in sync with British thinking about the need to bring NATO strategy more in line with contemporary realities. During an NSC discussion of US worldwide military assistance in mid-May, discussion turned towards the problems of force goals and requirements in NATO. Secretary of the Treasury Humphrey spurred his fellow NSC members to consider the problem that US military assistance commitments considerably exceeded the ability of the US government to pay for them.³⁰¹ The case of Turkish expectations for assistance to support a fairly large military establishment prompted the President to raise the issue that convincing an ally to accept a reduction was a key part of the problem. Admiral Radford reminded the NSC that determining Turkish force levels was essentially a problem for SACEUR Gruenther. And as Radford pointed out, Gruenther was “still basing his recommendations on the Lisbon goals.” If the US were to convince its allies to reduce the need for troops, it would have “to be firmly based

301 DDEL, DDEP, NSC, Box 7, 285th Meeting of the NSC, 17 May 1956, p.17.

on a decision by the United States to use atomic weapons to resist Soviet aggression.”³⁰²

President Eisenhower followed by saying he regarded “present NATO strategic concepts as completely outmoded.” The problem, however, was that none of the US allies really wished to be defended by nuclear weapons. Eisenhower stated that the Europeans regarded nuclear weapons as strictly offensive in character, and were petrified that the US would employ such weapons. Voicing a concern which would be echoed by the Europeans themselves, especially the following year after Sputnik’s launch, Eisenhower pointed out that in the defense of the United States, nuclear weapons would certainly be used, “but to use them in other situations [would] prove very difficult.”³⁰³

When Secretary of Defense Wilson suggested that the NATO allies would not or could not change NATO force requirements, President Eisenhower invoked the possibility that the United States might again undertake “an agonizing appraisal of its policies.”³⁰⁴ It was agreed that in the upcoming reviews of US military assistance, those involved would keep in mind the need for greater economy lest both the US and its allies’ economies be over-burdened by defense requirements which might well no longer provide the type of security they were intended. The following day, Wilson pointed out that the recently announced reduction in Soviet forces was recognition on the Soviets’ part that there was now little need for large land armies. He pointed out that US

302 Ibid., p.18.

303 Ibid., p.18.

304 Ibid., p.21. It is not entirely clear why Wilson singled out the Europeans in this regard when it was well-known that the Major NATO Commanders (SACEUR, SACLANT, and CINCHAN) played a key role in the development of force goals. It would seem if the US wanted the force goals reduced, it would have been possible to address the problem of why the MNCs continued to generate force goals based on the Lisbon model.

intelligence was currently over-estimating the Soviet threat.³⁰⁵ President Eisenhower reiterated to Wilson his sense that NATO's D-Day commitments were outmoded, but tempered his statement of the previous day regarding an "agonizing reappraisal" by pointing out that those commitments "can't be changed because a public outcry would develop, which would harm our position with our allies as regards collective defense."³⁰⁶

By the end of May, Prime Minister Eden was "most anxious to get to grips with the review" of British defense needs.³⁰⁷ Within the following week, Eden and a senior group of ministers, including Lord Salisbury, Harold Macmillan, Selwyn Lloyd, Walter Monckton, and Rab Butler, had approved a new set of guidelines for the future of British defense. These guidelines were drawn from the policy paper drawn up by Sir Norman Brooks' interdepartmental review group. Its chief assumption was that the "main threat" to Britain's "position and influence in the world is now political and economic, rather than military."³⁰⁸ It went on to recognize that the end of foreign aid would only exacerbate Britain's financial difficulties. Devising a new concept for the shape and size of NATO's "shield" presented the largest and most immediate problem for British policy. At SHAPE HQ and NATO an effort was getting under way to harmonize and reconcile the numerous NATO strategy documents which were already in existence (MC 3/5, MC 14/1, MC 48, and MC 48/1) and integrate the contribution of West German forces into

305 Robert McNamara would later make use of a similar conclusion to try and convince the NATO allies that it was possible to counter the Warsaw Pact in Europe with a conventional option, though at levels well below those of the Lisbon Force Goals.

306 DDEL, DDEP, DDE Diary, Box 15, MemCon with President and SecDef Wilson, 18 May 1956.

307 BNA, PREM 11/1778, Prime Minister's Minute to the Lord President, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Foreign Secretary, and Minister of Defense, 31 May 1956. Anthony Eden, *Full Circle: The Memoirs of The Rt. Hon. Sir Anthoy Eden* (London: Cassell & Company, 1960), p.371.

308 BNA, PREM 11/1778, Future of the United Kingdom in World Affairs (PR(56)3), draft, 2 June 1956.

NATO.³⁰⁹ Admiral Denny, head of the British Joint Staff Mission in Washington, informed the British Chiefs of Staff in the summer of 1956 that the revisions then underway were primarily editorial and involved no “New Look.” Sir Norman Brook’s review group, argued that the British should not approach this problem from the point of view that the threat of war had receded, but instead “as a technical military problem of adapting the content of those [NATO “shield”] Forces to meet the needs of the new situation.”³¹⁰ There was no confidence amongst Sir Norman Brook and his fellow bureaucrats that a solution could be worked out within NATO, either by SACEUR and his staff or the NATO Military Committee. Instead, it was imperative for the British to work out the new approach first, then take the plan to the Americans and Canadians.³¹¹ But this threw the problem back to the Ministry of Defense, and it remained to be seen if Monckton and the British Chiefs of Staff could devise a suitable rationale for a reappraisal of NATO strategy.

Governmental officials in Britain were well aware of the need to proceed cautiously with the NATO allies, but at the same time, the pressing need for economies in defense, both to meet short-term needs and to bring about substantial future reductions, placed a certain degree of urgency on British policy-makers. The British wanted to first approach the Canadian and American governments, and once a coordinated policy was established, press ahead with the other NATO allies. The Canadians received the earliest

309 The Joint Planning Staff did, however, take exception to a proposed amendment by SACLANC that provisions for a limited war with Russia should be made. See comments in BNA, DEFE 6/37, JP(56)132(Final), Overall Strategic Concept for the Defence of the North Atlantic Area, Report by the Joint Planning Staff, 10 August 1956.

310 BNA, PREM 11/1778, Future of the United Kingdom in World Affairs (PR(56)3), draft, 2 June 1956.

311 Ibid.

inklings of the new British policy during the Commonwealth Prime Ministers meeting held in London in June.³¹² For their part, the Canadians proved receptive to the British program of action, recognizing that they too might be able to curtail their NATO commitment as a result of a strategy reappraisal.

The British Ambassador in Washington approached Secretary of State Dulles on 18 June with a request to call an early meeting of the NATO Council in order to issue a new directive on NATO strategy.³¹³ Dulles relayed this request to Eisenhower at his farm near Gettysburg on 13 July. Dulles informed the President of the urgency with which the British were seeking a new directive. He described the British as advocating massive retaliation with only a “plateglass window” of conventional forces. Dulles had initially put the British off by arguing that the pending Mutual Security legislation in the US and a conscription bill in the Federal Republic of Germany made the move ill-timed. At the same time, he recognized that some reply would have to be given to the British in the near future. Eisenhower agreed to sit down in August with relevant advisors and consider a response to the British.³¹⁴

Since the fall of 1955, Secretary of Defense Wilson and the US JCS had been working to develop US force requirements for the coming budgetary cycle. In early March 1956, the Chiefs had retreated to Ramsey Air Force Base in Puerto Rico to review their force recommendations for Secretary Wilson. As a result of this meeting, the Chiefs

312 *Documents on Canadian External Relations*, vol.22, part I, Doc.544: Memorandum from Secretary of State for External Affairs to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 10 July 1956, pp.1004-9.

313 *FRUS 1955-1957*, vol.IV, Doc.32, MemCon between Secretary of State and the British Ambassador (Makins), 29 June 1956, pp.84-7.

314 DDEL, Dulles Papers, WHMS, Box 4, Memcon-Eisenhower and Dulles, Gettysburg, 13 July 1956.

concluded that existing military programs and force levels were “generally valid” and would remain so into the period from 1958-1960. However, they predicted that meeting the current goals would require spending of \$3-5 billion in excess over the current annual expenditure of \$35.5 billion.³¹⁵ This process was complicated by pressure from the Democrat-controlled Congress to increase expenditures on strategic air power in order to close the so-called “bomber gap.”³¹⁶ Given the strong desire of the Eisenhower administration to maintain a balanced budget, this meant that appropriations for the Navy and Army were likely to be reduced in the FY 1957 budgetary cycle.

Then on 13 July 1956, the *New York Times* ran a front page article which claimed that JCS Chairman Radford was seeking an 800,000-man cut in the armed forces by 1960.³¹⁷ Word of the so-called “Radford plan” soon drew considerable concern from Konrad Adenauer, who feared the implications of the reductions on the US commitment to NATO. In response to the “Radford plan,” Adenauer wrote to Dulles, claiming that, “even the plans and intentions of the United States Government as voiced so far are having a disastrous effect in Europe. The Soviet Union may thereby gain its largest and perhaps decisive victory in the cold war because Europe including Germany is losing confidence in the reliability of the United States.”³¹⁸ The German ambassador in

315 *HJCS*, vol.VI: *The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy 1955-1956*, pp.51-52.

316 *HOSD*, vol.IV: *Into the Missile Age 1956-1960*, pp.33-36.

317 “Radford Seeking 800,000-man Cut; 3 Services Resist”, *New York Times*, 13 July 1956, p.1.

318 DDEL, Dulles Papers, General Correspondence & Memoranda Series, Box 2, Ltr., Konrad Adenauer to John Foster Dulles, 22 July 1956. Also available in DDRS, 2000, F60, 765, and Hans-Peter Schwarz, *Konrad Adenauer*, vol.2: *The Statesman, 1952-1967*, trans. by Geoffrey Penny (Providence: Berghahn Books, 1991), pp.234-5.

Washington and Lt. Gen. Adolf Heusinger, Chief of the West German Armed Forces, reiterated the Federal Republic's unhappiness with the proposed force cuts.³¹⁹

Meanwhile, the British continued to explore ways to bring about force reductions with the Americans. Before returning to the United States for a brief visit, SACEUR Gruenther met with British Minister of Defense Monckton and the British Chiefs of Staff on 7 August. During the ensuing discussion, the British Chiefs stressed the economic plight which was forcing them to consider reductions of British forces in Germany. Gruenther reported that the British had few concrete ideas of their own as to how to approach the matter in NATO. At one point in the discussion Chief of Defense Staff Dickson suggested that since the Soviets were not apt to launch an attack on NATO given the West's nuclear capabilities, perhaps NATO's shield need only be strong enough to defend against an attack by satellite forces without Soviet backing. This suggestion, however, was not pursued any further at the time. Gruenther informed his hosts that he saw little likelihood of the reevaluations then underway at SHAPE leading to the sort of radical force revisions that the British sought. He left the meeting with the distinct impression that the British were looking to the United States to take the lead in developing a justification for a considerable reduction in NATO's shield requirements.³²⁰

When Gruenther returned to Washington, he found that the administration's attention was increasingly pre-occupied by the crisis over the Suez Canal. Nonetheless, President Eisenhower made use of Gruenther's visit to discuss European attitudes toward

319 "Germans Oppose Cut in U.S. Troops," *Special to the New York Times*, 31 July 1956, p.1.

320 DDEL, DDEP, Dulles-Herter Series, Box 7, Tel. from Gruenther to SecState, SecDef, and JCS, 8 August 1956. There is a heavily redacted version of this telegram in DDRS, 1992, F104, 1412.

the problems of NATO strategy and force levels in Europe.³²¹ At a meeting on 12 August, Gruenther reiterated that Chancellor Adenauer, while generally approving NATO's atomic strategy, "had almost a hysterical fear of the so-called 'all atomic' concept" which he believed dominated U.S. thinking.³²² Gruenther then pointed out that he saw little way in which he could reduce his requirement for thirty standing divisions to cover NATO's 500-mile front in the Center Region. President Eisenhower responded that while he understood that 30 divisions "might not be too many divisions," he wondered if significant reductions could not be made in the size of the division. He even suggested a reduction down to as little as 9,000 men per division.³²³ Indeed, Eisenhower's thinking towards reducing the size of divisions rather than the number of divisions themselves had a long pre-history, one which was only reinforced by the concept of introducing tactical nuclear firepower, which would allow a division reduced in size to maintain firepower equal to (or in considerable excess of) existing, manpower-intensive divisions.³²⁴ At a subsequent discussion the following day between Dulles,

321 DDEL, DDEP (Whitman File), DDE Diary, Box 17, Ltr., Eisenhower to Gruenther, 7 August 1956.

322 DDEL, DDEP (Whitman File), DDE Diary, Box 17, Meeting at the White House on Sunday, 12 August 1956.

323 Ibid.

324 On Eisenhower's interest in smaller Army divisions before he became President, see John B. Wilson, *Maneuver and Firepower: The Evolution of Divisions and Separate Brigades* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1998), p.225. An Eisenhower memorandum for SHAPE Chief of Staff Gen. Al Gruenther in September 1951 stated, "As you know, I have felt the typical American division is far too expensive in personnel...", Louis Galambos, ed. *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, vol.XII: *NATO and the Campaign of 1952* (Baltimore: the Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p.569. During a number of meetings with General Maxwell Taylor in late 1955 and early 1956, Eisenhower had stressed to him his interest in the Army shifting to smaller divisions with greater emphasis on integrated missile forces and improved tactical mobility. DDEL, DDEP (Whitman File), Whitman Diary, Box 6, Memorandum of Conference with the President, 29 June 1955; and DDEP (Whitman File), DDE Diary, Box 15, Memorandum of Conference, 24 May 1956. I discuss this in more detail in Robert T. Davis II, *The Challenge of Adaptation: The US Army in the Aftermath of Conflict, 1953-2000* (Leavenworth, KS: US Army Combat Studies Institute, March 2008), pp.23-27. Eisenhower reiterated his desire to see divisions

Wilson, Radford, and Gruenther, it was decided that it would be “unwise” to seek a new political directive on NATO strategy at this time, and that it would be “a mistake to withdraw any US/UK divisions from Europe at this time.”

Nonetheless, Dulles and Wilson agreed that steps should be undertaken to reduce US troop strength in Europe by 25,000-50,000 by cutting the number of troops in the divisions and reducing support forces.³²⁵ Later in the fall, Army Chief of Staff Taylor initiated the implementation of a new divisional organization. This new division, dubbed the Pentomic division, was purportedly better adapted for the type of atomic battlefield anticipated in a future war in Europe. This was done by regrouping the traditional American triangular division into five independent battle groups. These battle groups, in theory, would provide greater battlefield flexibility and mobility, allowing the divisions troops to disperse and regroup as needed to exploit conditions of the atomic battlefield.

The Pentomic divisions had an additional attraction as well. By integrating weapons systems with the ability to deliver tactical atomic weapons organically into each of the five battlegroups, the new division could deliver considerably greater firepower (if these tactical atomic weapons were employed) with considerably less manpower than the traditional division.³²⁶ The Pentomic division, however, would not prove to be a

cut to 12,000 or 10,000 men to Secretary Wilson and Chairman Radford on 17 August. DDEL, DDEP (Whitman File), DDE Diary, Box 17, Memorandum of Conference with the President, 17 August 1956.

325 *FRUS 1955-1957*, vol.IV, Doc.35, pp.93-95, esp. note 5.

326 On the US Army's development and reorganization into Pentomic divisions, see: A. C. Bacevich, *The Pentomic Era: The US Army Between Korea and Vietnam* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1986), pp.134-40; Paul C. Jussel, “Intimidating the World: The United States Atomic Army, 1956-1960” (PhD Dissertation: Ohio State University, 2004); John J. Midgley, Jr., *Deadly Illusions: Army Policy for the Nuclear Battlefield* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986), pp.31-85; Ingo W. Tauschweizer, “Creating Deterrence for Limited War: The U.S. Army and the Defense of West Germany, 1953-1982” (PhD Dissertation, University of Maryland, 2006), pp.92-135; and Wilson, *Maneuver and Firepower*,

panacea. Its introduction by the US Army into NATO Europe signaled the integration of tactical atomic weapons down to units of relatively small size. This raised difficult problems for the other NATO allies, who wondered what role their own equivalent units would play in the event the Soviets eventually deployed comparable weapons systems. The full implications and challenges of the new divisional structure and the role of “tactical” atomic weapons, however, still lay in the future.

During the remainder of August and September, the Americans repeatedly assured the Germans that American forces would remain in Germany. These repeated assurances did not completely mollify Adenauer’s concern. During the same period, the British continued to work out their own draft of a new directive for NATO. A NATO Military Committee meeting was scheduled to review a draft version of MC 14/2 in mid-October. The British hoped that an early NATO Council meeting could be called to issue a new political directive prior to the issuance of MC 14/2. Progress was frustratingly slow from the British perspective, but both governments were pre-occupied with other matters. The Republican National Convention and the upcoming presidential election naturally intruded on President Eisenhower’s time. In addition, the President was engaged in the ongoing wrangle with the Chiefs of Staff over their budget recommendations which continued to exceed the budgetary strictures Eisenhower and Wilson wanted to see imposed.³²⁷ Finally, the diplomatic activity revolving around the

pp.270-86. Trauschweizer’s dissertation is available online at: <https://drum.umd.edu/dspace/bitstream/1903/3390/1/umi-umd-3202.pdf>. Trauschweizer’s monograph will be published with the University of Kansas Press in the summer of 2008 as *The Cold War U.S. Army*.
327 Watson, *HOSD*, vol.IV, pp.75-102.

Suez Crisis preoccupied a number of key figures in the British and American governments.

It was not until 1 October that the State Department, after vetting it with the Department of Defense, presented the President with a memorandum regarding the US position on NATO strategy revision. President Eisenhower approved it the following day.³²⁸ This document stated that, given the need for NATO to defend against all-types of aggression, including local attack, “the maintenance of an effective shield for these purposes must include sufficient conventional ground forces to avoid inflexibility.”³²⁹ It also stated emphatically that, “we find unacceptable any proposal which implies the adoption of a NATO strategy of total reliance on nuclear retaliation.”³³⁰ Yet at the same time, President Eisenhower had not wavered in his conviction that if the Soviets themselves, as opposed to the East Germans or one of the other satellites, launched an attack on NATO Europe, “atomic weapons would be used.”³³¹ Though Secretary Wilson had favored reductions in US forces, at the meeting President Eisenhower ruled out any reductions in the number of US divisions given that the effect on Adenauer “would be unacceptably damaging.” It was generally recognized, however, that there was considerable work to be done still in convincing the Europeans, especially Eisenhower,

328 *FRUS 1955-1957*, vol.IV, Doc.38: Memorandum of Conference with the President, 2 October 1956, pp.99-102. There is also an abbreviated summary memorandum of this conversation in NARA, RG 59, Conference Files, Box 120.

329 *FRUS 1955-1957*, vol.IV, Doc.37: Memorandum from the Secretary of State to the President, 1 October 1956, p.97. The State Department draft had been sent to Secretary Wilson on 13 September. Wilson’s comments were returned to the State Department on 23 September. There is an original copy of Dulles’ cover letter and the memorandum in DDEL, DDEP (Whitman File), Dulles-Herter Series, Box 7. Copies of the original version with editorial comments and the re-written version can be found in DDEL, Dulles Papers, White House Memoranda, Box 3.

330 *Ibid.*

331 *FRUS 1955-1957*, vol.IV, Doc.38, p.101.

that in the long-term the United States was indeed interested in reducing its forces. But in the short-term, that position was judged to be tactically infeasible.³³²

On the same day that the Eisenhower administration was determining the practical limits to which it could conceive applying the New Look to NATO, the Eden government transmitted its own draft proposal on NATO strategy to the British embassy in Washington to pass along to the Americans for early comment. The draft was given to Secretary Dulles by Ambassador Makins on 3 October 1956.³³³ In its initial points, the draft was very much in line with accepted NATO strategy. The British draft emphasized that since the death of Stalin and the detonation of the first Soviet thermonuclear device, the Soviets themselves had to re-appraise their strategy. Because the Soviets now realized that global war would have disastrous consequences for the Soviets themselves, and because NATO would not initiate a global war, it was unlikely that global war would break out. Consonant with MC 48 and Eisenhower's own views, in the event of any Soviet resort to aggression, "the West would at once launch a full scale attack on Russia with thermo-nuclear weapons." From these premises, the British then made two suggestions which proved more controversial. First, because of the unlikelihood of global war, the British argued that the main realm of cold war conflict was now switching to political and economic confrontation, especially in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Africa. This led to the conclusion that:

the NATO defense effort must be so adjusted as to enable member countries to fulfil [sic] also their defense commitments in other areas; and despite the rising costs of weapons, overall defense expenditures must be kept at a level which will

332 Ibid.

333 BNA, DEFE 7/1617, Tel. from Sir Roger Makins to Foreign Office, No.2055, 3 October 1956.

give the members of the Alliance the necessary margin of economic strength to compete with the Soviet threat in all its aspects, without endangering their economic stability which itself is an essential element of their security.³³⁴

In a practical sense, this sort of approach would have been conducive for all the European NATO members who still had forces engaged in colonial-style engagements. Indeed, the French had pursued such a policy *de facto*, withdrawing forces from the European continent first for service in Indochina, and later, in Algeria. However, with the United States keen interest in securing a considerable buildup of West German forces, there was little prospect that concessions would be made to the British on this point in 1956. The second point of contention arose over the penultimate paragraph, which stated, “the atomic capability with which N.A.T.O. forces will be armed (over and above that provided by the strategic air forces) will be used in the event of aggression whether by Russia or her satellites.”³³⁵ The suggestion that NATO’s nuclear weapons might be released in the event of satellite aggression alone, such as an East German assault on Berlin or West Germany styled on the North Korean invasion of South Korea simply proved to be too much New Look for other members of the alliance.³³⁶

334 BNA, DEFE 7/1617, Tel. from FO to Washington, no.4555, 2 October 1956, Annex ‘A’: Draft Directive by the North Atlantic Council to the NATO Military Authorities. There is also a copy in DCER, vol.22, pt.1, Doc.555: Telegram DLDL-301, re: NATO Military Reappraisal-UK Draft Paper, 7 October 1956, pp.1035-36.

335 Ibid.

336 Lester Pearson, the Canadian Foreign Secretary, wrote that, “it does not seem realistic to lay down an unqualified assumption that any ‘identified Soviet aggression’ will call forth immediate thermo-nuclear retaliation, with the certainty of a Soviet response in kind. The expression ‘an identified act of aggression’ needs careful definition in the context of provoking an atomic reaction. For instance, would the members of the Alliance, and particularly the USA, agree to triggering off of atomic warfare in the event of an attack by East German forces against Berlin?” *DCER*, v.22, pt.1, Doc.556, Tel.DLDL-102, re: NATO Military Reappraisal-UK Draft Paper, 9 October 1956.

Secretary Dulles and Foreign Secretary Lloyd had the opportunity to discuss NATO matters briefly in New York in the midst of the UN Security Council meetings on the Suez Canal situation. Dulles conveyed his preliminary impressions on the British draft to Lloyd on 7 October. While expressing the general agreements that NATO needed to review its strategic planning, Dulles cautioned that he did not think it “wise to insist that NATO adopt a theory of defense planning which pre-supposed what form the next war will take.” Dulles pointed out that it would be a “serious mistake” if NATO strategy was altered in such a way that it removed the necessary element of flexibility in the event of future aggression.”³³⁷ This position was reiterated in a formal note delivered to the British on 12 October.³³⁸

The British introduced their draft strategy statement to the NATO Council in permanent session on 19 October. The French and US delegates also put forth position papers for consideration.³³⁹ The British had hoped to proceed with some haste since the summer. It proved impossible to get rapid movement out of the NATO bureaucracy, dependent as it was on achieving consensus from fifteen member nations. It was clear from the discussion at the 19 October meeting that the member nations wanted to discuss

337 The U.S. record of this meeting can be found in NARA, RG 59, Conference Files, 1949-1972 [Lot 62D 181, CF 807-828], Box 120, MemCon, re: UK Proposal for a Review of NATO Strategy Looking to a Reduction of Conventional Forces, 7 October 1956. There is a copy of Foreign Secretary Lloyd's initial telegram reporting on the conversation in BNA, DEFE 7/1617, Tel. from New York to FO and Whitehall, No.799, 7 October 1969.

338 *FRUS 1955-1957*, v.IV, Doc.39: Editorial Note, p.102.

339 BNA, DEFE 7/1617, Tel. No.176, re: NATO Reappraisal, 19 October 1956. Also see *DCER*, v.22, pt.1, Doc.559, Tel. No. 1772, re: NATO Military Reappraisal, 19 October 1956, pp.1041-43; and *FRUS 1955-1957*, vol.IV, Doc.39: Editorial Note, p.102. These various papers were later reproduced by the NATO Secretariat as C-M(56)121.

the proposed papers with their respective military authorities.³⁴⁰ Many of the chiefs of staff were attending a Military Committee meeting in Washington, which meant there would be additional delay before the respective national military authorities would have time to review the new papers. However, before the twin international crises of the fall of 1956 interfered, US officials were already cautioning their British counterparts not to hope for a revision of NATO's force goals before the following year. In addition, the events in Hungary and Egypt in the coming weeks soon preoccupied most of the principals in Britain, France, and the United States, and brought inter-alliance relations to a nadir.³⁴¹ Soviet intervention in Hungary further complicated matters by raising questions of whether or not such intervention portended a return to Stalinist methods by the Soviets in Eastern Europe. L.D. Wilgress, the Canadian Permanent Representative to NATO, reported to Foreign Secretary Pearson that, "the impact of the events in Hungary and the Middle East is leading the Council away from the former complacent attitude based on the retaliatory nuclear capabilities being sufficient to deter the Soviet Union from running the risk of general war." As a result of the debate over Soviet intentions,

340 The 14th Military Committee in Chiefs of Staff session was held on 18-19 October. At this meeting a draft revision of MC 14/2 was under consideration, but it was a draft that had been prepared on the basis of existing political guidance, and thus seemed to be being overtaken by the development of new political guidance under consideration by the NAC. The MC/CS referred the draft of MC 14/2 back to the Standing Group for further consideration pending a decision on the new political guidance. BNA, DEFE 7/1617, Tel. from British Joint Staff Mission, Washington to Ministry of Defense, London, 29 October 1956; and NARA, RG 218, Geographic File 1954-56, CCS 092 Western Europe (3-12-48), Sec. 67, Box 60, JCS 2073/1312, Resume of the 14th Session of the Military Committee on 18/19 October 1956.

341 Lord Ismay, NATO's Secretary General, expressed his deep concern to President Eisenhower, conveyed through US Ambassador to France C. Douglas Dillon, on the status of the alliance in the wake of the Suez Crisis. Dillon related that Ismay "emphasized that he was certain that [Eisenhower] could not realize the serious damage which US attitude of past few days, i.e. since cease fire, was doing to NATO, damage which he felt could shortly reach fatal proportions." DDRS, 1989, F62, 1117, Tel. CAP 593, 26 November 1956. Also see the comments of Paul-Henri Spaak, then Belgian Foreign Minister and Ismay's successor as NATO Secretary General, in "The West in Disarray," *Foreign Affairs*, vol.35, no.2 (January 1957), pp.184-90.

the trends paper which emerged was a “half-way position between two opposing views.” On the one hand, the British and the Canadians did not interpret Soviet intentions as having undergone a radical change, while many of the continental European states interpreted Soviet intentions with greater concern.³⁴² This made it difficult to work out the wording on the first section of the new political guidance on “Trends and Implications of Soviet Policy” (this became the “Analysis of Soviet Intentions” in the final paper approved at the December NAC ministerial meeting), “until the international situation had clarified.”³⁴³

Acting on advice from Secretary Dulles, President Eisenhower had resisted Eden’s requests for a meeting in the immediate aftermath of the Suez Crisis.³⁴⁴ This was done out of concern that it would further damage the US position in the United Nations and with the Arab world in the midst of the Soviet’s blustery anti-imperialist propaganda campaign. Dulles for his part had been hospitalized for surgery on his stomach cancer, and the speed of his recovery was uncertain. Eden, whose own health had been poor throughout the fall, traveled to Jamaica for an extended period of rest and reflection in the wake of the crisis.³⁴⁵ After Suez, there was a clear need to restore confidence in trans-

342 *DCER*, v.22, pt.1, Doc.565: Tel. 1971, re: NATO Military Reappraisal-UK Draft Paper, 15 November 1956, pp.1051-52.

343 This was the position taking by the Italian Representative to the NAC in permanent session, with strong support from the German representative, at the meeting held on 6 November. *DCER*, v.22, pt.1, Doc.564: Tel. 1901, re: NATO Military Reappraisal, 6 November 1956, pp.1049-51.

344 Eden and Eisenhower spoke on the phone three times on 7 November. Initially Eisenhower had said he would meet with Eden and French Prime Minister Guy Mollet, but after speaking with White House and State Department advisors, reversed his position later in the day. He resisted all further entreaties by Eden for face-to-face meetings. Robert R. Bowie, “Eisenhower, Dulles, and the Suez Crisis,” in *Suez 1956: The Crisis and its Consequences*, ed. by W. Roger Louis and Roger Owen (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p.212; and David Carlton, *Anthony Eden: A Biography* (London: Allen Lane, 1981), pp.455-56.

345 Eden and his wife flew to Jamaica on 23 November and returned to London on 14 December. Carlton, *Anthony Eden*, pp.458-63; and Eden, *Full Circle*, pp.569-74.

Atlantic relations, lest intra-alliance confidence further deteriorate. At the same time, the British need to convince their allies that their own need for economy in defense spending was greater than ever. Indeed, even before the Suez Crisis had intervened to sour relations between Eisenhower and Eden, the Prime Minister was contemplating a trip to the United States in December to discuss the need for reductions in Britain's long-term defense expenditures with the President. It would be Harold Macmillan, a wartime associate of Eisenhower's in North Africa and Eden's successor as Prime Minister, who next had the opportunity for a summit with Eisenhower. This meeting, however, was not until early 1957. The financial problems associated with the Suez Crisis, exacerbated considerably once Nasser closed the canal, intensified the economic challenge the British faced in the winter of 1956-57. Further, it was clear that the new draft political directive which was emerging would produce little of the relief the British had hoped for when they had first approached the Americans in the summer of 1956.

It was increasingly clear in NATO during late November that the issuance of a new political directive, which was the first step before NATO's military authorities could develop new force goals, was probably the most that could be achieved by the end of the year. The Soviet trends paper received approval from the NAC in permanent session on 22 November. By the end of the month, sufficient compromise on the political directive produced a draft version which was essentially in the form that would be adopted the following month at the NAC ministerial meeting. When the British received news that Dulles would attend the December NAC ministerial meeting, it provided the first opportunity for high level consultations between the two countries since the twin crises of

the fall had ended. The British also faced an awkward diplomatic challenge. The problem for the British was to determine what tactics to use within NATO. They needed to make it clear that Britain had to seek economies in her commitments, while at the same time preventing any further erosion in alliance relations.

The influence the British could exert over the Americans and their other NATO allies, however, was very limited during the remainder of Eden's tenure as Prime Minister. It was not until January 1957, when Eden resigned, that the Eisenhower administration would open itself to a restoration of the traditional close ties in the Anglo-American relationship. In the Cabinet reshuffle following Eden's resignation in January 1957, Harold Macmillan became Prime Minister. One of Macmillan's major priorities was to repair the rupture in Anglo-American relations that had been caused by the Suez crisis.³⁴⁶ With the annual White Paper of Defense due before Parliament the following February, the new Prime Minister and his Cabinet faced a considerable challenge, as the change in government had done nothing to relieve Britain from the pressures for greater economy and reduced defense commitments.

Ironically, the Eisenhower administration had ended up blunting the British attempt at implementing the full New Look at NATO, while at the same time continuing to move towards reductions in US force levels. Indeed, the US had already arrived at a rationale for decreasing force levels that ostensibly prevented any reduction in US

346 On Anglo-American relations in the Macmillan era, see Nigel J. Ashton, "Harold Macmillan and the 'Golden Days' of Anglo-American Relations Revisited, 1957-63," *Diplomatic History*, vol.29, no.4 (September 2005); and Michael Dockrill, "Restoring the 'Special Relationship': The Bermuda and Washington Conferences, 1957," *Decisions and Diplomacy: Essays in Twentieth Century International History*, eds. by Dick Richardson and Glyn Stone (London: 1995).

combat power in Europe. This was done through the introduction of the Pentomic division, which was approved for implementation in the fall of 1956. The Pentomic concept was briefed to the NATO Military Committee in mid-October.³⁴⁷ In the coming years the introduction of increasing numbers of tactical nuclear weapons to NATO Europe (and eventually in the Soviet arsenal as well) further complicated debates about the role of nuclear weapons in alliance strategy. As will be seen in chapter five, the search for a role for these new weapon systems went part and parcel with a debate over whether nuclear war could be limited. While this debate was playing out in the Alliance, repeated tensions over Berlin suggested that the limited war debate might well have real world ramifications.

The December North Atlantic Council Ministerial meeting in some ways marked a dividing point in the history of the Alliance. In November, General Gruenther had stepped down as SACEUR.³⁴⁸ He was replaced by USAF General Lauris Norstad, who would play an important role in the coming years in developing and interpreting NATO strategy.³⁴⁹ Lord Ismay, who had served as NATO's first Secretary General, announced

347 BNA, DEFE 7/1617, Tel. from Washington to FO, No.2143, 18 October 1956.

348 General Gruenther, largely for personal reasons, decided that his time had come to step down as SACEUR. Gruenther had broached the subject of his retirement with Eisenhower earlier, but by late 1955 was requesting that he be allowed to retire within the coming months. Gruenther suggested to Eisenhower that he be replaced either by his Chief of Staff, Lt. General Coutland van Schuyler, or Air Force General Lauris Norstad. Eisenhower, Dwight D. To Alfred Maximilian Gruenther, 2 December 1955. In *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, ed. L. Galambos and D. van Ee, doc. 1650. World Wide Web facsimile by The Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission of the print edition; Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, <http://www.eisenhowermemorial.org/presidential-papers/first-term/documents/1650.cfm>.

349 For an excellent account of Norstad's role as SACEUR, see Robert S. Jordan, *Norstad: Cold-War NATO Supreme Commander: Airman, Strategist, Diplomat* (Basingstoke, England: Macmillan, 2000).

his retirement at the December Ministerial. His resignation became effective the following April. He would be succeeded by the Belgian politician Paul-Henri Spaak.

The new political directive, designated C-M(56)138, was approved on 13 December 1956.³⁵⁰ The approval of the political directive set in motion the development of three new documents, MC 14/2, MC 48/2, and MC 70. These documents were intended to amplify the political directive in order to develop a meaningful defense concept (MC14/2 and MC48/2) and establish future force goals (MC 70). The new version of the Overall Strategic Concept (MC 14-series) was given NAC approval on 21 February 1957.³⁵¹ MC 14/2 (Revised), the Overall Strategic Concept for the Defense of the NATO Area, reiterated that in general war it was important to ensure that an “instant and devastating nuclear counter-offensive by all means available” could be launched.³⁵² While recognizing that the Soviet leaders were probably unwilling to launch a general war due to their understanding of the consequent destruction such a war would bring, MC 14/2 stated that “general war, though not the most likely eventuality, remains the greatest threat to the survival of the NATO nations.” MC 14/2 considered it more likely that the Soviets might initiate “infiltrations, incursions, or hostile local actions” to which NATO needed to be able to provide an immediate response “without necessarily having recourse to nuclear weapons.” But the scope of such infiltrations and the ultimate nature of the NATO response was greatly moderated in a sense by the concluding statement of this

350 C-M(56)138(Final), Directive to the NATO Military Authorities from the North Atlantic Council, 13 December 1956, in Pedlow, *NATO Strategy Documents*, pp.269-76. There is also a copy in DDEL, Norstad Papers, Box 90, Folder: NATO General(6).

351 MC 14/2 (Revised), 21 February 1957, in Pedlow, *NATO Strategy Documents*, pp.277-316. Available online at <http://www.nato.int/archives/strategy.htm>.

352 M.C. 14/2 (Revised)(Final Decision), 23 May 1957, <http://www.nato.int/archives/strategy.htm>.

section of MC 14/2 which stated emphatically that “in no case is there a concept of limited war with the Soviets.”³⁵³ In many ways, this was an emphatic statement of one of the fundamental premises underlying the strategy of massive retaliation. MC 14/2 and its companion document, MC 48/2, would remain on the books as NATO’s official strategy for the decade to come. Yet the debate over whether or not there was a possibility of limited war with the Soviets was far from over. No sooner did NATO seem to reach the apogee of massive retaliation than did many of its premises come deeply into question. It was not long before NATO found itself in yet another cycle of its ongoing dilemma, once again in search of a viable strategy.

³⁵³ Ibid.

Chapter 4: The Trouble with Massive Retaliation

The NATO strategy which was articulated in late 1956 and 1957 did little to solve fundamental tensions over defense planning for the NATO member states. The ambiguity of the new strategy left considerable room for discontent, which was not long in manifesting itself. The introduction of growing numbers of “tactical” and “theater” nuclear weapons in NATO; questions about nuclear responsibility in the NATO alliance; and the Soviet successful launch on an earth satellite in the fall of 1957 all contributed to a growing unease in NATO in the final years of the 1950s. The pursuit of nuclear retaliatory capability capable of deterring and indeed defeating any Soviet attack on the West—no matter how unlikely—remained the central feature of US security policy in the final years of the 1950s. Ostensibly, this strategy found support in NATO, but massive retaliation became less and less comforting over time to the NATO allies of the United States. Even John Foster Dulles—the publicly perceived champion of massive retaliation—moved away from his support for it in his final years as Secretary of State.

Since the end of the Eisenhower Administration, critics in the US and Europe argued that in many ways Eisenhower’s New Look and the associated strategy of massive retaliation had failed. John Gaddis argues that it was perceived as having failed for four reasons. This included excessive reliance on nuclear weapons for deterrence, inability to deter Third World revolutions, the emergence of a “missile gap” with the Soviets (which proved to be erroneous), and the failure to provide leverage for advancing negotiations

with the Soviets.³⁵⁴ Yet MC 14/2 and MC 48/2, the NATO strategy documents closely reflected the “massive retaliation” strategy (albeit with nominal reference to the notion of “flexibility”), remained in place till the late 1960s.

Within the US government, the opponents of “massive retaliation” found their strongest advocates within the US Army and later the US Navy, both of which were institutionally marginalized by the US Air Forces’ attempt to monopolize the country’s nuclear warfighting capability. By the end of Eisenhower’s second term, a considerable body of government policy makers in the Department of Defense (excepting the Air Force) and in the State Department increasingly supported an approach to defense policy which would subsequently be known as flexible response. In Britain some intellectuals concerned with defense issues developed a counter to massive retaliation known as graduated deterrence, which some consider to be the forerunner of flexible response. Discomfort with massive retaliation became particularly acute in Western Europe after the launch of Sputnik. The onset of a crisis over Western access rights to Berlin in 1958 further exacerbated the sense of unease with the policy massive retaliation. The question was what sort of strategy was to be embraced if massive retaliation was abandoned. This search for an answer led to debates over the possibility of limited nuclear war and the need for flexibility in NATO’s military strategy. This chapter will discuss the growing unease with the policy of the massive retaliation strategy and the initial attempts to develop a successor to it. Despite criticism of massive retaliation, the NATO strategy

354 John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment* (1982), p.165.

documents adopted in 1956-57 remained unchanged for a decade. This did not, however, prevent them from undergoing changes in *interpretation* in the intervening years.

The idea of flexible response initially found its greatest appeal in the NATO context in response to the Berlin crises of 1958-59 and 1961-63. The process of developing contingency plans (codenamed LIVE OAK) to safeguard western access to Berlin received renewed attention in the Eisenhower administration after Khrushchev's original November 1958 ultimatum. The Kennedy administration dealt with the second phase of the crisis, which culminated in the construction of the Berlin Wall. During the course of these crises Western planners attempted to develop a broad range of options to safeguard Western access rights to Berlin. Some of the military contingencies including the use of tactical nuclear weapons to demonstrate Western resolve. These plans reflected the attempts of planners in this era to envision modes of conflict short of total war.

IRBMs, Sputnik and Alliance Nuclear Relations

The unexpected launch of *Sputnik* on 4 October 1957-one year ahead of the first scheduled US launch of a satellite-created a profound sense of unease in the West. President Eisenhower took the launch of Sputnik in stride.³⁵⁵ He was able to do so because he was aware of the considerable US lead in manned bombers, the state of the US ICBM program, and the analysis of his scientific advisers as to the limits of the Soviet achievement. Eisenhower's public demeanor did little to calm a mood of crisis

355 May, et. al., *History of the Strategic Arms Competition 1945-1972*, pp.394-420.

that developed in the public and even spread to close allies. It also opened Eisenhower to considerable partisan criticism in the Democrat-controlled Congress, and led to considerable pressure to launch a crash program to accelerate US missile production.³⁵⁶ Despite the public outcry and criticism, Eisenhower remained relatively unmoved personally, but the weight of public pressure over Sputnik did have several important implications. Domestically, it led to increased US defense spending. At home and within the Western alliance, it gave further credence to those people who had long-opposed Eisenhower's New Look. In the final three years of Eisenhower's presidency there was a growing desire within the alliance for new initiatives to defuse Cold War tensions with the Soviets. It led many to support a reappraisal of NATO strategy, as well.³⁵⁷ From the strategic point of view, long-standing advocates of improved or increased conventional war forces found an opening to advance their cause under the general climate of insecurity that pervaded the post-Sputnik period.

356 The best account of the impact of Sputnik on the Eisenhower administration is Robert Divine's *The Sputnik Challenge*. Divine argues that Eisenhower's calm and measured response to Sputnik itself has largely been vindicated by history, but Eisenhower's failure to successfully persuade the American public to accept his rationale for calm rates amongst his major failures of political leadership. See pp.vii-viii, 8.

357 During a Cabinet discussion following the December 1957 NATO Heads of Government meeting, Prime Minister Macmillan reported, "The great issue which had emerged at the meeting was that of reconciling the need to strengthen the military power of the Alliance with the growing feeling in Europe that no opportunity should be lost of settling outstanding differences with the Soviet Union." BNA, CAB 128/31, CC(57)85th Conclusions.

There are some interesting comments in a paper by Italian Ambassador Mario Toscano-written several years later-which state his analysis (but probably representative of others in the Italian government) that Sputnik launch lead to a "real revolution in American strategy" as the "idea of automatically replying to any Soviet attack with a total atomic war was now rejected". This was certainly not yet the case, though Toscano seized on the profound sense of unease that the Sputnik launch gave many observers, which was to manifest itself in a number of emerging studies on limited war and the nuclear age. This material is taken from a paper titled "The Project of a Multilateral NATO Force and The European Policy" written by Ambassador Toscano in 1963, when he was Chief of the Studies and Research Department of the Italian Foreign Ministry. A copy is located in JFKL, NSF, Box 121.

In addition to partisan and public pressure accompanying the launch of Sputnik, President Eisenhower was also weighing the conclusions of a major study on civil defense during late 1957. The Gaither Committee had originally been appointed by Eisenhower to study a recommendation by the Federal Civil Defense Administration to spend \$40 billion on fallout shelters to protect the American population in the event of a nuclear war.³⁵⁸ Eisenhower had tried to limit the material covered by the panel to questions of civil defense, but when H. Rowan Gaither, the panel's head, became ill in the summer of 1957, leadership of the committee passed into the hands of Robert C. Sprague (a member of the 1955 Killian Committee). Sprague soon re-directed the mission of the committee away from Eisenhower's original writ to examine passive defense measures, and instead looked at ways to improve the nation's deterrent posture. The scope of the committee's investigation underwent a considerable broadening of scope in the course of its preparation. The committee was strongly influenced by the work of Albert Wohlstetter, a Rand Corporation analyst, who argued the nation's bomber force (the heart of its strategic deterrent in the Eisenhower period) was increasingly vulnerable to a surprise Soviet ICBM assault.

The final report was written by Paul Nitze, who had been primarily responsible for drafting NSC 68. It called for increased US bomber dispersal, more bombers placed on alert, improved warning systems, massive increases in IRBM and ICBM programs, and increased expenditures on conventional forces as well. The Gaither Report projected increased defense spending of nearly \$40 billion over a five to eight year period. The

358 See David L. Snead, *The Gaither Committee, Eisenhower, and the Cold War* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1999).

report's findings, delivered to Eisenhower orally on 4 November and to the NSC on 7 November, where given additional impetus in the wake of Sputnik.³⁵⁹ Not surprisingly, given Eisenhower's fidelity to a balanced budget which lay at the heart of the New Look, the President balked at accepting the recommendations of the report.³⁶⁰ But, as Robert Divine has demonstrated, Eisenhower's "first response to the crisis posed by Sputnik was to speed up earlier plans for the initial deployment of American IRBMs overseas."³⁶¹

Initial discussions about deploying US IRBMs to Britain had been raised in talks in London in July 1956. Secretary of the Air Force Donald Quarles approached Minister of Defense Walter Monckton regarding the deployment of 6 to 8 squadrons of Thor missiles (each squadron composed of 15 to 20 missiles). Quarles found the Eden government receptive to the offer, but Suez interceded to derail negotiations.³⁶² Duncan Sandys visited Washington in January 1957 as part of Macmillan's initiative to improve Anglo-American relations in the wake of Suez. While there he resumed discussions with his counterpart, Secretary of Defense Wilson, on Thor deployment to Britain. They worked out a compromise wherein four squadrons of Thors would be based in Britain. The initial two squadrons would remain under American control, the second deployment would be placed under British control.³⁶³ However, the nuclear warheads themselves

359 Divine, *The Sputnik Challenge*, pp.35-38.

360 Stephen Ambrose regarded Eisenhower's refusal to accept the calls for massively increased defense expenditures in the wake of Sputnik one of the finest moments of his Presidency. Nonetheless, many at the time did not share this analysis. Ambrose, *Eisenhower*, vol.2, p.435.

361 Divine, *The Sputnik Challenge*, p.34.

362 Baylis, *Ambiguity and Deterrence*, pp.236, 251-52.

363 Ibid., p.253.

would remain under US custody and control. Weapons release was to be a matter of joint decision.³⁶⁴

Eisenhower and Macmillan discussed the issue of IRBM deployments to Britain at the Bermuda Conference in March 1957 and a follow up meeting in Washington in October. In return for accepting the deployment of the Thors, Macmillan secured from Eisenhower a pledge to seek modifications on the McMahon Act. The intention of these modifications was to allow increased sharing US nuclear know-how with the British. This would secure for the British access to the strategic deterrent they thought was essential to maintain their role as a great power.

The deployment of the Thors to Britain was the first step in an American effort to deploy IRBMs throughout NATO Europe. IRBM deployment was seen as an important short term effort to improve the Western deterrent in the wake of Sputnik during a period in which the US ICBM program was not yet operational.³⁶⁵ But the deployment of yet another form of nuclear weapon to Europe increased debate within the alliance over who should control these weapons. This became a major issue in the alliance over the next few years. Nuclear sharing became a central feature in the debate between France and the United States after De Gaulle returned to power in late 1958, and had very important implications for Germany and Berlin as well.

³⁶⁴ Ibid. The control of nuclear weapons was an ongoing issue of great import. This matter is discussed at further length in Stephen Twigge and Len Scott, *Planning Armageddon: Britain, the United States and the Command of Western Nuclear Forces* (Amsterdam: Harwood Publishers, 2000), pp.99-119.

³⁶⁵ Dockrill, *Eisenhower's New Look National Security Policy*, p.215.

Limited War Theory and Planning

With the growth of the Soviet nuclear potential in the later 1950s, especially in the wake of the launch of *Sputnik*, informed observers in the West began to openly question the presumptions upon which the New Look was based.³⁶⁶ For some, the prospect of nuclear parity between the West and the Soviet Union made global war increasingly unlikely because of the massive destruction it would entail. Conversely though, many wondered if this situation would not in fact make limited forms of warfare more likely. As far back as 1950, an editorial in the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* had forecast that the wars of the coming decade would largely be fought by Soviet proxies in which atomic weapons would be of little use.³⁶⁷ In his study of nuclear strategy, Lawrence Freedman has written that the British military historian B. H. Liddell Hart should be considered the father of limited war theory, though his own critique of total war predated the nuclear age.³⁶⁸ Anthony Buzzard in Britain and William W. Kaufman and Bernard Brodie in the US all wrote early critiques of massive retaliation.³⁶⁹

The Suez and Hungarian crises of 1956, fears regarding Soviet penetration of the Middle East, and crises in the Middle East and East Asia in 1958 all helped to bring questions regarding limited war more sharply into focus in the waning years of the

366 For an excellent overview of the dilemmas of limited war in the nuclear age see Lawrence Freedman, *The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy*, 2nd edn. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), p.93f; and Christopher M. Gacek, *The Logic of Force: The Dilemma of Limited War in American Foreign Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).

367 On the history of the critique of massive retaliation, there is a good short exposition in Robert B. Haffa, Jr., *The Half War: Planning U.S. Rapid Deployment Forces to Meet a Limited Contingency, 1960-1983* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984), pp.23-25.

368 Freedman, *Evolution of Nuclear Strategy*, pp.97-100.

369 On Anthony Buzzard's critique of massive retaliation, see John C. Garnett, "British Strategic Thought" in *British Defense Policy in a Changing World*, ed. by John Baylis (London: Croon Helm, 1977), pp.158-59.

decade. Two particular issues arose: was a limited nuclear war possible, and was a limited war fought between the Soviets and one or more NATO members conceivable?³⁷⁰ The issues led to a great deal of debate, both amongst the military services in the individual NATO countries, and between the NATO countries.

Early exercises meant to test the impact of limited nuclear war seemed to suggest that any notion of “limiting” the impact of tactical nuclear weapons use to the battlefield without considerable collateral damage to civilians was next to impossible. A prominent historian of nuclear strategy suggests two operations in particular which cast “grave doubt on the notion that tactical nuclear weapons could be considered virtually conventional in nature.”³⁷¹ These were Operation SAGE BRUSH, held in Louisiana, and Operation CARTE BLANCHE in West Germany. In the former, seventy simulated bombs of 40 kilotons (twice the size of a Fat Man bomb) or less were released in Louisiana, at which point the operation referees declared that all life in the state had “ceased to exist.”³⁷² The latter was a NATO exercise designed to simulate a Soviet air attack and test allied response to surprise attack held in late July 1955. After two days and 355 simulated atomic weapon releases, the referees ruled that an estimated 1.7

370 For two prominent academic analyses of limited nuclear war, see Henry Kissinger, *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1957), and Robert Osgood, *Limited War: The Challenge to American Security* (1957). Kissinger’s book was brought to Eisenhower’s attention by Cabot Lodge. Eisenhower did not read the book himself (instead receiving a ‘fairly extensive brief made by General Goodpaster’), but thought it provocative enough to pass along to Acting Secretary of State Herter. Eisenhower pointed out that one of the flaws was that to organize the military along lines suggested in the book would mean preparing for two types of war, a proposition bound to be more expensive than the New Look. See DDEL, DDE Diary, Box 25, Memorandum for the Acting Secretary of State, 31 July 1957.

371 Freedman, *Evolution of Nuclear Strategy*, pp.109-110.

372 Quoted from Freedman, *Evolution of Nuclear Strategy*, p.109. For a contemporary post-op analysis of the exercise, see Major General John D. Stevenson, “Exercise Sagebrush: Massive Air-Ground Lesson in Atomic Warfare,” *Air University Quarterly Review*, v.VIII, n.4 (Fall 1956), pp.15-38.

million West German civilians would have been killed and another 3.5 million would have been severely wounded.³⁷³ This exercise not only helped to undermine support for Adenauer's defense program, but made many Germans wonder if atomic defense did not mean assured destruction.³⁷⁴

For Eisenhower and some senior members of his administration, however, nuclear weapons had come to be seen as conventional munitions. Dulles informed a news conference in March 1955 that as smaller atomic munitions became available, it would decrease the likelihood of using city-destroying weapons.³⁷⁵ The following day, President Eisenhower was asked to amplify on Dulles' statement of the previous day. In this news conference, he suggested that "in combat where these things [nuclear fission weapons] can be used on strictly military targets and for strictly military purposes, I see no reason why they shouldn't be used just exactly as you would use a bullet or anything else."³⁷⁶ During an NSC discussion in April 1957, Robert Cutler, Eisenhower's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, raised the question of whether or not current plans for integrating nuclear weapons into US forces was making those forces incapable

373 Ibid., and Large, *Germans to the Front*, pp.257-58.

374 Public opinion polls in West Germany conducted in April 1957 found 77% of those surveyed opposed to stationing atomic weapons in Germany and 72% opposed to the arming of German forces with atomic weapons. Staff Notes No.128, 11 June 1957. By the summer of 1957, USIS officers in NATO countries reported "genuine and deep seated anxiety over atom weapons and fallout risks as their major public opinion problem." Staff Notes No.135, 22 June 1957, Minute 1: European Atomic Attitudes. Both are in DDEL, DDE Diary, Box 25.

375 "Dulles Says U.S. Pins Retaliation on Small A-Bomb," *New York Times*, 15 March 1955, p.1.

376 President's News Conference, 16 March 1955, *Public Papers of the President*, 1955, p.330.

of handling local aggressions without resort to nuclear weapons.³⁷⁷ Eisenhower replied by saying:

The nuclear weapon today is a conventional weapon for the U.S. armed forces. Any plans we made for any other kind of war than one in which nuclear weapons would be used, would be planning confined strictly to police actions.³⁷⁸

Admiral Radford followed by pointing out that the JCS had been developing plans along these lines since 1953, and “saw no alternative to such planning.” Eisenhower supported Radford by pointing out that there were situations that could be envisioned, such as using a nuclear weapon to destroy a bridge on the Yalu River, which need not lead to a general nuclear war. That said, there seems to have been no opposition to Secretary Wilson’s earlier point that a limited war with the Soviet Union was inconceivable.³⁷⁹ Thus, on the one hand, the Eisenhower administration was contemplating the notion of nuclear weapons integrated into the conventional battlefield, but still rejected any notion of limited war with the Soviets.

The British Joint Intelligence Committee considered the possibility of limited nuclear war in a report completed by the spring of 1957. The report was formulated to consider the likelihood in the following five-year period that either the United States or United Kingdom would be able to use nuclear weapons (in anywhere from 1 kiloton up to the 1 megaton range) to halt an aggressor with the possibility of restricting their use to a “limited geographic area.” The problem was defined as follows:

377 This discussion took place while the NSC was reviewing the “Basic Military Planning Concept to Govern Planning and Development of the Mobilization Base.” DDEL, NSC Series, Box 8, 319th Meeting of the NSC, Thursday, 11 April 1957. This quote has been excised from the published version of this meeting in *FRUS 1955-1957*, vol.XIX, p.471.

378 Ibid.

379 Ibid., p.6. This portion is printed in *FRUS 1955-1957*, vol.XIX, p.469.

The U.S.A. and U.K. would naturally wish to prevent any local war which might break out from spreading into global war. The difficulty is that in almost any local war involving Soviet Countries, communist preponderance in conventional ground forces would face the West with the dilemma that only Western intervention with nuclear weapons would be likely to check the aggressor. On the other hand, if the West used nuclear weapons against the aggressor, the Communists would be faced with the prospects of defeat in local war unless the Soviet Union intervened. The whole question of limiting a local war with a member of the Sino-Soviet bloc, therefore, hinges largely on the Soviet attitude.

So long as the Soviets were driven by a rational conception of the nuclear threat, they were unlikely to embark upon a course that could lead to direct hostilities with the West. The report was premised on the notion that any direct conflict with a country of the Sino-Soviet bloc was unlikely to be limited in nature. With this caveat accepted, the JIC still found that “a limited war in the Baghdad Pact area” was not possible, that it was “questionable” to think the Soviets would stand aside if nuclear weapons were used against China, and that the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear, non-communist powers was not conceivable for the Western democracies.³⁸⁰

In the summer of 1957, Robert Cutler urged the President to form a special committee to look at limited war.³⁸¹ Though both of Eisenhower’s JCS Chiefs (Admiral Radford and his successor Air Force General Nathan Twining) were devoted supporters of the New Look, the Chiefs as a body became increasingly split over the limited war issue. The Air Force retained its support for the New Look throughout. Institutionally this was natural, as the stress on a strategic nuclear deterrent clearly favored the Air

380 BNA, CAB 158/28, JIC(57)33(Final), The Possibility of Limited Nuclear War up to 1962, 2 May 1957.

381 Cutler pointed out that there had been pressure to do so for some time from the NSC Planning Board’s civilian staff. What had impressed him was the growing pressure to do so from the military representatives. See DDEL, WHO, OSS, Subj Ser, Dep of Def Subser, Box 5, Memorandum for President, Subject: Limited War in the Nuclear Age, 7 August 1957.

Force's Strategic Air Command and its massive bomber force. The Army, which had suffered the largest budgetary and manpower cuts as a result of the New Look, had long favored increased emphasis on limited war planning. General Maxwell Taylor, Army Chief of Staff since 30 June 1954, was a well-know advocate of improving limited war capabilities.³⁸²

Growing support for the Army position from the Navy and Marines helped shift the balance in the JCS towards increased limited war planning. Admiral Robert Carney's poor relations with Secretary of Defense Wilson lead to Carney's retirement shortly after the end of his first term as Chief of Naval Operations in the summer of 1955.³⁸³ Carney was replaced by Admiral Arleigh Burke. Burke had made his reputation in World War II as an aggressive destroyer commander, and had played an important role in the formulation of postwar naval strategy as the director of Op-30, the Strategic Plans Division of the Office of Chief of Naval Operations.³⁸⁴ During his time as director of Op-30, Burke had helped develop the Navy critique of the then emerging New Look.³⁸⁵ Upon being sworn in as Chief of Naval Operations on 17 August 1955, Burke turned his attention to renewed emphasis on anti-submarine warfare and the development of a sea-based IRBM-system for the Navy.

382 On Taylor's relations with his fellow chiefs and chairman Radford, see John Taylor, *General Maxwell Taylor*, pp.194-96.

383 On Carney's tenure as Chief of Naval Operations, see Paul R. Schratz, "Robert Bostwick Carney," *The Chiefs of Naval Operations*, ed. By Robert W. Love, Jr., pp.243-61.

384 David Alan Rosenberg, "Arleigh Albert Burke," *The Chiefs of Naval Operations*, pp.268-69, 273-74.

385 In a report for CNO Carney written in December 1953, Burke had argued that growing Soviet nuclear capabilities would eventually produce a nuclear stalemate, at which point the US could no longer rely on its nuclear forces to deter limited aggression. *Ibid.*, pp.280-81.

Though he was an early critic of the New Look, Burke was initially circumspect with regard to his support for limited war planning in the Eisenhower administration. His support for Taylor's critique of the Air Force-dominated Joint Strategic Objective Plan-the means by which the JCS translated the basic national security objective into military planning goals-was muted during the spring of 1956. But by the fall of that year, Burke's own thinking of the role of the Navy in the cold war had led him to carefully articulate his own views to Secretary of Defense Wilson. In a memo sent to Wilson in November, Burke argued that the United States had already attained a sufficient deterrent, and that further expenditures on additional bombers and nuclear weapons were likely to be counter-productive. The US already had sufficient capability to destroy the Soviets many times over, and increasing the size of our arsenal did little to increase the ability of the United States to survive a global war with the Soviets. Burke argued that henceforth the administration needed to give increased attention to limited conflicts in which there would not be recourse to nuclear weapons³⁸⁶

There was also a shift within NATO towards acceptance of limited war in NATO planning.³⁸⁷ With the adoption of MC 14/2 and MC 48/2 in 1957, the NATO Military authorities began planning for a new round of Minimum Essential Force Requirements (MC 70) studies in 1957 to implement the alliance's strategic design. With the retirement

386 Ibid., pp.281-83.

387 When Deputy SACEUR Field Marshal Montgomery held his final NATO Command Post Exercise (CPX 7) on 18 April 1957, he had suggested that the age of nuclear deterrence had done away for the need for massive land armies or planned mobilizations. Instead NATO's conventional forces should become a highly professional Shield capable of handling, "limited aggression in the NATO area without necessarily resorting to nuclear weapons, thus trying to isolate a limited attack before it could develop into an ugly situation which might lead to unlimited nuclear war." Quoted in Hamilton, *Monty: Final Years of the Field Marshal*, p.868.

of General Gruenther in late 1956 and Deputy SACEUR Montgomery in early 1957, incoming SACEUR General Lauris Norstad was able to play a critical role in interpreting the new strategic directives. Norstad-though later decried as a nuclear war man by some in the Kennedy administration for his support of MRBMs in NATO Europe-was an important proponent of maintaining a strong conventional shield in NATO.³⁸⁸ John Duffield has argued that Norstad developed and articulated a new role for NATO's shield forces. The shield forces were traditionally justified as providing a force which made the Soviets to concentrate their own forces. This made them susceptible to nuclear attack. Norstad envisioned a new role below the threshold of all-out war. Strong shield forces would provide flexibility for NATO leaders by increasing the ability to respond in limited ways to limited Soviet aggressions. In order to have options short of all out war, Norstad envisioned strengthened Shield forces which would improve the over-all credibility of the NATO deterrent.³⁸⁹

The Berlin Crisis of 1958-1959

In November 1958 Berlin and the question of Germany in European security once again came to the foreground of international politics.³⁹⁰ The Soviet Union, twice informed the Western occupying powers of its intention to push ahead with a peace treaty with the German Democratic Republic. This would terminate the need for an occupation of GDR territory, including, in the Soviet view, the entire city of Berlin. The diplomatic

388 McGeorge Bundy wrote in October 1961, "At the root [Norstad] is a nuclear war man, and all his preferences move accordingly. On this McNamara and Taylor agree." JFKL, President's Office Files, Box 103, Memorandum for the President, re: Norstad Meeting, 3 October 1961.

389 Duffield, *Power Rules*, pp.128-29.

390 1958 was a year of many international crises, ranging from the crisis over Quemoy and Matsu in East Asia, to trouble in the Middle East revolving around Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq, to Berlin.

crisis of 1958 in many ways revolved around the wider issue of Germany in Europe, or the “German question,” the diplomatic history of which has been treated extensively elsewhere.

One of the key determinants for Western policy, particularly for the Eisenhower administration, was the need to support the Federal Republic of Germany. However, this support for Chancellor Adenauer was not without reservations, and Adenauer’s own intransigence sometimes caused considerable frustration in Western capitals.³⁹¹

Adenauer regarded Western support of the Federal Republic as the only legitimate representative of the German people as a cornerstone of his foreign and domestic policy.³⁹² He and his government frequently expressed concern that the Western allies maintain their rights in Berlin (though the western part of the city remained under joint French-UK-US occupation, it was not formally part of the Federal Republic).

Adenauer’s fear was that the Western powers, especially the US, might be willing to consider a compromise over Berlin or recognize the GDR in return for a broader Cold War settlement with the Soviets. As Trachtenberg points out, the question thus becomes how far was the West willing to go to protect their rights in Berlin, and how far were they willing to compromise on the German question as a whole to achieve a settlement with the Soviets. The United States and the French took a relatively tough line on the issue, arguing that Western access had to be maintained, while the British were more reluctant

391 See the discussion of the FRG position in Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, pp.274-82.

392 The promulgation of the Hallstein Doctrine-named after Adenauer’s secretary of state for foreign affairs Walter Hallstein-in December 1955 stipulated that the Federal Republic would break off relations with any country that recognized the GDR. W.R. Smyser, *From Yalta to Berlin: The Cold War Struggle Over Germany* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999), p.131.

to authorize the use of force.³⁹³ The Macmillan government was especially concerned about committing ahead of time to any pre-authorized contingencies. Their assessment of the whole nature of the Soviet threat and the thrust of policy tended to diverge considerably from the views of many in the US government during the crisis over Berlin.³⁹⁴

The basic US position with regard to Berlin was fairly consistent throughout the Eisenhower period. Stated US policy was that a direct Soviet attack on Berlin would result in a general war between the United States and the Soviet Union.³⁹⁵ However, the basic policy documents produced by the NSC recognized that the Soviets were unlikely to precipitate a war simply for the sake of capturing Berlin. Instead it was more likely that the Soviets would use a variety of pressures to try to erode the ability of the Western powers to maintain their access to Berlin short of war. The problem then was how to coordinate a Western response.

393 Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, p.258, 264, 268-270.

394 See John P.S. Gearson, *Harold Macmillan and the Berlin Wall Crisis, 1958-62: The Limits of Interest and Force* (Basingstoke, England: Macmillan, 1998). Gearson writes that, "At the start of the 1958 Berlin crisis, Macmillan was emotionally and pragmatically predisposed to an accommodation with the USSR at the expense of West German security interests", p.30. For Macmillan's concern that contingency plans might leave Khrushchev no way to back down from the crisis, see pp.43-44. For the official intelligence view, see BNA, CAB 158/35, JIC(59)17, "An Assessment of Soviet Policy Regarding Berlin," 5 February 1959. An extract of this document and a good analysis of the JIC views can be found in Percy Cradock, *Know Your Enemy: How the Joint Intelligence Committee Saw the World* (London: John Murray, 2002), p.143f.

395 NSC 5803, "US Policy toward Germany" was approved by President Eisenhower on 7 February 1958. See *FRUS 1958-60*, vol.VIII, Doc.5, Editorial Note, p.10. This document (full text of which can be found in DDEL, WHO, NSC Staff, Executive Secretary's Subject File Series, Box 8) with regard to US policy on Berlin was essentially identical to the *FRUS 1955-57*, vol.XXVI, Doc. 213: "Statement of U.S. Policy on Berlin", Supplement I to NSC 5727, pp.521-525.

On 27 November 1958, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev presented the West with a six month timetable to settle the question of Berlin.³⁹⁶ After that time the Soviets would unilaterally sign a peace with the German Democratic Republic and consider all Western rights in the city as having ended. This was accompanied by ominous threats that any attempt by the West to restore access to Berlin through force would be met with force.³⁹⁷ Marc Trachtenberg has argued that Khrushchev's policies on Berlin had less to do with Western access to the city itself, and were instead rooted in concerns over the potential of a *revanchist*, nuclear armed West Germany challenging the status quo in central Europe.³⁹⁸ What the Soviets sought was an accommodation with the West that would create some sort of *de jure* recognition of the situation in Germany, and alleviate their concerns regarding the potential of a nuclear armed West Germany. These concerns were rooted in the nature of NATO's strategy in the later 1950s which called for the use of "modern weapons" as a central element of NATO defensive strategy. These weapons were to be integrated with NATO forces throughout Europe. Indeed the Eisenhower administration was pursuing the development of NATO stockpiles of nuclear weapons in Europe and pressing for the liberalization of Atomic Energy Act provisions with the aim

396 Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko transmitted the formal proposal to US Ambassador to Moscow Thompson on the morning of 27 November. *FRUS 1958-60*, vol.VIII, Doc.72 (Editorial Note), p.133. As suggested above, the Western powers had some warning of the impending crisis. On 27 October 1958, East German leader Walter Ulbricht had given a speech in which he suggested that the failure to eliminate German militarism and purge the FRG of Nazism had 'undermined the legal basis for their presence in Berlin.' Quoted in Cradock, *Know Your Enemy*, pp.141-42.

397 Trachtenberg points out in his essay "The Berlin Crisis" that the premise that the Soviets were acting from fear over a nuclear armed Germany was first proposed by Adam Ulam and Jack Schick. See Marc Trachtenberg, *History and Strategy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), p.170. See also Sergei N. Khrushchev, *Nikita Khrushchev and the Creation of a Superpower*, trans. by Shirley Benson (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), pp.302-304.

398 Trachtenberg, "The Berlin Crisis," p.170 and Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, pp.252-56.

of sharing nuclear technology with key NATO allies. The fact that Adenauer and his Defense Minister Joseph Strauss were publicly discussing the provisioning of the *Bundeswehr*-the Federal Republic's army-with nuclear weapons intensified Soviet concern.³⁹⁹

At a meeting in Washington before the December 1958 North Atlantic Council (NAC) meeting, President Eisenhower informed Secretary of State Dulles and other advisors that he was unwilling to countenance any negotiations under a time limit set unilaterally by Khrushchev. Eisenhower believed that Berlin and questions about the whole of Germany should be dealt with separately. Eisenhower thought it was important for the US to reiterate its position that existing agreements regarding Berlin were valid and could only be modified through agreement.⁴⁰⁰ This stance placed some importance on preparing for possible contingencies should the Soviets act on their threats. In the course of the December NATO meeting, a common NATO reply to the Soviet note was worked out, which was transmitted to the Soviets by France, Britain, and the United States on 31 December.⁴⁰¹ The Western notes reiterated that the Soviets could not unilaterally abrogate their rights and responsibilities in Berlin. The Western powers would continue to insist on their unhindered access to Berlin, and they would not consider any sort of "free city" proposal for Berlin.

399 On Adenauer's desire to make sure that the newly constituted *Bundeswehr* was equipped with the same modern weapons as his NATO Allies, see Schwarz, *Konrad Adenauer*, vol.2, pp.219, 266.

400 DDEL, Dulles Papers, WHMS, Box 7, Memcon with President, 12 Dec 1958. This portion of the Memcon was not reproduced in the selection in *FRUS, 1958-60*, Doc.104, vol.VIII, p.192.

401 The draft replies had been drawn up by a Quadripartite Working Group in Paris, then discussed by the NATO Council, then underwent final editorial revisions before being passed on to the Soviets. See *FRUS 1958-60*, vol.VIII, Doc.118: Editorial Note, p.224.

Strictly speaking the matter of Western access to Berlin was not a NATO problem. However, since the three largest NATO powers had legal rights in Berlin and the Federal Republic, NATO's newest member, also had a vested interest in the area, NATO was implicitly involved. The NATO Council had since April 1954 issued statements in its final communiqué stating that the member states of the organization had no intention of recognizing the German Democratic Republic as a sovereign state.⁴⁰² This stance helped to create a more explicit NATO connotation to the Berlin crisis. Throughout the crisis, the Americans, British, and French worked on multiple levels to engage in tripartite planning, quadripartite planning (consulting with the government of the Federal Republic), and with their other NATO allies to assure a coordinated response to the Soviets. In December 1958, the NAC again endorsed a communiqué supporting the Western rights of access to Berlin.⁴⁰³

The British, however, proved to be lukewarm about American ideas to support access to Berlin. In a discussion of the British Chiefs of Staffs on 1 January 1959, Lord Mountbatten reported that the Americans were willing to undertake a probing operation on the autobahn to test Russian intentions in the event of a new blockade. According to Mountbatten, the Americans seemed willing to do so on the assumption that the Soviets were still two to three years from attaining nuclear sufficiency. Thus it would be better for the showdown to come now rather than later. Mountbatten made it clear that “such an

402 Final Communiqué, 23 April 1954, NATO Ministerial Meeting, Available online at: www.nato.int/docu/comm.htm.

403 The “Declaration on Berlin” of 18 December, supported the position that no state could withdraw unilaterally from international agreements and associated the North Atlantic Council with the views on Berlin to be communicated by France, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The Declaration is available at www.nato.int/docu/comm.htm.

operation should therefore only be undertaken with the clear understanding that it might lead to global war, and after all the necessary preparations, including mobilization, had been made.”⁴⁰⁴ Sir Anthony Rumbold of the Foreign Office argued that the Americans had misjudged the character of the initial Soviet note. He stated that West German rearmament with nuclear weapons was the issue which primarily concerned the Soviets, and felt it important that the Soviets be provided a means of retreat from the confrontation. It was important to convince the Americans that the United Kingdom was opposed to the potentially escalatory approach of a land probe on Berlin.⁴⁰⁵

Fearful of an impending collision over Berlin, hoping to jumpstart disarmament talks in Geneva, and eager to play a role as intermediary, Prime Minister Macmillan and a large entourage set off for talks with Khrushchev in late February 1959.⁴⁰⁶ Eisenhower and Dulles had expressed their misgivings, which were downplayed by Macmillan.⁴⁰⁷ De Gaulle and Adenauer were kept in the dark until three days before Macmillan’s departure for Moscow. Macmillan promised to consult with all three of his allies (in Paris, Bonn, and Washington) upon the completion of his trip to Moscow. The Anglo-Soviet talks

404 BNA, DEFE 4/115, COS(59)1st Meeting, 1 January 1959, Min. 1: Berlin.

405 Ibid.

406 Macmillan and company visited the Soviet Union between 21 February and 3 March. He subsequently visited Paris from 9-10 March; Bonn from 12-13 March; Ottawa on 18 March; and Washington from 19-23 March. For Macmillan’s trip to the Soviet Union, see Horne, *Alistair Macmillan*, vol.2, pp.122-29, and Gearson, *Harold Macmillan and the Berlin Wall Crisis*, pp.67-78. For Macmillan’s original report of his trip to the Cabinet, see BNA, CAB 128/33, CC(59)14, 4 March 1959. Here the Prime Minister argued that: “while publicly seeking to maintain the solidarity of the Western position, we should seek to convince our Allies of the wisdom of making a realistic response to the Soviet willingness to negotiate. If the Western powers were not prepared to go some way to meet the Soviet Union, they would face, in the near future, either a major diplomatic defeat as a result of adopting an aggressive policy which, in the event, they would be unable to sustain, or the risk of a major war as the result of following the policy to its logical conclusion.”

407 On Eisenhower and Dulles’ concern over Macmillan’s approach to Moscow, see *FRUS 1958-60*, vol.VII, Doc.353, pp.824-25.

proved arduous, and Macmillan and Foreign Secretary Lloyd endured their fair share of lumps from their Soviet hosts. Nonetheless, Macmillan judged the trip a success. This was primarily because of receipt of a Soviet note on the last day of full talks which effectively suspended the 27 March deadline. In it, the Soviet government expressed its willingness to hold talks between the Foreign Ministers of the four occupying powers as a preliminary towards a summit meeting on disarmament, Berlin, a German peace treaty, and European security.⁴⁰⁸ This move provided a breathing space for the western powers, but did little to remove the general sense of unease which permeated the contingency planning being carried out in the US.

While Macmillan was trying his hand at summitry with the Soviets, within the US government the State and Defense departments were coordinating contingency plans. Acting Secretary of State Herter informed President Eisenhower at the beginning of March that two main contingencies were being examined by the State Department. The first of these-which had already been discussed with the British-was the use of “substantial force to reopen passage to Berlin.”⁴⁰⁹ The second concept being floated was a counter-blockade, perhaps supplemented by further naval measures, of East German or even Soviet ports. Under international law, a pacific blockade was an act of reprisal, and not an act of war. The State paper contemplated setting up control points at the choke points of the Baltic and Black Seas, with the option to extend the blockade to

408 On US receipt of the note, see *FRUS 1958-60*, vol.VIII, Doc.194, p.408.

409 Secretary of Dulles, though suffering from a hernia and the return of the cancer that would ultimately kill him, maintained a hectic pace throughout late 1958-early 1959. In his frequent absence from Washington, Under Secretary of State Christian Herter-Dulles' ultimate successor-served as Acting Secretary. See Immerman, *John Foster Dulles*, pp.190-91.

Northern and Far Eastern ports.⁴¹⁰ Though the paper took into account certain objections, such as the feeling that a counter-blockade could be construed as unduly provocative, it argued that it held sufficient promise to be examined further.⁴¹¹ This was an interesting antecedent to the use of naval power to blockade the Soviets three years later during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Despite British misgivings, the US continued to press the British and French to allow contingency planning to take place under the direction of SACEUR General Norstad following a tripartite meeting of foreign ministers in December 1958. However, it was not until several months into the first Berlin crisis that effective tripartite military planning got under way. General Lauris Norstad, who simultaneously held the dual ‘hats’ of US European Commander and Supreme Allied Commander Europe, initiated a secret US contingency planning group on 18 February 1959.⁴¹² This was intended to serve as the core of a tripartite military contingency planning group that would report to Norstad. He placed it under the direction of his Deputy SACEUR, US General Williston B. Palmer. Organization of the tripartite planning staff moved slower than Norstad hoped. In a telegram to the Joint Chiefs of Staff of 17 March 1959, Norstad complained about the lack of progress in the formation of an effective tripartite staff to develop

410 *FRUS 1958-60*, vol.VIII, Doc.199, p.413.

411 *FRUS 1958-60*, vol.VIII, Doc.199, attachment: Berlin Contingency Planning: Pacific Counter-Blockade”, pp.414-17.

412 On Norstad and his role in the formulation of military contingency planning, see Gregory Pedlow, “Allied Crisis Management for Berlin: The LIVE OAK Organization, 1959-1963”, *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, and Robert S. Jordan, *Norstad: Cold War NATO Supreme Commander* (Basingstoke, England: Macmillan, 2000).

contingency plans.⁴¹³ This planning was to take place under the auspices of a tripartite planning group code name LIVE OAK.

It was not until the end of March—in the wake of Macmillan’s trip to Moscow and subsequent discussions with Eisenhower in Washington—that all three powers finally agreed to set up LIVE OAK.⁴¹⁴ LIVE OAK had an elaborate oversight structure, with a Tripartite Ambassadorial Group located in Washington to provide coordination, with additional advice to be provided by the three embassies in Bonn. Norstad served as commander of LIVE OAK, but there were no operational forces assigned to him, and strictly speaking the organization existed outside of his USEUCOM and SACEUR positions. Day to day management of the staff of approximately 35 people fell to British Major General W. G. Stirling of the British Army of the Rhine.⁴¹⁵

The scope of contingency planning at the beginning of April 1959 was laid out in a State Department paper titled “Berlin Contingency Planning.”⁴¹⁶ In the event the Soviets unilaterally withdrew from their responsibilities in Berlin, it called for the three Western occupying powers to undertake preparatory military measures which would not stir public concern, but would be visible to Soviet intelligence. More elaborate military measures would also be prepared. Before these were put into practice, a joint diplomatic

413 *FRUS 1958-60*, vol.VIII, Doc. 227, p.495-96.

414 When President Eisenhower asked Prime Minister Macmillan if the British were undertaking contingency planning during one of their meetings in Washington on 21 March, Macmillan responded by saying that “they had not been asked, but would do so if General Norstad asked them.” *FRUS 1958-60*, vol.VIII, Doc.241, p.527. See also Gearson, *Harold Macmillan and the Berlin Wall Crisis*, pp.88-89, and Pedlow, “Allied Crisis Management for Berlin”, p.90.

415 *Ibid.*, p.,91.

416 *FRUS 1958-60*, vol.VIII, Doc.255: Berlin Contingency Planning, 4 April 1959, pp.584-89. For a list of military and non-military measures under consideration, see a paper produced by the Interdepartmental Coordinating Group in DDEL, WHO, NSC Staff: Papers, Exec. Sec. Sub. File Ser., Box 8, Berlin Contingency Planning (October 1960 Draft).

protest was to be lodged with Soviet authorities. The more elaborate measures would then fall into two categories: “(1) measures to be implemented once the Soviet government has turned its functions over to the GDR and (2) measures to be implemented after Allied traffic has been forcibly obstructed.”⁴¹⁷ As further planning was underway, the meeting of allied and Soviet foreign ministers got under way in Geneva.

During the Eisenhower period a number of land and air contingencies were developed by LIVE OAK. The initial land probe, to be undertaken by a company-sized unit, was codenamed FREE STYLE. If this probe was turned back or met resistance, it was to be met by a battalion-sized probe codenamed TRADE WIND. The American planners also designed a division-sized probe-Operation JUNE BALL-at this time, but due to British resistance, it was not approved until the summer of 1961. The Americans had initially been resistant to contemplate a renewal of an airlift operation. In fact, the British had been informed by the Americans as far back as 1956 that the US no longer considered an airlift along the lines of 1948-49 viable.⁴¹⁸ Nonetheless, an air contingency codenamed JACK PINE was developed. It called for a more limited airlift to maintain logistic support for the Allied military units in Berlin, evacuate the non-

417 Ibid, p.585.

418 See Admiral Radford's comments to the British in February 1956 that in the event of a future Soviet blockade of Berlin, the U.S. would not make use of an airlift. He gave two reasons: 1) The Soviets now had the ability to jam radars making landings in inclement weather impossible, and 2) The United States Air Force no longer could stand the wear and tear on its heavy lift transports. Instead the U.S. would use a probe of troops along an autobahn corridor. *FRUS 1955-57*, vol.XXVII, MemCon, 1 February 1956, pp.643-44, and BNA, DEFE 5/64, COS(56)53, American Intentions in the Event of Another Soviet Blockade of Berlin, 8 February 1956.

combatants (but not West Berliners), and provide for military units to replace blocked civilian traffic to the city.⁴¹⁹

From 11 May through 5 August-with an intermission from 20 June to 13 July-the Foreign Ministers of France, the UK, the US, and the USSR met in Geneva to carry out talks in preparation for a summit on disarmament, a German peace treaty, and the general state of European security. Ultimately the conference broke up with almost no substantive progress on any of the issues at hand.⁴²⁰ In its wake, Eisenhower finally opted to try personal diplomacy with Khrushchev, inviting him to the United States in September 1959. While the visit went relatively smoothly, it too produced little headway on Berlin or other matters at issue between the two countries. However, Khrushchev had abandoned his ultimatum for Berlin, paving the way for a summit meeting in Paris the following May.⁴²¹ The withdrawal of the ultimatum led to a diminished drive to develop contingency plans as well. When the issue of Berlin again returned to the forefront of the international scene in 1961, the LIVE OAK organization remained in place, and again went into high gear developing further contingency plans.⁴²²

419 Ibid., pp.92-100.

420 Basic documents pertaining to the Geneva conference are found in FRUS 1958-60, vol.VIII, pp.687-1116. The final communiqué for the conference stated that “The discussions which have taken place will be useful for the further negotiations which are necessary in order to reach an agreement.” Ibid., p.1116.

421 Ambrose, *Eisenhower*, vol.2, pp.543-44.

422 On the wind-down in LIVE OAK planning in late 1959 and 1960, see Pedlow, “Allied Crisis Management for Berlin”, pp.94-95.

NATO in the Late Eisenhower Administration

The subject of NATO proper as a subject for planning papers was not formally on the NSC agenda during much of the Eisenhower presidency.⁴²³ In December 1956, the NSC Special Staff raised the issue of developing a new planning paper on NATO. The Special Staff suggested a number of questions pertinent to NATO that it would be appropriate for the NSC to review. These included whether or not US policy should aim at strengthening the organization further or not; whether force goals-largely based on 1948 models-should be revised; and did current NATO strategy correspond to the type of future war envisioned.⁴²⁴ Despite the relevance of these issues, getting NATO formally back on the NSC agenda proved to be slow going (though numerous NATO related issues, not least policy towards Germany and Berlin, were on the agenda frequently). When “Long-Range NATO and Related European Regional Problems” did make it into the 400th NSC Meeting in March 1959, President Eisenhower eventually demurred having the NSC take up the issue at that time. Eisenhower stated that things were too much in a state of flux with regard to NATO to expend too much talent or energy on the topic.⁴²⁵ The issue was revisited, however, in an 11 November meeting of the NSC. Gordon Gray, who had become Special Assistant for National Security Affairs in 1958, had by this time convinced Eisenhower that NATO was a topic that the NSC should hold occasionally discuss, even if it was unnecessary to arrive at policy decisions. During the

423 NATO as a subject was removed from the NSC agenda by recommendation of the NSC Planning Board on 3 April 1953, largely to be replaced by studies on US policy towards individual countries within the Alliance.

424 DDEL, WHO, OSA for NSC, NSC Series, Briefing Notes Subseries, Box 19, Folder: US-NATO Relations & Problems (1), History of NATO in the NSC, 20 April 1959.

425 DDEL, Eisenhower Papers, NSC Series, Box 11, 400th NSC Meeting, 26 March 1959.

course of the meeting, Gray remarked that the discussion paper prepared for the meeting indicated that the Soviet threat “had broadened and increased since 1949.” President Eisenhower interjected that he would like one dissenting minority view recorded against that point.⁴²⁶ Eisenhower’s own views on NATO strategy were increasingly at odds with his advisors in the final year of his administration, reflecting in part a growing frustration with the legacy of the New Look.

In August 1960, Robert Bowie, a special consultant to the State Department and State liaison to the NSC Policy Planning Board, completed a report entitled “The North Atlantic Nations Tasks for the 1960’s.”⁴²⁷ Bowie, a law professor at Harvard, had served as director of the Policy Planning Staff of the State Department until August 1955, thereafter serving as Assistant Secretary of State for Policy Planning and Department of State representative on the National Security Council Planning Board. Bowie was legendary within the State Department for his “epic” debates with Dulles.⁴²⁸ On the NSC

426 DDEL, Eisenhower Papers, NSC Series, Box 11, 424th NSC Meeting, 11 November 1959.

427 Bowie took responsibility for the conclusions, but was assisted by a small staff which included: Deane R. Hinton, Malcolm W. Hoag, Professor Klaus E. Knorr, Hal B. Lary, Louis Marengo, Irving A. Sirken, and Francis T. Williamson. Bowie was also appreciative of the assistance of Robert Komer (then at the CIA) in the preparation of the draft report. Komer would go on to serve in the NSC staff of both the Kennedy and Johnson administrations before eventually serving as Johnson’s pacification advisor on Vietnam.

DDEL, WHO, OSS, Subject Series, Alphabetical Subseries, Folder: Bowie Report, Box 6, “The North Atlantic Nations Tasks for the 1960’s,” A Report to the Secretary of State, August, 1960. There are also copies of the Bowie Report in the DDEL, Norstad Papers, Box 98, and in the John F. Kennedy Library [henceforth JFKL], NSF, Box 220. An highly annotated version of the report can be found as *FRUS 1958-60*, vol.VII, Pt.1, Doc.266, pp.622-627. Bowie subsequently floated a similar analysis—though one which also was published in the wake of both the Cuban and second Berlin crises—as “Strategy and the Atlantic Alliance,” *International Organization*, vol.17, no.3, The Atlantic Community: Progress and Prospects (Summer 1963), pp.709-732.

428 Immerman, *John Foster Dulles*, p.49.

Planning Board, Bowie was a well-known advocate of increased emphasis on limited war studies.⁴²⁹

One of the primary areas where Bowie felt the Alliance could be strengthened was through improving “the Shield’s conventional military capabilities to defend Europe against non-nuclear attacks and to reduce its risky dependence upon initiating the use of nuclear weapons.”⁴³⁰ This certainly reflected the concern in the administration engendered by the recent crisis over Berlin, as well as the broader concern over the strategy of massive retaliation. Bowie also opposed reliance upon tactical nuclear weapons for defense. He was strongly critical of increasing the number of national nuclear forces in the NATO alliances. In his analysis, independent national forces diverted all too many resources from the Shield, without any tangible gain to NATO’s deterrent nuclear forces.⁴³¹ For Bowie a strategy which rested on a tactical nuclear defense of Europe to offset the Soviet conventional advantage was “very costly in peacetime and self-defeating in wartime.”⁴³² Bowie did not feel it necessary to create a conventional force capable of handling an all-out Soviet invasion. Based on current estimate of Soviet forces (Bowie used 100 divisions as the 1 January 1960 numbers, with a reduction to 65 divisions by January 1962 based on announced Soviet troop reductions) and a standard 2:1 or 3:1 estimate of attacking to defending forces, he estimated that NATO’s existing force goals (MC 70) of 30 divisions would be sufficient for a credible

429 DDEL, WHO, OSS, Subj. Ser., Dep. of Def. Subser., Box 5, Memorandum for President, re: Limited War in the Nuclear Age, 7 August 1957.

430 DDEL, WHO, OSS, Subj. Ser, Alph. Subser., Box 6, “The North Atlantic Nations Tasks for the 1960’s” (The Bowie Report).

431 Ibid., p.56.

432 Ibid., pp.34-35.

defense of the central front. Based on the manpower and economic resources of the west, Bowie wrote that, "There thus seems to be no rational basis for the frequently-encountered despair about NATO force levels."⁴³³

In a discussion of his report with President Eisenhower and SACEUR Norstad, Bowie reiterated his concern regarding the danger posed by tactical nuclear weapons deployed in Europe. Bowie thought it was inconceivable that any tactical nuclear exchange in Europe would not degenerate into an all-out nuclear exchange.⁴³⁴ While Norstad had some reservations about Bowie's position on tactical nuclear weapons, he did press Eisenhower to support strengthened conventional force goals for NATO. When Eisenhower asked where the resources were to come from, both Bowie and Norstad pointed out (in an argument Robert McNamara would later use) that the NATO nations combined had a greater manpower pool than the whole of the Warsaw Pact.⁴³⁵ Though the Bowie report did not attain official NSC approval during the Eisenhower administration, much of the thrust of its analysis was revived in the Kennedy administration in the Acheson report on NATO.⁴³⁶ Bowie's position on strengthened conventional forces and desire to limit independent national deterrents suggested two of the central themes the Kennedy administration was to pursue with regard to NATO.

433 Ibid., pp.46-47.

434 *FRUS 1968-60*, vol.VII, pt.1, Doc.267, pp.631-32.

435 Ibid., p.632.

436 The final planning document-produced by a joint State-Defense working group-for NATO's ten year review during the Eisenhower administration is NSC 6017. A copy is located in DDEL, WHO, OSA for NSC, NSC Series, Policy Papers Subseries, Box 29. The Acheson Report is discussed in the following chapter.

British Concern Over NATO Strategy at the End of the Eisenhower Administration

Prime Minister Macmillan met with a group of senior civil servants and members of the Chiefs of Staff at the Chequers country estate in the summer of 1959. Looking ahead to the post-election period, Macmillan wanted the incoming administration to have prepared a long-term forecast that would look at “economic, diplomatic and military developments in world affairs over the next decade.” This long-term guidance was framed by a number of questions which the group discussed, including the impending effects of nuclear parity on the existing strategy of the Western deterrent.⁴³⁷ This study developed over the coming month, spawning a number of additional defense studies and appraisals of Britain’s place in the world for the coming decade. The final report, titled “The Future Policy Study, 1960-1970” was completed early the next winter and circulated to the Cabinet. Its forecast and recommendations will be discussed below.

In the wake of the fall elections, Macmillan was returned to office with a commanding Parliamentary majority at the height of his personal popularity.⁴³⁸ A Cabinet reshuffle subsequently followed. Duncan Sandys, who had often had difficult relations with the COS was shifted from Defense to the Ministry of Aviation. His place was taken by Harold Watkinson, a successful industrialist who brought the promise of smoother relations with the Chiefs with his appointment. Watkinson himself came out as an

437 The study was placed under the chairmanship of Sir Norman Brook, chief secretary to the Cabinet, and included representatives from the Treasury, Foreign Office, COS, and Atomic Energy Authority. BNA, CAB 134/1929, FP(59)1, Study of Future Policy, 7 June 1959.

438 The General Election was held on 8 October 1959. The Conservatives returned with 365 members of Parliament, and improvement of 21 seats over the 1955 General Election. This increased their margin over the Labor party to 107 seats. See Horne, *Harold Macmillan*, vol.II, pp.145, 214, and Chris Cook and John Paxton, *European Political Facts 1918-90* (New York: Facts on File, 1992), p.205.

advocate of restoring the balance in defense expenditures back toward conventional forces. As he wrote in his memoirs:

I was more interested in the need to achieve a reorganization of Britain's conventional forces under firm businesslike direction, coupled with a policy which would speed up their reaction time and create a mobile force with a poised capacity to operate from land or sea bases. This seemed to me a more important priority in 1959 than overmuch argument about nuclear philosophical heresies of one kind or another.⁴³⁹

The British were preparing to initiate a series of very quiet discussions on Global Strategy with the United States. Macmillan himself placed a great deal of emphasis on the success of these talks in bringing about closer US-UK cooperation in defense. One of the points brought up in discussion revolved around the relative balance between conventional and nuclear deterrence forces. The British were curious if the recent failure of US forces to be able to intervene in Laos was stimulating thought about the "provision of highly mobile conventional forces, possibly equipped with tactical nuclear weapons." At the same time the British wanted to be careful not to commit themselves to a large scale increase in conventional forces beyond what they "considered necessary to meet the likely threats."⁴⁴⁰ What these were would be spelled out in a study on United Kingdom Requirements for Limited War and the Strategic reserve soon to get under way.⁴⁴¹

439 Quoted in Jackson and Bramall, *The Chiefs*, p.330.

440 BNA, DEFE 32/13, MM 3/59, US/UK Review of Global Strategy-Brief for United Kingdom Representative, 12 November 1959.

441 Conforming to the Future Policy Study trend, the COS instructed the Joint Planning Staff to prepare a study on Limited War requirements for the 1960 to 1970 period. The study was subsequently re-titled Military Strategy for Circumstances Short of Global War-1960-1970, on the premise that this was a less ambiguous title. BNA, DEFE 6/61, JP(60)16(D)T. of R., 28 January 1960 and JP(60)16(Final), 30 March 1960, Limited War Study.

The Future Policy Study was completed and circulated to the Cabinet at the end of February 1960.⁴⁴² Throughout the report one sees the tension between European (NATO) and worldwide commitments that were to bedevil British policy makers in the coming decade. While there was a desire to see the British government get credit from its allies for its worldwide defense commitments, it stated, “First, and most important, British influence in the Atlantic Community and the cohesion of the Alliance as a whole will gain if the United Kingdom continues to make a significant contribution towards the Western strategic deterrent and towards the Shield Forces of NATO.”⁴⁴³ The continued unity and strength of NATO was described as the “main object” of British policy.⁴⁴⁴ The aim of thwarting Soviet designs on Western Europe was seen primarily as a political challenge, but one which was met through military means.

The report was framed under the presumption of nuclear parity and growing Soviet economic strength, projected to grow faster than the US in the coming decade. This contributed to a sense—in the case of NATO particularly—that there was no way to meet the challenge of the Soviets in Europe on a purely conventional basis.⁴⁴⁵ Since the British foresaw any type of limited war in Europe as highly unlikely, they wanted to see a

442 Circulated under a covering note from Prime Minister Macmillan on 29 February 1960. BNA, CAB 129/100, C(60)35, Future Policy Study, 1960-1970. It was discussed by the Cabinet on 23 March 1960. BNA, CAB 134/1929, FP(60)1.

443 BNA, CAB 129/100, C(60)35, p.42.

444 Ibid., p.24.

445 One of the implications of the inability to match Soviet conventional forces that was discussed at the initial Chequers meeting was the need to build up the tactical nuclear weapons assigned to the Shield Forces. Unfortunately the record does not say who made this point at the meeting, though one suspects it came from one of the Chiefs of Staff. BNA, CAB 134/1929, FP(59)1, 7 June 1959.

shift in NATO strategic priorities.⁴⁴⁶ This meant placing emphasis on the deterrent strength of the Alliance-both its strategic nuclear deterrent and the Shield Forces-and downplaying any concept of operations after the strategic nuclear exchange.⁴⁴⁷ But inherent in the notion of strengthened Shield Forces was a paradox. A strengthened Shield *deterrent* would suggest more ready forces, or certainly making sure existing forces were maintained at a high level of readiness. Trying to reconcile a strengthened Shield deterrent with reductions in second-phase capabilities was one of the unresolved problems which emerged from the Future Policy Study.

The British NATO Strategy Review of 1960

The British Chiefs of Staff, as part of the follow-up to the Future Policy Study, were reviewing the British position on NATO strategy in the final months of 1960. This was in part prompted by concern that SACEUR's request for control over MRBMs would not be granted, and because it was felt that UK and NATO military authorities held different conceptions of the NATO strategic concept.⁴⁴⁸ This report reviewed the existing NATO Strategic Concept, then based on MC 14/2 and MC 48/2. It reiterated that local hostile action on the part of the Russians, should it broaden in scope or become prolonged, would have to be met by "all weapons and forces at NATO's disposal" since at that time there was no "concept of limited war with the USSR." Nonetheless, the matter did not seem to be fully resolved within the Ministry of Defense. The Chief of the

446 A current JIC study argued that the Soviets would continue to avoid global war or situations likely to lead to global war. Soviet direct military action was primarily seen as a danger within the Soviet bloc itself. The report also rejected the premise that a movement towards a closer conventional balance in Europe (either through Soviet reductions or a NATO build-up), that it would make it "more likely that any hostilities that did occur could be limited." BNA, CAB 158/37, JIC(59)69(Final), 29 October 1959.

447 BNA, CAB 129/100, C(60)35, p.31.

448 BNA, DEFE 5/106, COS(60)256, NATO Strategy, 14 September 1960.

British Defense Staff in Washington wrote to Watkinson on 7 September, stating, “it may be impossible to use even tactical weapons from the very start: that from the military point of view the Shield Forces need only be strong enough to be able to resist until the West has had time to make up its mind to launch the strategic nuclear forces.”⁴⁴⁹ On the other hand, a military brief prepared for the Mottershead Committee in October, after the Chiefs had completed the review described below, could envision a situation in which the Soviets might launch a attack for piecemeal gains against the West. Under such circumstances, they considered the possibility-based on the premise that the Soviets would be willing to withdraw if the Western response seemed to indicate a willingness to resort to all-out war. In such a case, they considered it possible that the West might resort to the use of tactical nuclear weapons on a tightly constrained battlefield environment, located on NATO territory. Though recognizing the grave political implications within NATO, the brief stated that there was, “a political need for a more intelligible defense policy that one which could result, if the primary aim [prevention of war] should fail, in a choice between capitulation and mutual destruction.”⁴⁵⁰

On 13 September 1960 the British Chiefs of Staff approved a report which laid out British concerns with present NATO strategy.⁴⁵¹ In light of ongoing debates about the control of nuclear weapons in NATO and the shifting from clear American nuclear superiority toward a situation of greater nuclear balance between the superpowers, the

449 BNA, DEFE 7/2228, BDS to MoD, 7 September 1960.

450 BNA, DEFE 7/2228, “NATO Policy in Europe,” Brief for Military Representative to the Mottershead Committee, 26 October 1960.

451 BNA, DEFE 6/63, JP(60)63, NATO Strategy is discussed in DEFE 4/129, COS(60)55th Meeting, and approved subject to minor amendment in DEFE 5/106, COS(60)256, NATO Strategy, 14 September 1960.

British Chiefs felt that a review of NATO's basic strategy was called for. General Norstad's concern that current NATO conventional forces were insufficient to maintain the desired forward defense until the full effects of the strategic nuclear counter-offensive were felt was one important element of the British strategy review. The critical factor however was that the development of a large number of warheads and delivery systems by both sides and the fact that North America was now vulnerable to direct attack by ICBMs and SLBMs meant that a "state of mutual deterrence" had come about. Since the danger of global, devastating war was now even more acute, the British felt it was important to assure that it did not break out. One consequence of this was to try and decrease NATO's need for reliance on nuclear weapons from the outset of a conflict. This included the use of tactical nuclear weapons, whose use seemed increasingly unlikely to be authorized by political authorities in the initial phase of any crisis. The report expressed concern that if the Soviets should challenge Western Europe through conventional means, and if NATO did not develop a sufficient non-nuclear response, then the NATO powers would be faced with backing down or heading down the road to nuclear annihilation. But inherent throughout was the tension this re-appraisal created for NATO's conventional forces. On the one hand, it seemed to make little sense to maintain sizable conventional forces for NATO's forward defense if such a battle would have no effect on the outcome of a nuclear exchange. Two of the military conclusions in particular are of note:

With the coming of nuclear sufficiency, all-out nuclear war is no longer justifiable as the West's only reaction to minor aggressive acts.

...

The concept of shield forces which are able, even after a strategic nuclear exchange, to maintain territorial integrity or continue operations to a successful conclusion is no longer sustainable.⁴⁵²

In its final conclusions, the Chiefs stated that it was impossible to admit, even amongst themselves, that fighting after a nuclear exchange would not take place. This was to go too far in recognizing the altered circumstances brought on by nuclear sufficiency. Instead, in order to provide solace to friends and deterrence to foes, it remained necessary to train, equip, and prepare as though war beyond the nuclear exchange was still possible with the primary object of providing a credible deterrent to ensure that no such war broke out.

The British, who had received some information regarding the Bowie Report by late September, continued to review what position they should take toward NATO policy during the fall of 1960.⁴⁵³ They continued to be concerned with Norstad's MRBM plans. There was a clear sense within the British Ministry of Defense that Britain would soon have to develop a formal position on NATO policy of its own. Watkinson recognized that these were two problems for the British to solve. While there was support in principle for strengthened conventional forces for the Shield, the British were leaning towards resistance on practical grounds because of its financial implications.⁴⁵⁴ There was also a sense of conviction with British defense circles that SACEUR's MRBM request was not militarily justifiable. The British felt that both the size of the warheads and the types of targets envisioned for the MRBM force would be indistinguishable from

452 BNA, DEFE 5/106, COS(60)256, Annex, NATO Strategy, 14 September 1960, p.14.

453 BNA, DEFE 7/2228, Ramsbotham's paper for Playfair, 3 October 1960.

454 BNA, DEFE 32/13, MM.COS(60)12th Meeting, 5 October 1960.

a general strategic attack on the Soviets. Thus, it was inconceivable for the British to contemplate a situation in which SACEUR would need authority to use MRBMs short of general war, in which case the military uses which SACEUR envisioned them for (interdiction targets) would serve no purpose.⁴⁵⁵ However, there was also recognition on the British side that it was impolitic to criticize MRBMs on a military basis. In the wake of the US Presidential elections, the British decided to avoid any advance commitments prior to the submission of formal proposals to NATO.⁴⁵⁶ This fence sitting was largely to continue until the Acheson proposals were submitted for British consideration the following spring.

SACEUR's Interpretation of NATO Strategy

The sustained critique of massive retaliation found its expression in an order issued by Supreme Allied Commander Lauris Norstad in the last months of the Eisenhower administration. Norstad in many ways had enjoyed a privileged position under Eisenhower. This reflected the conception of SACEUR that Eisenhower himself had created. But in his "Basic Strategic Guidance for Allied Command Europe" of 13 December 1960, Norstad interpreted NATO strategy in a way that seemed to favor flexible response. This order was issued by Norstad to clarify misperceptions that had been brought to his attention after the fall NATO command post exercise. Norstad noted that while NATO frequently trained for all-out nuclear war, it was a serious misinterpretation to suggest that this was the only type of warfare NATO should be

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid. The military objections to SACEUR's MRBM request are discussed at further length in BNA, DEFE 6/63, JP(60)63(Final), attached at annex to DEFE 4/129, COS(60)55th Meeting.

⁴⁵⁶ BNA, DEFE 32/13, MM/COS(60)14th Meeting, 23 November 1960.

prepared for. This meant that ACE forces had to be equipped, trained, and deployed to react appropriately. This meant the use of only conventional weapons “when they were adequate to the military situation” and “atomic weapons when the use of such weapons is necessary.”⁴⁵⁷ In addition to conceiving situations which might be limited to conventional exchanges alone, the document also stated that, “The selective use of limited atomic firepower will not necessarily result in total war, although it may heighten the degree of risk.”⁴⁵⁸ Though couched in the cautious language of a military commander who walked a diplomatic tightrope, this was clearly an expression which recognized a conception of limited nuclear war. And it should be remembered that the standing NATO strategic concept “in no case was there a NATO concept of limited war with the Soviets.”⁴⁵⁹ But it seemed that now there was. This was a measure of both the degree to which massive retaliation had been undermined and to what extent the Berlin crisis had provided an opportunity for interpretation into the existing NATO strategic concept. Thus, prior to the Kennedy administration’s rethinking of NATO strategy and policy, Lauris Norstad was already injecting a sense of flexible response into NATO planning.

457 The document went on to say, “Except in certain well defined cases of direct self-defense, atomic weapons will be introduced into the battle only after a particular decision to do so has resulted from the operation of an established decision-making process.” DDEL, Norstad Papers, Box 90, SHAPE 167/60, Basic Strategic Guidance for Allied Command Europe, 13 December 1960, Folder: Strategy-General (2). This process will insure that such a decision would in all cases be taken by an authority at a level higher than that of the basic combat unit.” Just exactly what these well-defined cases were does not seem to have been so well-defined. During the Kennedy administration, Secretary of Defense McNamara-with his attention to detail-would try to push Norstad for further clarification on this matter.

458 Ibid.

459 NATO Archives, MC 14/2 (Revised), “Overall Strategic Concept for Defense of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization”, 21 February 1957, p.11. Available online at

Chapter 5: The Problem with Flexible Response

Flexible response is the phrase which has become popularly associated with the Kennedy administration's approach to Cold War strategy.⁴⁶⁰ President John F. Kennedy saw the field of foreign policy as the area where presidential power could be most effectively wielded. He entered office with a determination to make a mark, and to invigorate American policy with a new and determined sense of mission that he and others had felt was missing in the Eisenhower administration. The Kennedy administration had pressed its NATO allies to accept a defense posture that would prove more flexible and dynamic than its predecessor's policy.⁴⁶¹

Flexible response, as it was articulated over time, had several features, which were not *necessarily* connected with one another. The first was an attempt to improve NATO's conventional force posture. This aspect was articulated in early 1961 and was initially connected to the third Berlin crisis. Even after the construction of the Berlin Wall brought a *de facto* solution to the Berlin crisis, conventional force improvements were pressed upon the European allies for years to come. The second aspect of flexible response was an attempt to increase the nuclear targeting options in the SIOP plan. The aim was to make more options available to the President, and implicitly the alliance, than

460 The basic accounts of the flexible response debate within NATO are John S. Duffield, *Power Rules: The Evolution of NATO's Conventional Force Posture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), especially chaps.4-5; Francis J. Gavin, "The Myth of Flexible Response: United States Strategy in Europe during the 1960s," *The International History Review*, XXIII, 4 (December 2001), pp.847-75; Lawrence S. Kaplan, et.al., *HOSD*, vol.V: *The McNamara Ascendancy 1961-1965* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2006); Richard L. Kugler, *The Great Strategy Debate: NATO's Evolution in the 1960s* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1991); and Jane E. Stromseth, *The Origins of Flexible Response: NATO's Debate over Strategy in the 1960s* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988).

461 As Gavin relates, many senior officials in the Kennedy administration themselves rarely used flexible response in private, despite the nearly ubiquitous use of the word in news reports and secondary literature. Gavin, "Myth of Flexible Response", p.849.

a single, massive all-out nuclear retaliatory strike. Within the context of NATO, this aspect of flexible response was advanced in its most detailed form by Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara at a meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Athens, Greece in May 1962. A third feature of flexible response, which has less direct relevance to the discussion of NATO strategy, was President Kennedy's advocacy of improved counterinsurgency doctrine and special forces, such as the US Army's Green Berets.⁴⁶² The first two features of flexible response are of central relevance to understanding the debate over NATO strategy in the 1960s.

Over time President Kennedy came to have considerable reservations about flexible response in NATO. Nonetheless, his administration, as opposed to the President himself, remained committed well into the Johnson administration to the program enunciated in the early months of the Kennedy presidency.⁴⁶³ Despite the perceived shortcomings of massive retaliation, the attempt to induce a shift in alliance defense

462 For a good recent discussion of Kennedy's interest in counterinsurgency, see Andrew J. Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine 1942-1976* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 2006), pp.223-28.

463 Gavin has argued that the President and his some senior policy makers were never convinced of the "core strategic assumptions underlying the doctrine of flexible response." Instead flexible response was a rhetorical device which sought to "ease difficult intra-alliance tensions over the two crucial questions of the cold war in Europe, the German question and the nuclear question." Gavin, "The Myth of Flexible Response," pp.847-8. While I concur with Gavin regarding Kennedy's own position on flexible response, I think he misses the importance of how much the European allies perceived flexible response as a real attempt to change the alliance's operational strategy and the extent to which senior members of the US government retained their fidelity to the concept into the Johnson period. For instance, in November 1965, Secretary of State Rusk wrote Secretary of Defense McNamara that, "I would like to comment on several issues which I believe to have major significance for our national security policy. The first deals with our NATO policy. You and I continue to be in agreement that the position which the US has evolved over the past several years concerning the importance of a realistic non-nuclear capability in Europe remains an important tenet of US policy. In this connection, the further work which you are now having done within the Department of Defense to define more precisely both the requirements for and capabilities of a non-nuclear military effort in Europe will undoubtedly prove useful. But the problem to which I believe we must both address ourselves is the priority of effort which we wish to apply to a series of policy issues which currently confront us." *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.X: National Security Policy, Doc.105. Available at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/johnsonlb/x/9061.htm>.

posture towards flexible response was not one of the more successful chapters in alliance diplomacy. The strategy of flexible response was often at odds with the desires of key European allies. The British, French, and West Germans had their own strong views which were both at variance with one another and with the strategy pursued by Washington. Initially the Kennedy administration tried to pursue the change in strategy pragmatically, which meant trying to interpret existing strategy documents to fit their new concept.⁴⁶⁴ This tactic won little support. The preparation of MC 100/1 grew out of a need to enunciate the administration's goals more clearly when the supposedly more pragmatic course had played itself out. Curiously, by the time MC 100/1 was under consideration, some of the features which the administration had cast as part of their strategy, notably nuclear counter-force targeting as a flexible nuclear response, had largely been abandoned for technical reasons.

In November 1963 the French government blocked the acceptance of MC 100/1, a NATO strategy document which reflected the Kennedy administration's desire for a change in the NATO strategy embodied in the Eisenhower-era documents MC 14/2 and

464 This was true of US strategy as well as NATO strategy. Kennedy himself, and also McNamara, were resistant to formal definitions of strategy. The Basic National Security Policy (BNSP) which had been produced annually throughout the Eisenhower period as a guide for various government, found little favor in the new administration. During the transition period, Professor Richard Neustadt of Columbia University told Kennedy that the BNSP would be used by the various department to advance their own agendas and limit his freedom of maneuver as President. However, Walt Rostow, head of State's Policy Planning Staff, Paul Nitze, who directed Defense's Department of International Security Affairs, and Maxwell Taylor, first as the President's Special Military Advisor and later as Chief of Staff, to name a few prominent administration figures, all favored the utility of formal policy documents. The issue remained unresolved for sometime, until Kennedy rescinded NSC 5906/1, the final Eisenhower-era BNSP, on 17 January 1963. Thereafter guidance was to come from major policy pronouncements from the President and Cabinet officers. McNamara's November 1963 speech to the New York Economic Club, discussed at the end of this chapter, can in some regard be seen as the last major strategic policy statement on NATO of the Kennedy Presidency. For discussion of Kennedy and formal strategy, see Kaplan, et. al., *HSOD*, vol.V, pp.2.

MC 48/2. The French position on MC 100/1 reflected De Gaulle's and French national views, but also more general misgivings within NATO about the so-called strategy of flexible response. The attempted revision of NATO's defense posture undertaken by the Kennedy and Johnson administrations contributed to a good deal of consternation within the alliance about the strategic focus of NATO. The dilemma and ambiguities of flexible response would remain with the alliance down to the end of the Cold War.

President Kennedy himself was determined to inject a new spirit of dynamism into policy and to bring into Washington "the best and the brightest" to serve in his administration. He came to office with few clearly formed ideas as to what this would mean. Instead, Kennedy focused on gathering together around him a number of bright and agile advisors who would help him stake out the new policies his administration would follow. Many of these men were to play a key role in the determination of American and NATO policy during the 1960s.⁴⁶⁵ Robert McNamara, the recently named President of the Ford Corporation, was recruited to serve as Secretary of Defense. McNamara and a host of subordinates largely recruited from the RAND Corporation—including figures such as Ross Gilpatrick, Alain Enthoven, Charles Hitch, William Kaufman, and Henry Rowen—soon generated a great deal of upheaval in American strategic planning and defense procurement when they settled into the Pentagon.⁴⁶⁶ As

⁴⁶⁵ David Halberstam, *The Best and the Brightest* (New York: Random House, 1992). On the formation of the Kennedy team, there is also much of interest in Walter Isaacson and Evan Thomas, *The Wise Men, Six Friends and the World They Made* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986), pp.589-604.

⁴⁶⁶ Stromseth, *The Origins of Flexible Response*, p.28. Another important figure that ended up in McNamara's Pentagon was Paul H. Nitze. Nitze as Kennan's successor as director of the Policy Planning Staff at the State Department, had been instrumental in the draft language of NSC 68. Under McNamara he became the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, an office sometimes known as

Kennedy was determined to maintain tight control over foreign policy, he sought out a man to serve as his Secretary of State who would clearly be able to follow the policy lead established in the White House.⁴⁶⁷ A number of figures, such as Chester Bowles, David Bruce, Harvard Dean McGeorge Bundy, and Senator J. William Fulbright were all considered and dismissed. Ultimately, Kennedy settled on Dean Rusk, head of the Rockefeller Foundation and a former State Department official.⁴⁶⁸ McGeorge Bundy, having missed out on the appointment at Secretary of State, was brought into the administration as the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs. Bundy quickly rose to be one of Kennedy's closest advisors on foreign affairs.⁴⁶⁹ Dean Acheson, after turning down Kennedy's offer to serve as Ambassador to NATO, accepted an informal role as elder statesman for European and NATO affairs in the administration, and played an important role especially in the early months of the administration in formulating policy.⁴⁷⁰

General Maxwell Taylor would eventually become another member of the Kennedy team. After Kennedy became frustrated with the Joint Chiefs of Staff's advice

the "Little State Department." On Nitze's recruitment, see Paul H. Nitze, *From Hiroshima to Glasnost*, pp.180-82.

467 Robert Dallek, *John F. Kennedy: An Unfinished Life* (London: Penguin Books, 2003), pp.314-315.

468 Dallek, *John F. Kennedy*, pp.313-315. The two basic accounts of Dean Rusk's roles in the Cold War are Thomas Schoenbaum, *Waging Peace and War: Dean Rusk in the Truman, Kennedy, and Johnson Years* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988) and Thomas Zeiler, *Dean Rusk: Defending the American Mission Abroad* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 2000).

469 The most recent study on Bundy's role as National Security Advisor is Andrew Preston, *The War Council: McGeorge Bundy, the NSC, and Vietnam* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006); For an account of McGeorge Bundy's career and that of his brother William Bundy, see Kai Bird, *The Color of Truth: McGeorge Bundy and William Bundy, Brothers in Arms* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998). Though it is an academic study, and not a memoir, there is much of value on the Kennedy administration in McGeorge Bundy, *Danger and Survival: Choices about the Bomb in the First Fifty Years* (New York: Random House, 1988).

470 Chace, *Acheson*, pp.381ff.

following the Bay of Pigs fiasco, Taylor was brought on board as the President's special military adviser.⁴⁷¹ Kennedy entered office with a skeptical opinion of the higher military command, and this skepticism turned to frustration, if not disdain, over the course of the Bay of Pigs fiasco. Ongoing friction with NATO SACEUR Lauris Norstad and JCS Chairman Lyman Lemnitzer led Kennedy to replace Lemnitzer with Taylor at the end of Lemnitzer's first term as Chairman. Lemnitzer, who retained too much of a traditional military attitude for Kennedy's tastes, was then bundled off to Europe, where he served as SACEUR until his retirement in July 1969.⁴⁷²

Kennedy was determined to have a smoother transition than the brief and coldly formal exchange between Truman and Eisenhower before Eisenhower's inauguration. President-elect Kennedy met with President Eisenhower twice before his own inauguration. At the first meeting on 6 December, Eisenhower talked with Kennedy for over an hour. Before the meeting he had suggested that they review NATO nuclear sharing, disarmament and nuclear test bans, and a number of world trouble spots. At a second meeting, President Eisenhower met privately with President-elect Kennedy to discuss emergency procedures for the use of atomic weapons and the use of covert forces in the Cold War. Though matters such as Laos took up much of the actual briefing time, Eisenhower's demonstration of emergency evacuation procedures and his surprising

471 John M. Taylor, *General Maxwell Taylor: The Sword and the Pen* (New York: Doubleday, 1989), and Maxwell D. Taylor, *Swords and Plowshares: A Memoir* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1972).

472 L. James Binder, *Lemnitzer: A Soldier for His Time* (Washington, DC: Brassey's, 1997), pp.312ff; and Ronald H. Cole, et. al., *The Chairmanship of the Joint Chiefs of Staff* (Washington, DC: Joint History Office, Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1995), pp.67-72.

sangfroid discussion of nuclear weapons only served to remind Kennedy of the pressing responsibilities he would inherit as president.⁴⁷³

In a memorandum prepared shortly after President Kennedy was sworn in, National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy argued that the National Security Council needed to review a host of issues dealing with basic military policy, including the needed strategic forces, continental defense, limited war forces, and NATO strategy. Bundy wanted Kennedy to authorize a number of studies, either under his supervision in the NSC or McNamara's at Defense, which would make full use of candid information and planning from the armed services—for which he needed Presidential support—to initiate the thorough, ongoing review of military policy.⁴⁷⁴ Within the following months Kennedy and McNamara authorized a number of studies as the administration grappled with the complex defense and security issues it faced.

The Kennedy Team and SIOP

Though Kennedy's future policies were still in development as his administration assumed office, Kennedy himself had seen the dangers of the atomic age as one of the primary areas of concern in the years leading up to his presidential bid.⁴⁷⁵ Not surprisingly, getting a firmer grip on nuclear strategy and command and control became an important early concern of the new administration. But in the course of doing so the Kennedy administration was going to severely challenge many of the implicit postulates of the NATO system that had been worked out in the course of the Eisenhower

473 Dallek, *John F. Kennedy*, pp.302-05.

474 *FRUS 1961-63*, vol.VIII, pp.18-19.

475 Dallek, *John F. Kennedy*, p.343.

administration and bring about a nearly decade long struggle to re-appraise NATO strategy.

Before all this came to pass, however, the Kennedy team first had to digest the American nuclear war-fighting strategy as it had evolved by the end of the Eisenhower administration. Secretary of Defense McNamara and his team were briefed by the Strategic Air Command at Omaha, Nebraska on 4-5 February 1961.⁴⁷⁶ McNamara was shocked by a number of aspects of the briefing. For one, the primary strike plan called for attacks in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, and China, regardless of whether or not those countries were involved in US-Soviet hostilities. Also, in order to insure a high probability of target destructions, there were as many as four thermonuclear weapons dedicated to many of the targets. For McNamara, this was not only wasteful, but it threatened to produce a 'fantastic' amount of fallout. Upon leaving the briefing, McNamara directed his assistant Alain Enthoven to begin what was to be a long, drawn-out battle to develop a greater number of options for the President in the event of a nuclear war.⁴⁷⁷

As Kennedy and his close advisors became aware of the loose pre-delegation arrangements for nuclear weapons use that had evolved under the Eisenhower administration, there was a great deal of time and energy spent on securing more careful presidential control over the command and control aspects of nuclear weapons.⁴⁷⁸ The

476 Curiously, President Kennedy's briefing on SIOP was not held until 13 September 1961. See Scott D. Sagan, SIOP-62: The Nuclear War Plan Briefing to President Kennedy," *International Security*, vol.12, no.1 (Summer 1987), pp.22-51.

477 Shapley, *Promise and Power*, pp.109-11.

478 Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, p.298.

centralization of control had very important implications for the relationship between the Kennedy administration and its European allies. Concomitant with centralization was an implication to oppose the proliferation of all national nuclear deterrents. This ran against the desires of two important allies, Britain and France. At Nassau in 1962, Kennedy adopted a stance towards assisting the British with the maintenance of their nuclear position that considerably complicated the debate over nuclear weapons within the alliance. Before dealing with this it is important to consider the Acheson report, which provides the point of departure for discussing subsequent US policy towards NATO.

The Acheson and Mottershead Reports

As part of the incoming administration's analysis of national security, President Kennedy had requested that former Secretary of State Dean Acheson serve as a special consultant to Secretary of State Rusk and himself on matters related to NATO and Europe. Though eschewing any formal position within the government, Acheson proved eager to accept a position as the administration's primary consultants on matters related to NATO and Europe more generally.⁴⁷⁹ Acheson undertook a study of US policy toward NATO with the assistance of Paul Nitze, William Bundy, and a number of aides from McNamara's civilian recruits in the Department of Defense. He was to continue in his role as special advisor and trouble shooter into the Johnson administration.

⁴⁷⁹ Chace, *Acheson*, pp.383-84. Acheson, though out of office since Eisenhower became President in 1953, had maintained an active engagement in foreign policy, writing numerous critiques of Dulles' handling of foreign affairs and fellow Democrats whom he felt were insufficiently committed to the continued American presence in Europe. From late 1956, he served as chairman of the foreign policy committee of the Democratic Advisory Council.

Acheson's study and its implications were still being worked out when the first NATO Military Committee in Chiefs of Staff meeting, under Kennedy's tenure, met in Washington on 10 April 1961. Kennedy addressed the assembled military chiefs during the meeting, avoiding any dramatic departures as the Acheson review was still under way. But in a subsequent address by General Lemnitzer, the assembled delegates were informed that the new administration was maintaining its commitment to a forward defense and continued to support the integration of nuclear weapons in NATO shield forces. But he also stated that the administration would "give a high priority to provision of conventional capability."⁴⁸⁰ Though General Lemnitzer sought to reassure his assembled chiefs that the US would remain committed to the maintenance of a secure second-strike deterrent capability, this was clearly an early statement by the Kennedy administration of the new approach to NATO strategy.

When Harold Macmillan came to Washington from 5-8 April 1961 for his second meeting with Kennedy, Acheson delivered a preliminary view of some of his group's thoughts on NATO strategy.⁴⁸¹ Acheson told Macmillan that there was already sufficient nuclear capability in Europe to provide for effective defense. Where he saw the problem was in NATO's conventional forces. He advocated a NATO conventional force posture capable of maintaining a defensive against a conventional Soviet attack of up to 20

480 NATO Archives, MC/CS 26, General Statement Made by General Lemnitzer, 10 April 1961.

481 This meeting was preceded by discussions between US and UK officials, including Ambassador Caccia, Lord Hood, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Dean Acheson, General Lemnitzer and Paul Nitze on 17 March 1962. The meeting had given the British a good perspective on emerging US views. The announcement that the US was not formally pursuing a revision of NATO strategy-an important British goal to attain downward revision of force goals-may have caused the British some concern. DDEL, Norstad Papers, Box 96, Folder: Asst Sec Def/ISA (4), Memorandum for Record, 18 March 1961.

divisions for a period of two to three weeks.⁴⁸² This would create the pause that General Norstad had been advocating, and give the Soviets time to consider whether or not they were prepared to escalate the exchange further. Lord Home welcomed the renewed emphasis on conventional forces, as “it was dangerous to make NATO too strong in nuclear weapons, especially M.R.B.M.s”; he was concerned about the implications of any potential increase in force requirements for the United Kingdom. Macmillan pointed out that the crux of the problem lay with French attitudes, but he offered no immediate solutions to the problem posed by NATO strategy.⁴⁸³

When the British Chiefs of Staff had considered the question of NATO strategy in September 1960, they had posed three questions for consideration. The first was to consider whether current strategy was correct in both present and future circumstances. There was a fairly broad consensus among the chiefs that nuclear sufficiency had made, or was rapidly making, current NATO strategy anachronistic. This led to the second question, which regarded the merits of undertaking a revision, and the third question, which was how such a revision should be undertaken.⁴⁸⁴ General Norstad was exploring the possibility of creating another committee of “Wise Men” to review NATO strategy. Thus, if the British wanted to seize the initiative, it was important that they advance their own ideas.⁴⁸⁵ Because of a sense that “NATO was not at present in a very confident

482 BNA, CAB 129/105, C(61)54, Record of Meeting Held at the White House on Wednesday, 5 April 1961, Washington Talks. The US records of these conversations are still partially classified. The author has filed several Mandatory Reviews of Memcons for 5 April 1961 from JFKL, NSF Country Files, Box 175.

483 Ibid.

484 BNA, DEFE 4/129, COS(60)55th Meeting, Minute 2, NATO Strategy, 13 September 1960.

485 See report of Deputy SACEUR General Sir Richard Gale to COS, BNA, DEFE 4/129, COS(60)64th Meeting, Min. 2, 18 October 1960.

state,” there was concern as to what direction the strategy revision should take. The British continued to desire a full application of the New Look. Since this logic meant abandoning preparations for fighting after an all-out war, the British had to be cautious. Implicit in the suggestion that there would be no need for fighting was the concept that there would be no one left to fight. If this point were pressed too hard, it could further erode alliance solidarity. Thus, the British again opted to proceed cautiously. As a preliminary step in this direction, Foreign Secretary Lord Home proposed at the December 1960 NAC Ministerial Meeting that NATO undertake a comprehensive review of its nuclear armory.⁴⁸⁶ To follow up on this momentum, a Policy for Nuclear Weapons in NATO Committee, generally referred to as the Mottershead Committee, was formed to set out the British position.⁴⁸⁷ The Mottershead Committee was undertaking its review during the same period Dean Acheson began a review of the US’s NATO policy for President Kennedy.

The importance of forwarding their own views on NATO became apparent to the British both because of the thrust of upcoming studies for the NATO Triennial Review and because of the Acheson proposals. The MC 70 force goals were only projected through 1963. The long lead times in defense planning made it necessary for NATO to begin setting force targets for the next period, in this case 1962-1966. But as Lord Mountbatten stated to his fellow Chiefs in a January meeting, with no revision of the strategic concept, it was likely that the upcoming Triennial Review would return force

486 See discussion of NATO Strategy and Nuclear Weapons, BNA, DEFE 4/133, COS(61)3rd Meeting, Min. 4. Lord Home had replaced Slewyn Lloyd as Foreign Secretary in July 1960.

487 Named for F. W. Mottershead of the Ministry of Defence, who served as the Chair of the Committee.

goals as unsatisfactory for the British as the MC 70 goals.⁴⁸⁸ The British were concerned with SACEUR and SACLANT's requests for additional nuclear forces and SACEUR's altered requirements for conventional forces.⁴⁸⁹ They adopted delaying tactics regarding the Triennial Review, pushing for a one year postponement which they eventually attained.

After the Macmillan government received preliminary indication of the thrust of Acheson's proposals during the Macmillan-Kennedy meeting in early April 1961, work got under way to study its implications. There was some urgency, as a meeting of the NATO foreign ministers in Oslo was scheduled for early May, and the procedure for revising NATO strategy was on the agenda. The British Chiefs authorized the Joint Planning Staff to undertake studies of two hypothetical Soviet actions based on a conventional attack of 20 divisions which NATO would have to resist conventionally for two to three weeks.⁴⁹⁰ This report was discussed by the Chiefs on 25 April. In the assessment of the wider implications of Acheson's plan two ideas arose. If hostilities did break out, the Joint Planning Staff found that it was difficult to envision either the Soviets or the West accepting a major conventional defeat without resorting to nuclear weapons. Should nuclear weapon use then be initiated, they expected that the dispersal caused by the previous conventional fighting would lead to an even more widespread and damaging release of tactical nuclear weapons than had they been used from the start. On the other

488 BNA, DEFE 4/133, COS(61)4th Meeting, NATO Force Requirements 1962-1966, 17 January 1961.

489 Norstad's requirements for strike aircraft and MRBM's, for instance, represented a 50% increase over MC 70 targets. See Questions for MC/CS Discussion on Major Commanders Overall Force Requirements for End 1966, and United Kingdom Ability to Meet NATO Force Requirements, BNA, DEFE 4/134, COS(61)22nd Meeting, 28 March 1961.

490 BNA, DEFE 4/134, COS(61)25th Meeting, 13 April 1961, The Acheson Proposals.

hand, if the purpose of increased conventional forces was wholly aimed to improve the deterrent, then the JPS felt the question fell more to an assessment of its effect on the Soviet mind. They were not prepared to make such an assessment.

At the same time, the British Joint Planning Staff remained doubtful as to whether increased conventional forces would really improve the deterrent of the NATO shield.⁴⁹¹ The JPS foresaw that in order to implement the Acheson proposals the British would have to double their forces on the central front, which would be in excess of even the MC 70 force goals. On both military and economic grounds, they were unwilling to accept the strategic concept set forth in the Acheson proposals.⁴⁹² The Chiefs themselves remained unclear as to the reason for Acheson's proposals, and hoped to secure further clarification from the Americans in this regard.

Shortly thereafter, the Chiefs of Staff discussed the final results of the Mottershead Report. The report stated that the instant resort to all-out war because of any aggression in the NATO area would have to be abandoned. This would mean providing for scales of aggression greater than local hostile action but less than all-out nuclear war. However, on the matter of conventional conflict in Europe, the Mottershead Report did not stray far from standard British thinking on the subject. It foresaw a requirement for conventional forces to resist Soviet aggression for up to only 48 hours. This was to provide sufficient time for a political decision to be made on the use of tactical nuclear

491 BNA, DEFE 4/135, COS(61)27th Meeting. The JPS report, 'Mr. Acheson's Concept of Conventional Operations', JP(61)46(Final), is at Annex to the meeting. It is also filed under the same title as DEFE 5/113, COS(61)138.

492 Ibid., and BNA, DEFE 4/134, COS(61)24th Meeting, 11 April 1961, NATO Strategy-Use of Conventional Forces.

weapons. After a period of this duration, it was feared from a military point of view that the window for the successful application of tactical nuclear weapons—as opposed to resulting to all out war—would have passed.⁴⁹³ The Mottershead Report did accept the possibility for the discriminate use of tactical nuclear weapons.⁴⁹⁴ This suggested a move towards limited nuclear war more inline with the concept that had hitherto been championed by SACEUR Norstad. However, this conclusion came at the same time that it appeared the Kennedy administration was also reconsidering dependence on tactical weapons in forward deployed units of the Shield. Lord Mountbatten reported that at the recent Military Committee Meeting in Washington that even SACEUR Norstad “indicated that he had radically changed his previously held views on the deployment and use of these [tactical nuclear] weapons.”⁴⁹⁵ The Mottershead Report concluded, with what had become the standard British position, by advocated abandoning any lingering conception that the shield forces would fight on after an all-out nuclear exchange.⁴⁹⁶

By mid-March 1961 Acheson’s report was close to completion. Many of its recommendations followed close on the heels of the Bowie Report.⁴⁹⁷ It was presented to the National Security Council and given presidential approval via National Security

493 BNA, DEFE 5/113, COS(61)146, NATO Strategy and Nuclear Weapons-Military Implications of the Mottershead Report, esp. par. 18-22.

494 This conclusion was contrary to the views held by Sir Solly Zuckerman, the Scientific Advisor to the Ministry of Defense, who felt that the use of tactical battlefield nuclear weapons would invariably lead to escalation. See Zuckerman’s comments on “A Study of Nuclear Weapons,” Annex B to BNA, DEFE 4/132, COS(Paris)(60), 1st Meeting, 21 June 1960, Study on Military Strategy for Circumstances Short of Global War.

495 BNA, DEFE 4/135, COS(61)26th Meeting, 18 April 1961, Present Thinking of the United States in NATO Strategy and Nuclear Weapons [Mountbatten’s comments].

496 NATO Strategy and Nuclear Weapons-Military Implications of the Mottershead Report, COS(61)28th Meeting, 2 May 1961, DEFE 4/135, BNA.

497 JFKL, NSF, Box 220, Memorandum for the President, 6 March 1961, on the similarities between the Bowie and Acheson studies.

Action Memorandum 40 on 20 April 1961.⁴⁹⁸ The Acheson report called for first priority in NATO's European area be given to preparing for contingencies short of nuclear or massive non-nuclear war.⁴⁹⁹ The point of this increase in conventional forces would:

...not enable NATO to defeat every conceivable Soviet aggression in Europe without using nuclear weapons. Nor would it be designed to permit anything approaching a re-run of World War II, much less after the nuclear phase of World War III. However, it would give NATO flexibility to meet a wide range of Soviet aggressions without recklessness, since it would provide a non-nuclear capability to impose a pause in the event of quite large attacks by Soviet non-nuclear ready forces, i.e., by the bulk of the Soviet forces in the satellites reinforced by such forces as the Soviet could quickly deploy to the central front.⁵⁰⁰

Though Acheson wrote of a "wide range of aggressions," the only one conceivable case where fighting could break out with Soviet forces in the central front would have to revolve around Berlin.

Macmillan's visit to the United States had given them an early preview of the direction of Acheson's thinking on strengthening NATO. He then proceeded to Europe for discussion with other close Allies and a presentation of his thinking to a private

498 *FRUS 1961-63*, vol.XIII, Doc.100, "NATO and the Atlantic Nations," pp.285-91. See also Stromseth, *Origins of Flexible Response*, pp.30-31.

499 The copy of "A Review of North Atlantic Problems for the Future," with a covering memorandum for the President signed by Dean Acheson, dated 24 March 1961, located in JFKL, President's Office Files, Box 103, Folder: NATO-General 1/61-4/61. This copy contains some underlining and marginalia, particularly in the introduction and on p.56. There is a line along the paragraph on p.56 (and three words which are unclear) concerned with retention of a US veto over any European controlled nuclear weapons in NATO. The paragraph reads: "So far as the US is concerned it is vital that the major part of its nuclear power not be subject to veto. It is not essential that the part of that power deployed in Europe be veto free. It is, however, most important to the US that use of nuclear weapons by the forces of other powers in Europe should be subject to American veto and control. Therefore, the concept of a veto by another than ourselves in Europe is not contrary to interest. This paragraph appears almost verbatim as paragraph 7e in *FRUS 1961-63*, vol.XIII, Doc.100, "NATO and the Atlantic Nations", p.289. There is also a copy of March draft of "A Review of North Atlantic Problems for the Future", which seems to have been Walt Rostow's, in JFKL, NSF, Box 220, and SACEUR Lauris Norstad's copy in DDEL, Norstad Papers, Box 95.

500 *Ibid.*, p.51.

session of the North Atlantic Council.⁵⁰¹ Acheson's informal session was then followed up in the NAC by Permanent Representative Thomas Finletter's presentation on Administration thinking on 26 April.⁵⁰² Thus, by the end of April the NATO allies were aware of the basic priorities of the Kennedy administration's approach to NATO. On the one hand, many welcomed the seemingly renewed emphasis on the centrality of NATO to American policy. On the other hand, there was implicit concern in many quarters about the implications of these new priorities on the budgets of the member countries.⁵⁰³ Crises over Berlin and the introduction of Soviet missiles in Cuba intruded on the administration's efforts to bring their allies around to their new thinking on strategy. For many in the Kennedy administration, these crises validated the need for a strategy of flexible response. America's allies, however, remained rather more circumspect.

Berlin Again

Though the Soviets had exerted little pressure on Berlin since Khrushchev had dropped his ultimatum in September 1959, Kennedy was warned by his advisors on coming to office that the Soviet leader was apt to press him on the situation before long.

501 Acheson traveled to Europe in mid-April 1961 to try a case at The Hague. On Acheson's travel plans, see HSTL, Acheson Papers, Box 82, Letter: Acheson to Stikker, 22 March 1961. While in Europe, Acheson met with Konrad Adenauer on 9 April, Charles de Gaulle on 20 April for a brief, hour-long session, and addressed the NAC on 21 April. On the Adenauer/De Gaulle/NAC meetings, see *FRUS 1961-1963*, vol.XIII, Docs. 97, 101, and 102, pp.269-72, 291-99. See also Lauris Norstad's concern with Acheson's address to the NAC, DDEL, Norstad Papers, Box 91, Letter: Norstad to Acheson, 20 April 1961.

502 There is a copy of TOPOL 1526, the telegram which Finletter was instructed to use for his oral brief and then distribute to the NAC, located in DDEL, Norstad Papers, Box 91. See *FRUS 1961-1963*, vol.XIII, Doc.103, footnote 2, p.300.

503 Permanent Representative Finletter wrote President Kennedy in late May expressing concern about two main lines of resistance to the US proposals in NATO. One was a strong inertia in the Standing Group, Military Committee, and from the national governments against changing the existing political directive. Another was the fear amongst some countries that any changing in the 1962-1966 force goals would mean greater defense expenditures. See *FRUS 1961-1963*, vol.XIII, Doc. 106: Letter from Finletter to President Kennedy, pp.304-09.

The renewed pressure to do something about the status of West Berlin in 1961 came from the leader of the German Democratic Republic, Walter Ulbricht.⁵⁰⁴ Khrushchev's 1958 ultimatum had the unintended consequence of increasing the East German refugee flow into the Federal Republic. Berlin, as an open city, was the primary conduit for East Germans fleeing to the West. In the period from 1959-60, approximately 340,000 East Germans fled, and the flow showed signs of increasing.⁵⁰⁵ Ulbricht, desperate to halt the refugee flow that was undermining the GDR pushed Khrushchev to act. At a meeting of the Soviet Presidium on 26 May, prior to Khrushchev's departure for the Vienna summit, Khrushchev told his colleagues that he was going to push on with his plans to settle the Berlin problem. He recognized that his determination to sign a separate peace might set off a confrontation that could lead to war, though he felt there was only about a 1 in 20 chance this was the case.⁵⁰⁶ Khrushchev was confident that the British and French would not fight for their access rights, and it remained only to pressure Kennedy to concede. When challenged by Foreign Minister Anastas Mikoyan, who felt that the West might initiate military action without resort to nuclear weapons, Khrushchev replied that this was not the case. He confidently asserted that the Soviets were strong enough in nuclear

504 On the Ulbricht-Khrushchev relationship, see Hope M. Harrison, *Ulbricht and the Concrete 'Rose': New Archival Evidence on the Dynamics of Soviet-East German Relations and the Berlin Crisis, 1958-61*, Cold War International History Project, Working Paper No.5. Available online at: www.wilsoncenter.org

505 Gaddis, *We Now Know*, p.143.

506 Naftali and Fursenko have written that "on May, 26, 1961, the world moved closer to nuclear war than at any time since the Soviets tested their first atomic bomb in August 1949." Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, *Khrushchev's Cold War: The Inside Story of an American Adversary* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2006), p.355. Also Vojtech Mastny and Malcolm Byrne, eds. *A Cardboard Castle: An Inside History of the Warsaw Pact, 1955-1991* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2005), pp.17-19, and Docs. 14-17, pp.116-25. In his introductory essay to this volume of documents on the Warsaw Pact, Mastny described the shift in emphasis from defensive to offensive planning by the Warsaw Pact as the lasting legacy of preparations for the 1961 Berlin crisis.

weapons to deter the European NATO powers, while also issuing orders to Defense Minister Malinovsky, Army Chief of Staff Zakharov, and Warsaw Pact Commander Grechko to assure that the conventional balance of power was well to the Soviets advantage.⁵⁰⁷

Kennedy and Khrushchev met for the first time in Vienna on 3-4 June 1961.⁵⁰⁸ On the first day of talks, Khrushchev pressed Kennedy hard on a number of matters, seemingly leaving the American on the defensive. That evening Kennedy would complain that Khrushchev had treated him like a little boy.⁵⁰⁹ During a discussion of colonialism-where the Soviet leader was eager to emphasize that the US was on the wrong side of history-Khrushchev spoke of three types of wars. These were nuclear, conventional, and wars of national revolution. While the general thrust of his point was the inevitability of the wars of national revolution, Khrushchev pointed out that in a conventional war, the Soviets could field five divisions for every American.⁵¹⁰

On the second day of the talks, Khrushchev brow beat Kennedy was over Germany and Berlin. Khrushchev informed Kennedy of his intentions to sign a peace treaty with the GDR. A difficult exchange followed. During a parting conversation after

507 Fursenko and Naftali, *Khrushchev's Cold War*, pp.357-59.

508 The US records of these exchanges are in *FRUS 1961-1963*, vol.V, Doc.83-85, 87-89, pp.172-97, 206-30. The topic of Germany was brought up by Khrushchev on the morning of 4 June, see pp.216f.

Kennedy said to Khrushchev during the exchange: "it had not been his wish to come here to Vienna to find out not only that a peace treaty [between the Soviet Union and the GDR] would be signed but also that we would be denied our position in West Berlin and our access to that city," p.220. There are also good accounts of the exchange in Michael Beschloss, *The Crisis Years: Kennedy and Khrushchev 1960-1963* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991), pp.194-224, Fursenko and Naftali, *Khrushchev's Cold War*, pp.360-64, and Richard Reeves, *President Kennedy: Profile of Power* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993), pp.156-71.

509 Reeves, *President Kennedy*, p.166.

510 Reeves, *President Kennedy*, pp.164-65.

lunch, Kennedy got in one last exchange with Khrushchev over Berlin. When Khrushchev told the President that the Soviet decision to sign a peace treaty by December with East Germany was firm and irrevocable, he pointed out that the decision for war or peace rested with the Americans. According to Richard Reeves, Kennedy replied, “Then, Mr. Chairman, there will be war. It will be a cold winter.”⁵¹¹ Khrushchev’s public announcement of his intent to sign a peace treaty with the GDR came on 10 June.⁵¹² Thus began the second phase of the Berlin crisis. Kennedy, still recovering from the Bay of Pigs disaster and upset with his own performance when he met Khrushchev, was determined to stand firm on Berlin and not show any signs of weakness or inexperience in his handling of the matter.⁵¹³

Kennedy’s determination to take a tough line on Berlin was probably also strengthened by important insight into Soviet thinking that became available through the efforts of Colonel Oleg Penkovsky. Penkovsky, the deputy head of the GRU’s foreign section, began spying for the West (he was jointly run by the CIA and the British SIS) in early 1961.⁵¹⁴ From 13 July 1961 President Kennedy began receiving briefs from CIA chief Allen Dulles on the information Penkovsky was delivering to his American and

511 Reeves, *President Kennedy*, p.171. The US version of this exchange in FRUS has Kennedy saying only that “The President concluded the conversation by observing that it would be a cold winter.” Reeves’ material was based on an interview and letter from Dean Rusk. Dallek, Kennedy’s most recent biographer, has followed Reeves’ on this point. Dallek, *John F. Kennedy*, p.413.

512 Dallek, *John F. Kennedy*, p.418.

513 Ibid., p.417-18. On the aftermath of the Bay of Pigs, see pp.364-65.

514 Stephen Dorril, *MI6: Inside the Covert World of Her Majesty’s Secret Service* (New York: The Free Press, 2000), pp.705f, and Jerrold L. Schecter and Peter S. Deriabin, *The Spy Who Saved the World: How a Soviet Colonel Changed the Course of the Cold War* (Scribner: New York, 1992).

British handlers.⁵¹⁵ Though the British had access to essentially the same information, the Cabinet Office-unaware of the provenance of the information for security reasons-remained skeptical. One future Cabinet Secretary dismissed the Penkovsky material as rubbish.⁵¹⁶ This included a statement by Soviet Marshal Sergei Varentsov that despite the risk, the Soviets felt they could push the West on a unilateral peace treaty with the GDR because the Federal Republic was “still not ready for war and needs two or three years more. The U.S., Britain, and France, because of this, will not start a big war and will retreat.” Varentsov went on to say that the Soviets also did not want a big war, desiring instead to force the West to negotiate with the GDR.⁵¹⁷ Subsequent information from Penkovsky suggested that Khrushchev-if buoyed by world Communist opinion at the upcoming October Party Congress-might decide to strike. This was despite Penkovsky’s comment during an oral debriefing that “[Khrushchev] does not have all available means for carrying through such a strike to the final conclusion.” When pressed to expand on what he meant by this, he stated that the Soviets suffered a shortage of atomic warheads and trained personnel to use them and had problems with their guidance system.⁵¹⁸ Such intelligence would have reinforced the view prevalent in the Kennedy Administration that the Soviets felt they could push the West because of their advantage in *conventional* strength.

515 Christopher Andrew, *For the President’s Eyes Only: Secret Intelligence and the American Presidency from Washington to Bush* (New York: HarperCollins, 1995), p.267.

516 Dorril, *MI6*, p.706.

517 Andrew, *For the President’s Eyes Only*, p.268.

518 *Ibid.*, p.270.

Kennedy advisors, lead by the hawkish Dean Acheson, pushed for considerable military preparations to convince the Soviets of American seriousness. Kennedy did not accept the full range of options suggested by Acheson and others, but in a speech to the American people on 25 July stated that “we cannot and will not permit the Communists to drive us out of Berlin, either gradually or by force.” He requested a \$3.25 billion supplement for defense spending to form six Army and two Marine divisions, strengthen airlift capability for rapid reinforcement, and provide for the call up of reserves.⁵¹⁹ Kennedy’s response was measured as was his resistance to some of the more provocative military preparations. His emphasis on conventional force buildup (which Eisenhower, who always remained skeptical of limited contingencies that envisioned hostilities short of general war, would have criticized) served to signal his determination to defend Berlin to Khrushchev, and to begin implementing aspects of the flexible response program that his administration would champion

The US desire to see a NATO-wide military response to increase the Western deterrent continued to meet with British resistance in the summer of 1961. The US had circulated a memorandum to the British setting out their views on the military buildup on 22 July, which the Foreign Office circulated to the Cabinet four days later.⁵²⁰ The US memorandum ultimately called for deployment of 40 allied divisions (1,500,000 men) along the Central Front to “create a basis for the reversal of the misconceptions about NATO weakness and for a substantial increase in the credibility of Western capacity to

⁵¹⁹ Dallek, *John F. Kennedy*, pp.422-25, and Gaddis, *We Now Know*, p.146.

⁵²⁰ The US memorandum was circulated under a covering note by the Foreign Secretary. BNA, CAB 129/106, C(61)117, Berlin-Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 26 July 1961.

take actions which would render the situation uncontrollable by the Soviet Union.” The memorandum argued that terrain and logistics requirements for the Soviets would limit their deployment, even with mobilization, to a force of 50 to 55 Soviet divisions (1,500,000 men). This would allow NATO the option of initiating large-scale ground action which the Soviets “could not throw back rapidly with conventional means,” thus facing the Soviets with the onus of escalation to the nuclear threshold.

In order to achieve this, the US envisioned a two-phase buildup. The aim was for all allied forces by the end of 1961 to be brought up to the levels and standards of readiness set out in MC 70 (Column A). Concurrently, the NATO allies were to make preparations to call up additional ready reserves to be deployed to the central front if the diplomatic crisis continued (Column B).

	Column A	Column B
Belgium	2	2
Canada	1	1
France	4	8
FRG	9	12
Netherlands	2	2
U.K.	3	4

Defense Minister Watkinson pointed out to his colleagues in a related memorandum that British mobilization plans were such that these increased demands for British forces in the BAOR could only be met through general mobilization.⁵²¹ However, in a follow-up

521 BNA, CAB 129/106, C(61)115, Berlin: Strengthening United Kingdom Forces in Germany, 25 July 1962. 62,000 men were required to bring the BAOR to a full wartime footing, 32,000 to bring existing units up to strength, and another 30,000 administrative/logistic personnel.

two days later, Watkinson clarified that the US government was primarily interested in the British bringing and maintaining BAOR strength at 55,000 men (short of full wartime footing) and in the long-term improvement of their tactical air forces in Germany. Naval force goals under MC 70 were accorded a distant third in priority. Watkinson informed his fellow Cabinet members that the long-term maintenance of this level of forces precluded the use of reservists, but the US hoped to help the British offset the foreign exchange costs of these additional deployments by having the Germans purchase war stocks from the United Kingdom. However, the Prime Minister's office remained unconvinced that there was a military justification for increased conventional forces. Even the planned increases would still leave the West unable to outfight the Soviets conventionally, so in the end the decision to escalate would still devolve to the Western powers.⁵²² This ongoing divergence in threat appraisal of the Soviet forces in central Europe continued to bedevil US-UK approaches to both Berlin and NATO strategy more widely.

In August 1961 LIVE OAK became a Quadripartite staff with the addition of German members. This was a reflection of the decision to include the West German Ambassador to Washington into what became the Quadripartite Ambassadorial Group on 5 August 1961.⁵²³ LIVE OAK was by this time coordinating its plans with NATO, which led to a new series of contingency plans for Berlin under NATO auspices [See appendix two for list of LIVEOAK and BERCON plans]. Generally speaking the plans were

⁵²² BNA, PREM 11/3348. See undated memorandum for the Prime Minister commenting on C(61)115-118, initialed HB.

⁵²³ Pedlow, "Allied Crisis Management for Berlin", p.101.

coordinated into a four phase course of action. In the first phase were operations of a reconnaissance nature to see what actions the Soviets would take against a Western probe. This was to be followed by a second phase, which the planners hoped would provide a pause, in which recourse to the UN, economic measures, or perhaps a blockade could be implemented. If access was not restored, the third phase contemplated stronger military measures. These included plans for all-out dogfights to attain aerial superiority over Berlin and land advances of divisional and corps size. A fourth and final phase contemplated recourse to nuclear weapons. NATO's BERCON (Berlin Contingency) Bravo contemplated using five low-yield, air burst weapons to demonstrate the seriousness of the Western intent and impress upon the Soviets the fact that the Western powers were willing to resort to nuclear weapons.⁵²⁴ Thus by the end of 1962, the Berlin Contingency Plans had come to represent a range of options which included limited land warfare, blockades employing seapower, aerial hostilities, and the release of a limited number of nuclear weapons. In many ways, the contingency planning for the Berlin crisis embodied the essence of the concept of flexible response.

In order to gain a clearer view of why the NATO Commanders force requirements were diverging so strongly from what the British felt were reasonable expectations of their level of contribution, they had invited the major commanders to deliver briefings to

524 An overview of the BERCONs can be found in "Berlin Contingency Planning-Phasing of Military Operations", 23 January 1962, BNA, DEFE 5/123, COS(62)39. In a discussion between President Kennedy and General Norstad in January 1962, Norstad discussed the use of tactical nuclear weapons in Berlin contingency plans. He stated that "there was a catalogue of plans, each of which involved the use of a small number of nuclear weapons: one of five weapons [brief redaction, probably related to weapon yield] on military targets so selected that there was a minimum danger of civil damage and casualty to the population. The possible targets included East German airfields, Soviet surface-to-air missile sites near Berlin, Soviet or East German aircraft in the air, Soviet troop concentrations, or Soviet warships at sea." JFKL, NSF, Box 220A, Memcon-Notes on the President's Meeting with General Norstad, 25 January 1962.

the British COS. This followed on the heels of the force requirement briefings given at the 26th Meeting of the Military Committee in Chiefs of Staff session. The Military Committee in Chiefs of Staff Session decided at their 26th Meeting that the Major NATO Commanders should hold briefings on the MC 96 force goals for those national authorities who were interested.⁵²⁵ The briefings were given in London on 5 June 1961. During discussions regarding the briefings the following day, the Chiefs identified three major points on which the major commanders' interpretation of NATO strategy diverged from their own. First, both SACEUR and SACLANT considered it their responsibility not only to stipulate forces which would deter the Soviets, but also allow them to bring any hostilities to a successful conclusion. Second, following from the first requirement, there was a requirement for 90 day stockpiles of war material. Third, calculation of force requirements continued to be based on the maximum Russian military capabilities, not on an assessment of the threat based on intentions.⁵²⁶ However, the British Chiefs found it difficult to challenge the 1966 force requirements on military grounds under the existing NATO strategic concepts.⁵²⁷ The British government therefore adopted a negotiating position of wait and see, preparing themselves for the next US initiative.

The summer of 1961 provided considerable distractions for both the Americans and British, which helped to stall progress on NATO strategy revision that year. Western attention in Europe was focused primarily on the Kennedy-Khrushchev summit and the

525 DDEL, Norstad Papers, Box 102, Folder: '66 Force Goals (2). Norstad sent letters out to the NATO Ministers of Defense on 10 May 1961 regarding these briefings.

526 BNA, DEFE 4/136, COS(61)34th Meeting, 6 June 1961, NATO 1962 Force Goals and 1966 Force Requirements.

527 BNA, DEFE 4/136, COS(61)37th Meeting, 13 June 1961, NATO 1962 Force Goals and 1966 Force Requirements.

subsequent Berlin Wall Crisis. The alliance bureaucracy was adapting to the direction of a new Secretary-General, Dirk Stikker. And the British, aside from their involvement in LIVE OAK planning and concern over the course of the Berlin crisis, were dealing with a short-term crisis between Iraq and Kuwait and undertaking a long-term strategy reassessment of their own.⁵²⁸ Thus, little effective headway was made on NATO strategy matters in 1961. It was not until early 1962 that the Kennedy administration began again to press their allies to adopt policies and defense plans more in line with their conception of flexible response.

British Strategy in the Sixties

No sooner had the British undertaken Operation VANTAGE in Kuwait than Minister of Defense Watkinson came under pressure from the Treasury to effect both immediate and long-term reductions in the overall cost of defense. When Watkinson met with the Chiefs on the afternoon of 11 July, he informed them of his plans to forestall an immediate reduction in expenditures. He desired to convince the Chancellor of the Exchequer to accept the need for a long-term study to combine a strategic re-appraisal by the Chiefs of Staff with a review of Britain's obligations and commitments by the Future Policy Committee. Watkinson was anxious to avoid wholesale withdrawal from any

⁵²⁸ In mid June 1961, Britain ended a special relationship with Kuwait which stretched back to 1899 and had made Kuwait an effective British dependency in the Gulf. Thereafter Britain remained bound by an exchange of notes to come to Kuwait's aid in the event of threat of external attack. No sooner had this note been exchanged than Iraqi dictator General Kassim announced his intentions to annex Kuwait to Iraq (reviving claims to the region that dated back to Ottoman times). The British subsequently mounted Operation VANTAGE (July 1961) to deploy reinforcements to Kuwait in order to forestall any Iraqi aggression, and demonstrate their capability to do so in the future. The Kuwait crisis was regularly led on the Cabinet's foreign policy agenda from 30 June through 13 July. See BNA, CAB 128/35, CC(61)37-40. For the COS material on Kuwait, see BNA, DEFE 4/136, COS(61)40th Meeting, Minute 3, 27 June 1960. Kuwait remained a regular item of COS meetings throughout the summer.

commitments. Since a large portion of overseas defense expenditures was spent on garrisons, Watkinson wanted to place “reliance upon a seaborne strategy, under which small afloat forces could be rapidly reinforced by sea and air.” These forces would increasingly be based in a mobile reserve in the United Kingdom.⁵²⁹ Sir Edmund Playfair, the Permanent Secretary, informed the Chiefs that planning should be done for a five-year look and that studies needed to be undertaken relatively quickly, within a window of four to six months.⁵³⁰

The Joint Planning Staff was charged with a review of strategic thinking, while political guidance was provided by a small group of senior ministers meeting as a revived Future Policy Committee. Two meetings were held in early October to lay out some basic principles. Macmillan wanted to determine what overseas commitments had to be maintained over the next ten years and what principles of defense policy should be adopted to meet those commitments.⁵³¹ Though the British in the long-term hoped to reduce expenditures on NATO, it was decided that the initial review would have to look at overseas expenditures other than the BAOR. This was because ongoing tension over

529 This thinking was similar to that of the Eisenhower administration’s New Look which had also sought to bring US troops back to the continental US to form a strategic reserve.

530 BNA, DEFE 32/14, MM/COS(61)6th Meeting, 11 July 1961, Limitation of the Future Cost of Defence. This topic was also covered by the COS earlier in the day in DEFE 4/136, COS(61)43rd Meeting, 11 July 1961.

531 BNA, CAB 134/1929, Our Foreign and Defence Policy for the Future, at annex to FP(61)2nd Meeting, 10 October 1961. In a memorandum by the Prime Minister circulated to the Future Policy Committee, the following annual costs for overseas expenditures were cited: Europe, £75 million; the Mediterranean, £49 million; the Middle East, £23.9million; and the Far East, £55.1 million, for a total of £203 million. The concurrent JPS study cited Britain’s overseas defense expenditures as £235 million, of which £80 million was spent on Europe. One of the goals of the report was to attain a £35 million reduction in overseas expenditure by the 1965/66 year. See DEFE 6/71, JP(61)91(Final), 14 September 1961, DEFE 6/71, also at annex to DEFE 4/138, COS(61)62nd Meeting, 19 September 1961.

Berlin made it politically unfeasible within the alliance for the British to contemplate any immediate reductions to their continental commitment.

Once the Berlin situation had retreated into the background, the British hoped to reduce their forces in the BAOR to 43,000 men, as against their current commitment to provide 55,000 men (in fact, the British had only 51,000 men deployed at this time). The aim was to deploy two divisions of two brigade groups each in Germany, with an additional force of two divisions in the United Kingdom earmarked for deployment. If these reductions could not be made in the near future, Macmillan feared that “it will for both financial and man-power reasons become impossible to achieve a proper politico-military policy elsewhere abroad; we should have to cut other overseas commitments in some arbitrary and possibly damaging way.”⁵³² With regard to the Mediterranean, Macmillan sought to reduce Malta from a major naval base to a forward operating base (with a concomitant increase in importance of facilities in Gibraltar), maintain Britain’s relatively small position in Libya, and reduce the troops deployed to Cyprus. Though Macmillan intended for the four bomber squadrons committed to CENTO to remain on Cyprus, he was willing to abandon the need to mount land operations from Cyprus into the Near and Middle East.⁵³³

The re-appraisal initiated by Watkinson resulted in a paper titled “British Strategy in the Sixties.” A draft of the paper was prepared by late September, and the final paper received formal approval from the Chiefs in January 1962.⁵³⁴ The paper excluded

⁵³² Ibid.

⁵³³ BNA, CAB 134/1929, FP(61)2nd Meeting, 10 October 1961.

⁵³⁴ BNA, DEFE 4/142, Approved at COS(62)3rd Meeting, Min. 6, 9 January 1962.

consideration of Britain's strategic nuclear deterrent and contribution to NATO-despite the large portion of the defense budget that they consumed-on the basis of the instructions which had been laid down by the Minister of Defense. Thus, as the Planning Staff reported, the paper was in many ways an extension of the earlier paper "Military Strategy for Circumstances Short of Global War-1960-1970." As such it was primarily concerned with Britain's role East of Suez, but its implications for the overall shape of Britain's military forces were bound to have bearing on the commitment of United Kingdom forces to NATO. Aside from the implications for the strength of the BAOR, it was also reflected in an attempt by the British over the next two years to bring about a major reconsideration of NATO naval strategy. This was in no small part because emphasis on more afloat and mobile forces East of Suez would mean a draw down on Britain's West of Suez presence. As the report stated, "The strength we require will be achieved in the main by a redeployment from West of Suez, with a consequent reduction in Category A NATO forces which we have assumed previously would be acceptable."⁵³⁵

Broadly speaking, the strategy looked to achieve large cuts in the size of the British Army, with "compensating increases in the size of the Royal Navy and in the transport capacity of the Royal Air Force," though these increases were in part to be offset by other reductions.⁵³⁶ The thinking of "British Strategy in the Sixties" was

⁵³⁵ BNA, DEFE 5/123, COS(62)1, 9 January 1962, British Strategy in the Sixties, p.22.

⁵³⁶ DEFE 4/138, COS(61)62nd Meeting, 19 September 1961. See the summation: 'The Essence of this Strategy' in the earlier JP(61)91(Final), p.33, at annex.

subsequently reflected in the Defense White Paper published the following month.⁵³⁷ In February 1962, Watkinson presented to Parliament his Statement on Defense 1962-The Next Five Years.⁵³⁸ Going into 1962, British strategic thinking continued to emphasize reductions in the size of both the BAOR and NATO naval forces. This line of thought was at variance with the themes the Kennedy administration would emphasize in 1962.

Selling Flexible Response to NATO

When the Kennedy administration was developing its NATO policy in early 1961, the organization underwent a change in Secretaries-General. NATO Secretary-General Paul-Henri Spaak, frustrated by the lack of cooperation within NATO, announced his intention to resign from NATO on 26 January 1961.⁵³⁹ During his farewell tour, Spaak met with President Kennedy, Dean Acheson, Secretary of State Rusk, and others in Washington on 21 February 1961. President Kennedy inquired what course Spaak felt the US should follow in the NATO military field. Spaak emphasized that it was important for the administration to clearly state whether or not NATO strategy would continue to be predicated on the use of tactical and strategic nuclear weapons for the

537 BNA, DEFE 32/14, MM/COS(61)7th Meeting, 18 July 1961, Limitation of the Future Cost of Defence. Watkinson had told the Chiefs back in July 1961 that he wanted the study completed in time to contribute to the Defence White Paper.

538 BNA, CAB 129/108, C(62)23, Statement on Defence 1962-The Next Five Years [book proof], 23 February 1962.

539 Spaak was frustrated over a number of problems, including the growing Franco-American rift, slow progress toward long-range planning, lack of enthusiasm from the Eisenhower administration towards Nortad's MRBM proposals, and the failure of NATO to embrace Spaak's plans for an expanded NATO role in coordinating Western economic aid. See Robert S. Jordan, *Political Leadership in NATO: A Study in Multinational Diplomacy* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1979), p.92-93. US Ambassador to NATO Burgess reported Spaak as saying 'his job was done in NATO' upon Spaak's return from a visit to Washington in mid August 1960. See DDEL, Norstad Papers, Box 90, Folder: NATO General (4), Airgram: USRO/Paris to SecState, 17 August 1960. Dirk Stikker, soon to be Spaak's replacement, had pointed out many of Spaak's frustrations to Dean Acheson in December 1960. See HSTL, Acheson Papers, Box 82, Letter, Stikker to Acheson, 19 December 1960.

defense of Europe. When Secretary Rusk asked Spaak what were the implications of canceling the idea of a NATO nuclear force, Spaak said it would mean fundamentally overhauling the entire NATO strategic concept as it had developed since 1954.⁵⁴⁰

Shortly after completing his larger review on NATO, Dean Acheson addressed a memorandum to President Kennedy on the problem of lack of civilian authority over the post of Supreme Allied Commander Europe.⁵⁴¹ Acheson explained the reasons for the creation of a powerful SACEUR in the Truman period and argued that given the perception of crisis at the time and the stature of Dwight Eisenhower, the relative autonomy of the post was then justified. However, Acheson felt that the need for a powerful, autonomous SACEUR had passed. He pointed out that the Standing Group had been intended to be a more important supervisory body than it had become. But with its location in Washington and the decreasing prominence of the men who sat on it, it was no longer serving the function for which it was intended. As Acheson saw it, there was a real problem given the weakness of NATO's Secretary-General and International Staff in reviewing force guidelines and the relative autonomy of the post of SACEUR given the traditional direct access he had to the President. It was essential to insert an American civilian of high stature with authority flowing from the President, to Secretary of Defense, to the new appointment into the NATO hierarchy. This would allow (American) civilian review and input into the force planning and strategy of the alliance. Acheson suggested that the US could consider either pushing for an American Secretary-

540 *FRUS 1961-63*, vol. *XIII*, Doc.95: Memorandum of Conversation, 21 February 1961, pp.263-64.

541 JFKL, NSF, Box 220, Memorandum for the President, 29 March 1961 (under a cover Memorandum from McGeorge Bundy dated 31 March).

General (which he pointed out had been floated by several Europeans), or the creation of a NATO Minister of Defense. In the latter case, the Minister of Defense would be responsible to the NAC. This position would replace both the Standing Group and the Military Committee.⁵⁴² If the latter proposal were adopted, Acheson foresaw the possibility, once the position was trimmed in responsibility, of a European SACEUR.⁵⁴³

Acheson had in mind offering the position of SACEUR to the French to soothe De Gaulle's unhappiness with the alliance. Acheson hoped that such changes might help to ease European dissatisfaction with the "impotence of the North Atlantic Council" and "increase the participation of the NATO countries in developing basic strategy."⁵⁴⁴ The Berlin crisis in 1961 precluded any desire to change the Supreme Allied Commander in the short-term. In the long-term, none of these options were adopted, but the assertion of greater civilian authority over NATO military planning and operations became an important theme of Kennedy's NATO policy.⁵⁴⁵ This was to lead to growing disenchantment with SACEUR Norstad and considerable friction in his relations with the Kennedy administration.

542 See, for instance, the comment of German Ambassador Wilhelm Grewe during a conversation with Dean Rusk stated that he personally would like to see Dean Acheson nominated to replace Spaak. See *FRUS 1961-1963*, vol.XIII, Doc.93: Memorandum of Conversation, 1February 1961, p.257. As far back as December 1960, Dirk Stikker had written Acheson and expressed his hope that Acheson might consider a position in NATO under the new administration. HSTL, Acheson Papers, Box 82, Letter, Stikker to Acheson, 19 December 1960.

543 JCS Chairman General Nathan Twining had broached the idea with President Eisenhower of a European SACEUR as a successor to Norstad in late August 1960. Twining raised the condition that a strong US CINCEUR would have to be in place to handle atomic weapons. Eisenhower apparently favored further consideration of the idea by the JCS, but seemingly nothing came of it. See DDEL, DDE Diary Series, Box 51, Memcon-Eisenhower and Twining, 29 August 1960.

544 JFKL, NSF, Box 220, Memorandum for the President, 29 March 1961 (under a cover Memorandum from McGeorge Bundy dated 31 March).

545 Thomas Finletter, the US Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Council, also pressed for strengthened civilian control over NATO military planning in a letter to President Kennedy. See *FRUS 1961-1963*, vol.XIII, Doc.106:Ltr. from Finletter to Kennedy, 29 May 1961, pp.304-07.

One of the key points that had emerged from the Acheson Report was a need for further sharing of information on US nuclear strategy with key allies. In part this was aimed to meet a legitimate European concern over how the US intended to fight a nuclear war in Europe. The critiques of massive retaliation and confusion over the future of Norstad's MRBM plans had further confused this already muddled matter. In mid-April 1961, Francois de Rose, an officer of the French Foreign Ministry responsible for NATO and atomic matters, informed Paul Nitze director of Office of International Security Affairs (ISA) in the Department of Defense, that the French government knew little about the intended use or size of the nuclear weapons under SACEUR's control. He expressed French concern that the U.S. might unilaterally initiate a release of weapons that could result in Europe annihilation. He went on to suggest that there was a definite need for European governments to know the impact of nuclear weapons under various conditions. Nitze replied by stating that he foresaw that if atomic weapons were used, full-fledged exchange would probably result.⁵⁴⁶

De Rose's requests, and others like them, helped reinforce the conviction that there was a need to "educate America's allies." Early US efforts to "educate the Allies" did not always come off so well. When Chancellor Adenauer made his second visit to Washington in November 1961, he was treated to a careful prepared military briefing on the nuclear balance between the United States and the Soviet Union.⁵⁴⁷ This attempt at

546 JFKL, NSF, Box 220, Memorandum of Conversation (I-3775/61) between Paul Nitze and Francois de Rose, 11 April 1961.

547 JFKL, NSF, Box 79A, Folder: Germany, Subjects: Adenauer Visit, 11/61. This 22 page briefing book is untitled. The top line reads "I-19329/61 REHEARSAL-20 November 1961". This document was declassified in September 2005, though significant excisions remain.

“nuclear education” was considered a failure. Reflecting on the briefing the following November, L. J. Legere wrote:

Last year at this time the political people thought it terribly important to hit the Chancellor with a no-holds barred military briefing which would try to convince him that U.S. nuclear power was overwhelmingly superior to the USSR, even in a second-strike formula. He didn’t believe it. The briefing was a flop, and the military people, including General Taylor whom the President made responsible for the briefing, appear in retrospect to be responsible, although they only did what they were told to do.⁵⁴⁸

This experience led Bundy to inform the President that if the German defense effort was to be increased, the message had to come from Kennedy himself. According to Bundy, Adenauer would “not listen to military men on military subjects.”⁵⁴⁹ This initial effort at “nuclear education” served as a prototype for the type of address McNamara would attempt the following year at the NAC meeting in Athens.

US policy options towards NATO were set out in the beginning of 1962 by a paper produced by the Office of International Security Affairs. The paper spelled out four major areas of US concern with NATO: 1) greater agreement on policies to counter Soviet aggression, with particular reference to Berlin; 2) concern about the diffusion of nuclear weapons, which created political difficulties in peacetime and command and control problems in wartime; 3) “The urgent need to increase European non-nuclear

548 JFKL,NSF, Box 80, Folder: Germany, Subjects: Adenauer Visit, 11/62, Memo, L. J. Legere to McGeorge Bundy, 6 November 1962.

549 JFKL,NSF, Box 80, Folder: Germany, Subjects: Adenauer Visit, 11/62, Memo for the President from McGeorge Bundy, 9 November 1962.

forces”; and 4) different views on NATO strategy.⁵⁵⁰ It went on to discuss what attitudes then existed within the US government, and suggested possible future policy options.

The paper divided US attitudes toward NATO into three main groups. These included a group—well exemplified by Dean Acheson and Robert Bowie—that championed current and continued interdependence between Europe and the United States. This group in particular favored the build-up of non-nuclear forces, was highly skeptical of large numbers of tactical nuclear weapons, and supported continued reliance on long range strategic nuclear forces. The interdependence group gave high priority to integrated planning, centralized command, control, and political direction. They disapproved of a NATO nuclear force, either under SACEUR’s command or in some sort of multilateral European control.⁵⁵¹ A second group supported SACEUR in an enhanced political role to complement his military function. It advocated meeting the force goals, especially for MRBMs, that SACEUR had requested. Though not stated, this was undoubtedly the view that Norstad himself would have championed. This view supported the pre-delegation of authority to release nuclear weapons to major military commands, and accepted-problems aside-diffusion of nuclear weapons. One of the arguments for this line of thinking was that nuclear assistance to the French could be traded for commitments not to share such information with the Germans and for greater

550 JFKL, NSF, Box 220A, U.S Policy toward NATO, 15 January 1962, Office of International Security Affairs, I-14238/62. This document was declassified in November 2005. No specific author is identified.
551 JFKL, NSF, Box 220A, U.S Policy toward NATO, 15 January 1962, Office of International Security Affairs, I-14238/62, pp.8-9.

contributions to NATO's non-nuclear forces.⁵⁵² The third view recognized the inevitable desire on the part of the Europeans for an independent voice in world affairs, one which would not "indefinitely accept dependence on a U.S. guarantee for its defense."⁵⁵³ This view accepted the need for the creation of a legitimate multilateral force, one in which release of the weapons might not be subject to a U.S. veto, or for that matter, any single nation.⁵⁵⁴

On the subject of limited nuclear war in Europe, the report seemed to favor those of the interdependence school. In the event of limited release (such as those contemplated in the Berlin contingency planning), the report saw that the political complications of limited use within the alliance were likely to more than offset any gains of impressing Western seriousness on the Soviets. And much like British thinking at the time, the wide-spread use of tactical nuclear weapons, even when limited to a theater, seemed likely to spread uncontrollably towards general nuclear war. The report therefore recognized that "current tactical nuclear weapons programs are excessive and that there are serious dangers associated with their widespread deployment in Europe."⁵⁵⁵ From this, it seemed to indicate a clear need to match the Soviet's dominant conventional position through a build-up of NATO's non-nuclear strength. This theme, though seldom well-justified in these papers, ran consistently through the thinking of the Bowie and Acheson papers to the ISA paper. Perhaps most oddly, the ISA paper placed emphasis on

552 Ibid., p.10-11.

553 Ibid., p.12.

554 Ibid., p.12-13.

555 JFKL, NSF, Box 220A, U.S Policy toward NATO, 15 January 1962, Office of International Security Affairs, I-14238/62, p.20.

improved European reserve forces, thinking totally at odds with the entire concept of the duration of future conflict that had manifested itself in British defense thinking over the previous few years.⁵⁵⁶

In conclusion, the report came out against any notion of theater nuclear autonomy in NATO, including the assignment of a Polaris MRBM force to SACEUR. It was important for the United States to assert central control over NATO's nuclear forces. The report asserted that the United States, by helping attach prestige and influence to the possession of a nuclear deterrent by Britain, was in part responsible for the concern over European confidence in the U.S. deterrent and the desire for independent nuclear capabilities amongst some of the Allies. While recognizing that Britain and France were going to have independent nuclear forces, it opposed further assistance because of the destabilization that would be caused by leaving the Germans out of the nuclear club.⁵⁵⁷ Instead, the report called for frank and detailed discussion on a wide range of security issues. It stated that the United States had "much to offer the Europeans in way of an education."⁵⁵⁸ A number of long term solutions for improving the dialogue between Europe and the United States while at the same time preventing further nuclear proliferation were considered.⁵⁵⁹ In the immediate future, the US could either strengthen the tendencies toward European independence, or seek to stress interdependence instead.

556 For instance, "there is an urgent need for taking the non-nuclear tasks more urgently, improving logistics, procuring equipment, and improving European reserve forces," p.21.

557 Ibid., p.27.

558 JFKL, NSF, Box 220A, U.S Policy toward NATO, 15 January 1962, Office of International Security Affairs, I-14238/62, p.30.

559 These included moving the NAC to Washington, making the Secretary-General a permanent American post, and making SACEUR a European appointment. The report stressed that these need not be considered as moves that had to go one with the other.

Regardless of which of the paths were followed, the report stated that certain points were in parallel in both approaches. These included keeping nuclear weapons out of German hands; reassuring Europeans about the U.S. commitment to their defense; establishing agreed guidelines for nuclear weapons use in NATO; a greater non-nuclear buildup; and a “tapering off of the intimate US-UK relationship.”⁵⁶⁰

NATO Strategy in 1962

In addition to Britain’s own study “British Strategy in the Sixties,” another long-term study, known as the Von Karman Report, was being discussed at NATO in early 1962. The Von Karman Report was an outgrowth of the ten year review of NATO policy that US Secretary of State Herter had proposed in the waning months of the Eisenhower administration. The Von Karman report focused on long term technological and scientific advances, and their implications for NATO defense policy and strategy. By the end of February 1962 the NATO SG circulated the report to the national authorities and major NATO commanders to solicit comments on the study. These comments were to be aimed at how the report impacted current NATO strategy for preparation of a new document, “An Appreciation of the Military Situation as it Affects NATO in the 1970s” that was scheduled for presentation to the NAC in September 1962. This document, which would eventually become MC 100/1, ended up being sidetracked until 1963.⁵⁶¹

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid., p.32.

⁵⁶¹ BNA, DEFE 5/124, COS(62)78, NATO Strategy-Final Report of the Von Karman Committee, 21 February 1962.

When the British Joint Planning Staff and Chiefs of Staff reviewed the Von Karman Report, they found it generally in accord with British views.⁵⁶² Given the very long lead times for research and development, the JPS foresaw that the Von Karman Report would be a better basis for projecting NATO's long-term strategy than the Major Commanders' force requirements. The report generally pointed to the development of growing sophistication in the nuclear realm. It expressed the opinion that it was unlikely that an "overall system of defense against ballistic missiles can be foreseen in the period under review." It also predicted increased divergence between weapons designed for all-out war and those for limited war. This meant that in the future NATO would be faced with ever growing costs if it tried to prepare simultaneously for both general and limited war. For the British themselves, this also presented the problem that their forces planned for deployment outside the NATO area (which British Strategy in the Sixties foresaw in a limited war role) would be equipped with equipment increasingly unsuited for those deployed in the NATO area and vice versa. The British COS accepted the JCS argument that any revised strategic concept should preclude any notion of a sustained tactical nuclear land battle (which was at variance with the Mottershead conclusions). This meant that a reappraisal was necessary for NATO's land, air force, and naval components in order to clearly orient them towards deterrent roles, and shift them away from postures designed for limited, protracted war in Europe.⁵⁶³ Though the primary topic for discussion at the May 1962 NAC meeting was the political control of nuclear weapons in

562 BNA, DEFE 6/73, JP(61)163(Final), for the Joint Planning Staff comments on the Von Karman Report. The report was discussed by the COS in DEFE 4/143, COS(62)12th Meeting, 20 February 1962.

563 BNA, DEFE 5/124, COS(62)78, NATO Strategy-Final Report of the Von Karman Committee, esp. par. 9-18, 21 February 1962.

NATO, the British wanted to be prepared to address the problem of NATO strategy informally, as it was “fundamental to many of the decisions that the Council will have to reach in the next few months,” particularly regarding the NATO MRBM force and the size of NATO’s conventional forces.⁵⁶⁴

Despite the unsuccessful approach to Adenauer in the fall of 1961, the Kennedy Administration resumed advocating their case for strengthened conventional forces and flexible response doctrine in 1962. But in 1962 two key allies, Britain and France, were pursuing projects of their own which made it difficult for the allies to reconcile their various objectives in the course of the year. For the British, the primary object of policy in 1962 was to secure British entry into the European Economic Community (EEC). Any US initiatives that distracted from this project were generally unwelcome. For De Gaulle the project was to revitalize France and enhance its position as the leading state in Western Europe. Frustrated by American and British coolness towards his plans for a tripartite directorate between the three powers and freed from the Algerian morass by the signing on the Evian Accords in March 1962, De Gaulle increasingly turned his attention towards winning over Adenauer and building up France’s independent nuclear deterrent.⁵⁶⁵ France’s nuclear policy put De Gaulle at odds with the Kennedy administration on two counts. The French nuclear program was being financed in part by allowing conventional forces to be rundown. Weakened conventional forces went against

⁵⁶⁴ BNA, DEFE 5/126, COS(62)185, Watkinson’s Brief for the Athens NAC meeting: NATO Strategy: Conventional Forces and MRBMs, 13 April 1962.

⁵⁶⁵ DeGaulle’s approach to the Germans had been underway since his first meeting with Adenauer in September 1959, but Algerian independence allowed him to devote full attention to his European ‘grand design’. See Jean Lacouture, *De Gaulle: The Ruler 1945-1970*, trans. By Alan Sheridan (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990), pp.335-46.

the basic thrust of administration policy. Second, the quest for an independent nuclear deterrent went against the desire of the US administration to centralize control of the Western deterrent. The struggle between De Gaulle and the United States was one of the salient challenges which the NATO alliance faced during the 1960s.

During 1962 the Kennedy administration continued to press for increases in NATO's conventional force strength. The administration also renewed efforts to meet the perceived needs of the Europeans for greater participation in nuclear strategy. This initiative was met through the Multilateral Force (MLF) concept. The first step in this process was once again to impress on the allies the state of the nuclear balance and the US rationale for its flexible response strategy. As we have seen, an effort to so convince Chancellor Adenauer had gone awry in the fall of 1961. Basic divergences in the US and West German perceptions of the Warsaw Pact also contributed to the problem of gaining acceptance for flexible response. Nonetheless, the Kennedy administration seemed determined to press on. The administration's program for 1962 continued to avoid outright revision of existing alliance strategy (MC 14/2 and MC 48/2), stressing instead the continued education of the allies on the US views of strategy. The highlight of this came with McNamara's address to the North Atlantic Council in May 1962. Following this address, the US increasingly turned its attention towards convincing the Allies that it no longer accepted the fundamental basis of the existing Political Directive (MC 14/2). The Administration's pragmatic approach, along with pressure from NATO Secretary General Stikker and the British, meant that in 1962 the US remained wary of initiating

discussions to formally revise it.⁵⁶⁶ By year's end, however, there was renewed momentum for discussions of strategic doctrine.⁵⁶⁷

During a visit by Harold Macmillan to the US in late April, both Kennedy and McNamara continued to stress the need for enhanced conventional forces in central Europe. When Macmillan expressed his concern that "defining in advance the circumstances in which the deterrent would be invoked" would undermine the deterrent's credibility, Kennedy reminded him that it was important for the West to have sufficient forces to appear to be able to take the initiative should access to Berlin be threatened.⁵⁶⁸ In a separate meeting with McNamara, Macmillan asked if he thought 30 NATO divisions would still be necessary if a settlement was reached on Berlin. McNamara replied that conventional forces would retain their rationale for certain contingencies, lest the Soviets take Hamburg hostage while they launched an invasion of the Middle East.⁵⁶⁹ Despite having told Kennedy point blank that he did not think conventional hostilities in Europe were likely, both sides seemed content to allow their differences to be worked out

566 See especially a State Department Circular to NATO Posts, 25 May 1962, which stated that the US "should not ourselves initiate efforts to revise Political Directive." In August, Rusk followed this up by stating that "September through December is time to 'make haste slowly'", during which the US should avoid pressing for conclusions or decisions on NATO matters, while encouraging the Allies to digest the information they had been provided as quickly as possible. *FRUS 1961-63*, vol.XIII, Docs. 139, 152, pp.396-99, 441-44. There is a somewhat misleading passage in Nitze, *From Hiroshima to Glasnost*, p.208, titled "A New Strategy for NATO" which states that the US "began to seek allied acceptance of a new NATO strategy...in January 1962." Nitze seems to actually be referring here to contingency planning strategies for Berlin, not revision of MC 14/2 and MC 48/2.

567 Writing to Prime Minister Macmillan on 7 August in reply to a letter on the cancellation of the BLUE WATER missile, Kennedy stated that, "For a number of tactical reasons-the current situation in NATO, the Common Market negotiations, and the timing of our own internal studies-I believe that major new departures should wait until 1963." *FRUS 1961-63*, vol.XIII, Doc.150, p.440. Also see Rusk's statement at the December 1962 NAC meeting, discussed below.

568 BNA, PREM 11/3648, Record of Meeting between Macmillan and Kennedy, 28 April 1962. There is a US version of the Kennedy-Macmillan conversation at JFKL, NSF, Box 175, NATO Strategy in Folder: Macmillan Visit 4/62 Memcons.

569 BNA, PREM 11/3648, Record of Meeting between Macmillan and McNamara, 29 April 1962.

later in direct talks between McNamara and Watkinson. In any case, Macmillan informed Kennedy that Britain was entering into a crucial phase in her EEC negotiations, which were liable to have to await a Commonwealth Prime Ministers conference in September before being finalized, which would absorb considerable UK attention in the coming months.⁵⁷⁰

During the Macmillan-McNamara exchange, McNamara had voiced his growing concern over German nuclear ambitions. He pointed out to Macmillan, who was treated to a dose of gloomy projections over a potential nuclear exchange, that it was very important to stress to the Germans that the United States and the Soviet Union already possessed large nuclear arsenals. McNamara felt this would help convince them of the irrationality of pursuing their own weapons, as it would take a prohibitively large expenditure for them to make any impact on the overall strategic balance.⁵⁷¹ Given the overall thrust of administration thinking, one wonders if there was not a carefully couched message here for the British as well.

McNamara did indeed present the administration's case to all the NATO allies the next month at the Athens NAC meeting. The key step in the American attempt to educate the allies was McNamara's address to a restricted session of the NAC in May 1962. The address, largely written by McNamara's adviser William W. Kaufmann, particularly focused on the concept of counterforce. Counterforce, it will be remembered, was the second key component of the Kennedy administration's conception

570 BNA, PREM 11/3648, Record of Meeting between Macmillan and Kennedy, 28 April 1962, PREM 11/3648, and CAB 128/36, CC(62)31, Min.1.

571 BNA, PREM 11/3648, Record of Meeting between Macmillan and McNamara, 29 April 1962.

of flexible response. Counterforce was an attempt to move away from an optimal mix of military and urban/industrial targets which had characterized SIOP-62. In counterforce, military targets would attain first priority, and missiles aimed at urban centers would be initially withheld. It was hoped that such a strategy, if the Soviets could be somehow convinced to follow suit, would reduce casualties while “attempting to preserve the fabric as well as the integrity of allied society.” But for such a strategy to work, it was important that nuclear weapons remain under central control and direction.

Secretary McNamara told his fellow defense ministers that the US thought that the destruction of Soviet forces in a nuclear conflict could no longer be guaranteed without facing the prospect that civil society in the NATO countries would suffer considerable damage as well. He informed his audience that the United States had “developed its plans in order to permit a variety of strategic choices. We have also instituted a number of programs which will enable the Alliance to engage in a controlled and flexible nuclear response in the event that deterrence should fail.”⁵⁷² He went on to stress that the Kennedy administration was confident that Western nuclear superiority would be maintained over the Sino-Soviet bloc through at least the mid-1960s.

But McNamara also wanted to draw the Alliance’s attention to the fact that in the face of an ambiguous Soviet challenge (a challenge below the threshold of a nuclear or all-out conventional attack), it was the West that might find itself in the unenviable position of facing first-use of nuclear weapons if the conventional deterrent was not

⁵⁷² *FRUS 1961-63*, vol. *VIII*, Doc.82: Address by Secretary of Defense McNamara at the Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, Athens, 5 May 1962, p.276.

strengthened.⁵⁷³ Thus, while trying not to undermine Alliance confidence in the ultimate resort to the US nuclear deterrent in the event of a Soviet nuclear attack on any one member or of an all-out Soviet conventional attack on Western Europe, McNamara reiterated the need to building up NATO's non-nuclear capabilities. This would help convince the Soviets-as McNamara believed it did in the Berlin Crisis-that NATO could effectively deal with Soviet pressure on scales that did not merit a 'massive retaliation' sort of response.⁵⁷⁴

Observers within the Kennedy administration widely perceived this NAC meeting as the most successful meeting of the Kennedy era.⁵⁷⁵ A State Department circular went so far as to say that the meeting was "one of the most successful in [the] history of the Alliance." It stated that Secretary McNamara "gave to [the] Council [the] fullest statement it has ever received on basic facts in nuclear field."⁵⁷⁶ This material was initially considered so sensitive-the NAC meeting was a very restricted session with no notes allowed-that the State was still working out with Defense how to address this information to relevant NATO posts. It seemed that the administration was at last making some progress in its campaign to "educate the allies."

⁵⁷³ Ibid., p.277.

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid., p.280.

⁵⁷⁵ The British view was more reserved. In their report to the Cabinet, Foreign Secretary Home described the meeting as "satisfactory", and Defence Minister Watkinson pointed out that "while some progress had been made at the Athens meeting, the next round of discussions on NATO strategy was likely to be difficult." See BNA, CAB 128/36, CC(62)32nd Conclusions. Defense Minister Strauss of West Germany relayed his compliments on McNamara's speech during a visit to the United States in early June. See *FRUS 1961-1963*, vol.XIII, Doc. 140, Memcon, 9 June 1962, p.401.

⁵⁷⁶ See *FRUS 1961-1963*, vol.XIII, Docs. 136: Tel. from Rusk to State Dep, 6 May 1962, and Doc.137: Circular from State, 9 May 1962, pp.388-93.

Watkinson and McNamara had met prior to the May 1962 North Atlantic Council meetings in Athens.⁵⁷⁷ Watkinson continued to support McNamara's position on two important issues. What this meant for Britain was retaining the strength of the BAOR at 55,000 men and continued support for the Forward Defense concept. Watkinson did elicit from McNamara his own private reservations about Norstad's MRBM proposal, which certainly resonated with the opinions in British defense circles.⁵⁷⁸ Watkinson came away from these discussions convinced that this was not the time to become involved in "philosophical discussions on strategy in the North Atlantic Council."⁵⁷⁹ Watkinson and McNamara also agreed that there were a number of further questions between the two countries that should be worked out by SACEUR and the NATO military authorities, though both sides realized that further bilateral exchanges by their respective defense experts might well be useful.⁵⁸⁰

The decision to maintain the strength of the BAOR, though addressing an important allied request, did nothing to relieve the financial pressure that the deployment placed on British expenditures. Only on the MRBM front did the British come away with a perceived short-term victory. The Athens meeting had agreed on the creation of a NATO Nuclear Planning Committee for improved consultation on alliance nuclear matters. The British supported the committee on the hope that it would alleviate

577 The Defense Ministers met in Athens on 3 May, followed by a general NAC meeting from 4-6 May.

578 In a discussion with President Kennedy and Secretary Rusk prior to the NAC Meeting, McNamara stated that he personally saw no military requirement for the MRBM force, though he was opposed by both the Chiefs of Staff and Norstad on this matter. *FRUS 1961-1963*, vol.XIII, Doc.133: Minutes of Meeting, 16 April 1962, pp.377-380.

579 BNA, DEFE 32/14, MM/COS(62)4, Watkinson report to British COS on his meeting with McNamara in 8 May 1962.

580 BNA, DEFE 5/127, COS(62)247, NATO Strategy: Further Action, COS(62)247, 6 June 1962.

European concerns on nuclear matters while diverting attention from the NATO MRBM concept.⁵⁸¹

Shortly after the Athens NAC meeting McNamara gave a commencement address at the University of Michigan which was to cause considerable irritation amongst the NATO allies. McGeorge Bundy, who had read an early draft, had counseled President Kennedy either to have McNamara abandon the speech, or undertake a revision with an eye towards not offending French sensibilities or feeding propaganda grist to the Soviets.⁵⁸² After the thick veil of secrecy that had surrounded his Athens address, McNamara turned right around and gave a very public speech about the nature of US atomic strategy. This speech tended towards an oversimplification of his Athens address, and as Bundy had feared, provided ample ammunition for European critics of counterforce and flexible response.⁵⁸³ The Ann Arbor speech turned out to be another miscue in the administration's efforts to win their allies over to their thinking about NATO strategy. In the course of the speech McNamara also spoke out against small, independent nuclear deterrents.

The latter portion of the speech was particularly poorly received in Britain. Defense Secretary Watkinson admitted to being rather put out by the statement. He consoled himself by interpreting McNamara's remark as directed primarily at the French

581 BNA, DEFE 4/146, COS(62)49th Meeting, Minute 3, 26 July 1962. See also CAB 128/36, C(62)32, Min. 3, the Foreign Secretary's report to the Cabinet. The US too hoped that the "Athens package" would "prove adequate to satisfy for the time being [European] desires for greater participation in nuclear matters." See *FRUS 1961-1963*, vol.XIII, Doc.139: Circular Telegram from Dep. of State to Certain Missions, 25 May 1962, p.397.

582 JFKL, NSF, Box 274, Memorandum for President from Bundy, 1 June 1962.

583 Kaplan, et. al., *HSOD*, vol.V, pp.308-09.

nuclear program.⁵⁸⁴ Prime Minister Macmillan was rather less patient. With an eye towards the pending British application to join the EEC, he thought that McNamara's public strategy exposition put awkward pressure on the British. The Prime Minister informed his Foreign Secretary that the Americans needed to accept the "fact" that Britain had an independent deterrent and that the French were soon to get one. It thus made little point for the US to go on talking about them. Macmillan hoped that McNamara would stop making speeches and launching plans; once the EEC negotiations were done, there would be time to take stock of NATO matters.⁵⁸⁵

Harold Watkinson's tenure as Secretary of State for Defense had seen an effort to delay the pace of the Macmillan government's general movement towards contraction in defense commitments. Nonetheless, there was steady pressure for reductions which could not be altogether avoided. The thrust of the Kennedy administration's emphasis on strengthened conventional forces in NATO thus created a thorny diplomatic problem for the British. During 1962 and 1963, the British spent considerable effort trying to develop strategies to deflect the thinking of the new administration into avenues more conducive to their own strategic outlook and in line with their economic situation. But the articulation of British policy, as will be seen, had difficulty developing a clear alternative to the flexible response strategy of the Kennedy administration.

584 BNA, PREM 11/3709, Memorandum on Nuclear Weapons: Watkinson to Macmillan, 18 June 1962. The file contains considerable material on the Macmillan government's damage control efforts. See also JFKL, NSF, Box 264, Memorandum for Record by Nils Lennartson, 18 June 1962.

585 BNA, PREM 11/4583, Talking points paper for meeting between Macmillan and Foreign Secretary Home, 23 June 1962, drafted by Macmillan's private secretary Philip de Zulueta. Also quoted in Horne, *Macmillan*, vol.2, pp.329-330.

After the Athens NAC and Defense Policy Committee Meetings, the British set about preparing studies of NATO land, air, and naval strategy. They wanted to spell out points on which there was basic Anglo-American agreement and draw out the remaining points of divergence.⁵⁸⁶ The first two of these papers were approved as briefing statements for the UK representatives in NATO by 6 June. The report assumed that any potential conflict with the Soviets would neither be a full-scale nuclear surprise attack, or an all-out conventional assault. Rather, it was expected that hostilities resulting from a crisis over Berlin or Soviet suppression of an East German uprising in which the West Germans intervened would be based only on Soviet ready forces already deployed in East Germany and Central Europe. This would be a deliberate choice on the part of the Soviets to “make obvious the limited nature of the attack.”

Both the British and Americans continued to emphasize (the degree of emphasis being rather stronger on the British side) the primacy of the deterrent role of conventional forces. Little progress had been made, however, since Acheson’s initial proposals at harmonizing the British and American conceptions of how long conventional operations might last. The British, as had been concluded in the Mottershead Report, saw little reason to delay the decision to use tactical weapons after it was clear that the Soviets were intent upon a major aggression. The Americans for their part still seemed to conceptualize that a conventional phase prior to the use of tactical nuclear weapons might last as long as three weeks. The British were unable to calculate the implications for force sizes of their concept. For tactical (diplomatic) reasons they were prepared to

⁵⁸⁶ Initial focus was on NATO land/air strategy, with studies on naval strategy to follow.

accept the US figure of 30 divisions so long as no further requirements were made of them. As to whether a future war could be limited to a theater of exchange, the British were doubtful, though they recognized that a tacit recognition of the concept might be reached with the Soviets. The British also remained uncertain as to why the Americans were supporting earmarking Polaris submarines beyond the political rationale for such a move. Though they recognized a military need for a certain small number of such weapons, they thought the requirements for such weapons should receive a low priority. The Chiefs of Staff concluded that the British should support SACEUR's forward strategy in NATO and allow the Triennial Review to proceed, though priorities for strengthening NATO's forces still needed to be determined by the NAC. On the other hand they wanted to discourage the development of a NATO MRBM force and the deployment of additional of these weapons to Allied Command Europe unless a clear requirement for them could be established.⁵⁸⁷

In July of 1962 Harold Macmillan's Cabinet underwent its second major reorganization in a spate of dismissals known as a "Night of the Long Knives." It began with the dismissal of Selwyn Lloyd as Chancellor of the Exchequer.⁵⁸⁸ Macmillan had decided to remove Lloyd over growing frustration with the lack of imaginative thinking. Another casualty was Harold Watkinson, who resigned as Minister of Defense. Watkinson had proved rather more popular with the Chiefs than his predecessor Duncan

587 BNA, DEFE 5/127, COS(62)246, NATO Strategy, 6 June 1962. See also Mountbatten's comments about ascertaining the roles of MRBM and air forces in DEFE 4/145, COS(62)35th Meeting, Minute 6, 15 May 1962.

588 Macmillan's first Chancellor of the Exchequer, Peter Thorneycroft, had resigned from the office in 1958, only to re-enter the government as Minister for Aviation in 1960.

Sandys, but had proved less effective than Macmillan desired.⁵⁸⁹ His acquiescence to McNamara's May proposals for continued BAOR deployment at 55,000 men, which went against the defense reviews that the British had just completed, undoubtedly contributed to Macmillan's frustration with his handling of the Ministry of Defense. Watkinson was replaced by the parsimonious Thorneycroft, who soon turned his attention to long term decisions about the nature of Britain's defense commitments.⁵⁹⁰

A discussion of the Blue Water surface-to-surface missile system in the summer of 1962 is highly suggestive about the degree to which British thinking on tactical nuclear weapons was moving strongly away from the US position on their role. The Blue Water missile was the British Army's weapon of choice for the delivery of tactical nuclear weapons, which at that time were an integral part of the NATO shield forces defense concept. In an extended discussion of the weapon system's fate-its primary champion was Secretary of War John Profumo-it was decided to cancel the weapon on the basis that the Cabinet doubted "the validity of the military case for them and could expect that our allies would come to share these doubts before the weapons themselves came into service." The Cabinet accepted that a war of movement in Europe accompanied by the release of thousands of tactical nuclear weapons, being no different than outright strategic bombardment, was untenable. Thus, the Cabinet members could see no need for more than a few tactical weapons to be placed under the direct control of SACEUR for the purpose of 'enforcing the pause', and as a result agreed to the cancellation of the Blue

589 Horne, *Macmillan*, vol.2, pp.243, 343-47.

590 Peter Thorneycroft assumed the post of Minister of Defense on 17 July 1962. See BNA, CAB 128/36, CC(62)47th Conclusions.

Water project.⁵⁹¹ When informed of the decision, Kennedy wrote to Macmillan hoping that savings from this cancellation might allow greater British resources to the buildup of conventional forces. Kennedy reiterated to Macmillan his judgment that it was not credible (to Kennedy himself or to Moscow) to believe that the allies would shift from limited land probes to relieve Berlin directly to strategic nuclear warfare.⁵⁹² After a year and a half, neither Kennedy nor Macmillan had seemingly moved much closer to the views.

From the Cuban Missile Crisis to Nassau

The Cuban Missile Crisis had several important implications for NATO strategy. On the one hand, Kennedy and senior members of his administration emerged from the crisis with an enhanced desire to avoid nuclear disaster. This manifested itself in the willingness of the administration again to press for nuclear test ban talks with the Soviets. The desire to reach some sort of accommodation with the Soviets indirectly served to lessen the administration's urgency to see its allies adopt the flexible response strategy. McNamara's interpretation of the crisis also led him to abandon counterforce doctrine and turn to another nuclear strategy, assured destruction.⁵⁹³ On the other hand, the Cuban Missile Crisis was initially used as an example of why flexible response did in fact have relevance.⁵⁹⁴

591 BNA, CAB 128/36, CC(62)53, CC(62)54, both on 3 August 1962.

592 *FRUS 1961-63*, vol.XIII, Doc150, pp.439-40.

593 Kaplan, et.al., *HOSD*, vol.V, pp.313, 319.

594 Kennedy remarked to a NSC meeting in January 1963 that the major lesson of the Cuban crisis was that in crisis situations both the US and Soviets needed time to appraise options so that neither side made a rash decision that could lead to war. Strengthened conventional forces in Europe would allow for "greater control over the timing of a showdown in Europe provoked by the Russians." *FRUS 1961-63*, vol.XIII, Doc.168, pp.484-85.

The Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962 reinforced the widely held conviction in the Kennedy administration that conventional forces played an important role in strengthening the Western deterrent. In an address to the NATO Parliamentarians Conference in November 1962 on the lessons learned from the Cuban Missile Crisis, Undersecretary of State George Ball argued that the placement of Soviet missiles in Cuba had been a threat to the entire NATO alliance, not just the United States. This was because the missile, when they became operational, directly threatened America's retaliatory deterrent capability, upon which the security of all the alliance members rested. Ball argued that the U.S. response to the crisis had been a successful demonstration of what he called "measured response." He stressed the continued need for close alliance cooperation and stated that "the most urgent need today is for the development of more effective conventional forces for NATO to complement the superior nuclear power already available to the alliance."⁵⁹⁵

During a conversation with Danish Foreign Minister Haerckerup in early December, Kennedy again stressed the importance of the Cuban lessons. He pointed out that US conventional strength had faced the Soviets with the prospect of backing down or being the first to resort to nuclear weapons. He noted that an all-out nuclear exchange was likely to result in the deaths of 300 million Europeans; it was important to buildup conventional forces to provide for a meaningful alternative other than resort to nuclear

⁵⁹⁵ It should be noted that in this case Ball was speaking primarily about conventional ground forces. He said later in his address that, "NATO forces already dominate the sea. Our air strength is at least equal to that of the Soviet bloc." Under Secretary George W. Ball Addresses the NATO Parliamentarians Conference on "NATO and the Cuban Crisis," November 16, 1962, David L. Larson, ed. *The "Cuban Crisis" of 1962: Selected Documents and Chronology* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1963), p.254.

weapons. This was a fairly traditional statement of the Administration's position. At the same time, Kennedy expressed mounting frustration that the US had "not had much success in putting our point of view across." If NATO were to decide that the conventional build-up was not possible, then it was better to "stop talking about it because such talk might lessen the credibility of the nuclear deterrent."⁵⁹⁶

The December 1962 NAC meeting provided a general forum for the administration to push its interpretation of the lessons of the Cuban Missile Crisis.⁵⁹⁷ Secretary Rusk encouraged his fellow ministers to consider the implications of some allies lagging behind others in their share of the military burdens of defense. He stressed that it was important for the alliance to have a broader range of response than the stark choice between thermonuclear holocaust and surrender. In Rusk's appraisal, the time was "ripe for [a] thoroughgoing re-examination of strategic doctrine."⁵⁹⁸

When Secretary McNamara addressed the meeting, he also argued that the Cuban Missile Crisis had demonstrated the efficacy of strong conventional forces. In McNamara's analysis, since no matters of national survival were at stake, neither the US nor the Soviets were prepared to resort to the use of nuclear weapons. Instead, "the forces that were on the cutting edge of the action were the non-nuclear ones." Reversing the conventional NATO paradigm, he argued that it was conventional forces which were

596 JFKL, NSF, Box 65A, Memcon: Kennedy and Haekkerup, 4 December 1962.

597 The State Department Scope Paper for the meeting stated, "The Cuban crisis demonstrated the value of a broad spectrum of military power...Certain European members, however, will be inclined to attribute the American success mainly to nuclear superiority. It will be important to set the record straight on this matter, because it will profoundly influence NATO's actions across the board in the military area." *FRUS 1961-1963*, vo.XIII, Doc.158, p.455.

598 *FRUS 1961-1963*, Western Europe; Berlin Microfiche Supplement, Doc.32, POLTO 698, 15 December 1962.

the sword, while nuclear forces served as the shield.⁵⁹⁹ McNamara again admonished his audience, telling them that NATO for too long had tended to fix its strategy, budgets, and forces to the situation as it stood in 1949.⁶⁰⁰ Though this had a certain ring of truth to it, it was also an interesting statement from the perspective of the administration's push for added conventional forces, which could be interpreted as a reversion to the type of thinking which had led to the Lisbon force goals. Certainly the thrust of Dean Acheson's thinking in his 1961 report to the President seems a revival of his own earlier thinking on strategy. Despite continued resistance from European allies, however, the Administration clung tenaciously to this position.

The message that Rusk and McNamara sent at the December 1962 meeting was clear; the Kennedy Administration planned to push on with its program for strengthened conventional forces in NATO. Though there was little that was new about this, it did avoid the more elliptical statements that had characterized earlier administration presentations to the NATO allies. Rusk's statement also seemed to suggest that there was increased willingness on the part of the US to undertake a formal revision of strategic doctrine.⁶⁰¹ Within the NATO international staff itself there had been a move in this direction with the introduction of a paper under the imprimatur of Secretary-General

599 *FRUS 1961-63*, vol.VIII, Doc. 120: Address by Secretary of Defense McNamara at the Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, Paris, 14 December 1962, Doc.120, p.440.

600 *FRUS 1961-63*, vol.VIII, Doc. 120: Address by Secretary of Defense McNamara at the Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, Paris, 14 December 1962, p.439.

601 There remained strong pressure within both the National Security apparatus, especially Walt Rostow, and at Defense in the person of Paul Nitze for formal strategic guidance. However, President Kennedy himself seemed to be moving in the opposite direction.

Stikker's paper in late August 1962.⁶⁰² Subsequent discussions of the paper at the NAC council made little headway during the fall.⁶⁰³ During October the Cuban Missile Crisis occupied center stage. Force planning and strategic reassessment remained largely unaddressed while efforts at educating the allies continued. Early indications from Europe, however, suggested that the Kennedy administration's efforts had made little headway.⁶⁰⁴ The coming year seemed to presage considerable difficulties in alliance affairs.⁶⁰⁵

Amidst these existing difficulties, the Kennedy-Macmillan exchange at Nassau on 18-21 December resulted in the pledge by the United States to provide the British with Polaris missiles in exchange for the recently cancelled Skybolt system.⁶⁰⁶ Macmillan

602 The Stikker paper was issued as NATO document NDP/62/10. A copy of the paper was given by Stikker to US Permanent Representative Finletter on 30 August. It was discussed by the NATO Council on 18 and 27 September, though no action was taken at this time. See references to NDP/62/10 in *FRUS 1961-1963*, vol.XIII, Doc.153, p.444, and BNA, DEFE 5/131, COS(62)403, NATO Defence Policy-The Stikker Paper.

603 The relative importance of Stikker's position on NATO strategy and force goal reviews was heightened in this period in terms of the NATO structure as General Norstad was coming to the end of his tenure as SACEUR. Norstad was replaced with JCS Chairman Lemnitzer, with Kennedy's special military advisor General Maxwell Taylor taking over as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. Norstad's retirement was delayed as a result of the Cuban Missile Crisis, and did not take place until January 1963. On the growing difficulties between Norstad and the Kennedy administration preceding his retirement, see Jordan, *Norstad: Cold War Supreme Commander*, pp.194-212, and Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, p.302.

604 *FRUS 1961-1963*, vol.XIII, Doc.170, pp.491-92. Upon his return from the Bahamas meeting, Prime Minister Macmillan reported that "many of President Kennedy's advisers were inclined to indulge a inflated conception of the material power at the disposal of their Government. The natural reaction of the other members of the [NATO] alliance, which was perhaps particularly evident in this country, was apt to take the form of suspicion of the United States motives and policies." BNA, CAB 128/37, CC(63)2, Min.1, 3 January 1963.

605 See, for instance, the discussions of the National Security Council and NSC Executive Committee on 22 and 25 January, respectively. *FRUS 1961-1963*, vol.XIII, Docs. 168-69, pp.484-91.

606 Nassau is extensively treated in the secondary literature. Historiographically one of the most important studies on the Skybolt was the internal review conducted for President Kennedy after Nassau by Richard Neustadt. For an important reconsideration, see Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, pp.359-63. On secondary accounts, see for instance, Baylis, *Ambiguity and Deterrence*, pp.312-26; Kaplan, et.al., *HOSD*, vol.5, pp.375-84; Pagedas, *Anglo-American Relations and the French Problem*, pp.250-56. For the US version, see *FRUS 1961-63*, vol.XIII, Docs. 402-06, pp.1091-1112. For British versions, BNA, PREM 11/4147, PREM 11/4229, and CAB 128/37, CC(63)2, Min.1.

considered the meeting a hard-won, but considerable success because he won through personal diplomacy continued access to the next generation of strategic deterrent.⁶⁰⁷ The Nassau deal was predicated on a delicately worded agreement in which Britain committed the nuclear forces to NATO while retaining the right to make independent use of them in dire national emergency. This formula provided the US with the basis to press for the creation of a NATO multilateral force, while allowing Macmillan to preserve the form of an independent national deterrent (though Nassau clearly signaled the shift to interdependence for the UK as a nuclear power). The Nassau exchange further complicated alliance nuclear relations, upset internal US policy which opposed independent national deterrents, and added the burden of an expensive new weapon system to a British defense budget which was already under severe strain.⁶⁰⁸

1963-The Year of French Obstructionism

Nineteen sixty-three witnessed a number of French decisions which exacerbated tensions in the fabric of the alliance. Amidst rising French obstructionism, the US made a hard push for acceptance of the Multilateral Force (MLF) concept in hopes of providing a solution for the perceived European (but mainly German) desire to participate in nuclear affairs. Neither France nor Britain were ultimately engaged in the MLF concept, indeed US pressure for UK participation in the MLF further strained Anglo-American relations already frayed by the Skybolt cancellation crisis.

607 Horne, *Macmillan*, vol.2, p.440.

608 Marc Trachtenberg's argues that Nassau provided the opportunity for the final demise of the Acheson approach to NATO that had been predominate-though not universally accepted-since its articulation in early 1961. Thus Nassau from the beginning was not a hard won British diplomatic victory, but the beginning of a considered US approach to assisting both the British and French nuclear programs. Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, pp.359-63.

The overriding problem in 1963 for NATO generally and the UK specifically was the attitude which the French took towards a number of issues. The first of these problems to arise was the decision by De Gaulle to reject Britain's application to the Common Market. Macmillan's government had been served notice of De Gaulle's attitude during a meeting between the two leaders at Rambouillet prior to the Nassau meeting with Kennedy. But it was not until 14 January when De Gaulle gave one of his infamous press conferences that the rejection of Britain's application seemed assured. By the end of the month the French government officially terminated the negotiations then underway in Brussels on UK membership. The French veto of the UK application introduced a note of turmoil in British policy during the remainder of the year which contributed to the defensive nature of British policy generally.

In the midst of the demise of the EC application, British Minister of Defense Thorneycroft was contemplating hard decisions about the future of British defense policy. Thorneycroft presented a paper to the British Chiefs in December 1962, on Defense in the Longer Term. In the paper he argued that sooner rather than later Britain was going to choose between a worldwide role (especially East of Suez) or maintaining existing commitments to NATO. For his part, Thorneycroft wanted to choose the worldwide role and investigate making large reductions in Britain's continental commitment.⁶⁰⁹ The British Chiefs of Staff were unable to concur with the full implications of Thorneycroft's paper, which at their most extreme seemed to contemplate reducing the British presence

609 BNA, DEFE 32/7, Defence in the Longer Term (Draft), 28 November 1962, and DEFE 5/132, COS(62)485, Defence in the Longer Term, 18 December 1962. Thorneycroft's paper stated "If the Common Market talks break down, we may in any event face the need to scale down drastically our military power on the Continent."

on the Central Front down to a single division.⁶¹⁰ Such a radical reduction in British capabilities, so soon after McNamara had once again exhorted his fellow ministers regarding the importance of conventional forces and in light of French views on NATO strategy were sure to stir a vigorous debate at many levels. The British Chiefs themselves responded obliquely to Thorneycroft's suggestions with a paper titled "A British View of Strategy for the Defence of Central Europe." The paper responded to a number of issues. One was movement from the NATO International Staff to renew the process of updating NATO strategy in preparation for the next round of force planning. It was also a response to McNamara's presentation at the December NAC meeting and recent US studies which argued for 60 NATO divisions to be available at M+30 (30 ready divisions, and 30 reserve divisions which could be mobilized within a month).⁶¹¹ But the paper should also be read as a counter to Thorneycroft's suggestion that the UK commitment to the continent could be run down to very low levels. The paper states: "A trip wire strategy, deploying relatively small forces along the Iron Curtain to trigger strategic retaliation, is not credible." At the same time, it described trying to match the Soviet and satellite force division for division as "impossible" without drastic reductions in the

610 BNA, DEFE 5/135, COS 42/63, Long Term Strategy, 31 January 1963. In their general observations on Thorneycroft's paper, the Chiefs warned that substantial reductions in forces on the continent were liable to "impose severe strain on the military structure of NATO and convey the impression of political and military disarray" and might additionally have important consequences for Anglo-American military collaboration.

611 BNA, DEFE 5/134, COS 35/63, Visit of the Chief of the Defence Staff to General Lemnitzer-Brief on Conventional Forces, 4 February 1963. At this time the British COS expected that the NATO MC would be presenting a revised strategic concept to the NAC for discussion in March. The key to understanding the difference in the American goals for conventional forces at this time lay in the downward revisions of Soviet capabilities which developed in US estimates. As early as the fall of 1961 a NATO Working Group set up at the Department of Defense had begun to undermine the long-standing conception that NATO could not match Warsaw Pact forces on the Central Front. See Kaplan, et. al., *HOSD*, vol.V, p.364.

Western standard of living.⁶¹² Thus, the British Chiefs themselves were trying to strike a balancing position between US pressure and that of their own Minister of Defense. At the same time, if one did not accept the notion of either a tripwire strategy nor the notion of extended conventional fighting, what exactly were they aiming at?

This confusion seems to have played out in a visit by Chief of the Defense Staff Lord Mountbatten made a visit to the United States in February 1963. During the visit Mountbatten had conversations with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and President Kennedy.⁶¹³ The visit was intended to try to convince the Americans not to “rock the boat” on NATO strategy, particularly while Britain’s Common Market application was still under review. This meant trying to convince the Americans to downplay their emphasis on non-nuclear forces. According to Mountbatten’s own account, he found a sympathetic ear from the President. Kennedy told Mountbatten that if it were not for the problem of Berlin, then he would be willing to accept a force of approximately 10 divisions on the Central Front.⁶¹⁴ Kennedy had in fact questioned the need for pushing for augmented

612 BNA, DEFE 4/151, COS 5th/63, Min.5, and DEFE 5/134, COS 34/63, 23 January 1963.

613 The biggest British concern going into the meeting was how to address the subject of non-nuclear forces. The final communiqué at Nassau had mentioned the subject (representing a compromise in language between British and American positions), and subsequent correspondence between McNamara and Thorneycroft suggested the Americans were trying to push the British back towards a position of accepting larger conventional forces. See BNA, DEFE 4/151, COS 3rd Meeting/63, Min.7, 15 January 1963.

614 The only record of this exchange which I have come across to date is Mountbatten’s report to the COS Committee in BNA, DEFE 4/152, COS 12th Meeting/63, Min.3, 12 February 1963. There is a mention of the visit, with no substantive content, in Zeigler, *Mountbatten*, p.599. During a meeting between Kennedy and the JCS on 28 February, Kennedy mentioned that Mountbatten had been promoting a ‘plate glass’ concept. (This was the same phrase that Dulles had used to refer to the British concept in July 1956.) *FRUS 1961-63*, vol.XIII, Doc.178, p.517. Mountbatten’s advancement of such a concept was inline with the direction Thorneycroft was moving, but did not actually coincide with the Force Requirement to Meet the British View of Strategy for Central Europe. This study by the JPS did not support the US position, but interestingly came up with an 88 brigade (29 divisions) requirement for forces on the Central Front. It also explicitly rejected what it called the French ‘trip wire’ strategy. The plan was endorsed by the COS on

conventional forces the previous month in a meeting with Rusk, McNamara, and McGeorge Bundy.⁶¹⁵ He apparently told Mountbatten that the Berlin situation distorted the whole Western military posture, and if a solution to Berlin could be found, he would embrace a view consonant with the basic strategy that Mountbatten himself had proposed.⁶¹⁶ It seems that Mountbatten may have been trying to test the waters for a “plate glass” strategy more consonant with Thorneycroft’s thinking than that of his fellow Chiefs.

Though US policy in 1963 continued to be to push for attainment of the MC 26/4 conventional force goals, Kennedy himself seemed to be entertaining doubts about the scale of the long-term US troop commitment to NATO Europe. In a discussion with the JCS at the end of February, Kennedy told the Chiefs he wanted them to consider how much US forces in Europe might be reduced in the following year. In fact, his thinking seemed to be gravitating towards a position similar to the earlier “new looks.” During the meeting he “challenged the Joint Chiefs to think in terms of using our military strength to get an economic adjustment that, in the long run, would protect our interests vis-à-vis our allies.” While not issuing any specific directive in the meeting, Kennedy “left the clear

2 April 1963. See BNA, DEFE 4/153, COS 23rd/63, Min.1 and DEFE 5/137, COS 135/63. By late April 1963, Kennedy had also apparently informed both the German and Italian governments that NATO could rely on a nuclear strategy with considerably less conventional forces than were currently in ACE. This conforms with the basic account given by Mountbatten. See NARA, RG 59, Bureau for European Affairs, 1959-1966, Box 6, DRAFT paper by R.H. Kranich, 29 April 1963, p.4.

615 *FRUS 1961-1963*, Microfiche Supplement, v.XIII-XV, Doc.27: Meeting between the President, Rusk, McNamara, and McGeorge Bundy, 10 December 1962.

616 BNA, DEFE 4/152, COS 12th Meeting/63, Min.3, 12 February 1963.

impression” that he wanted a fresh reappraisal of the problem of conventional force goals before the May NAC meeting in Ottawa.⁶¹⁷

While the question of force goals was under consideration, US attention in 1963 was focused primarily on the MLF project. The issue of command and control of the force was the primary topic of discussion at the Ottawa meeting of the NAC in May 1963. Despite some indications that Kennedy’s thinking was undergoing a shift on the question of conventional forces, convincing the Europeans of “the need for improved conventional forces capable of prolonged operations in forward areas” remained a US policy objective going into the Ottawa meeting. This in part may have derived from continued bureaucratic pressure for a revision of NATO strategy. In late January, JCS Chairman Maxwell Taylor and Assistant Secretary of Defense (ISA) McNaughton had tentatively agreed that the U.S. should push for changes in the NATO Political Directive and Strategic Concept.⁶¹⁸ This would contribute to strengthening NATO’s conventional force posture, which was seen as a necessary step to make the strategy of measured (flexible) response a practical reality.⁶¹⁹ The US strongly supported Stikker’s proposal at the meeting for a NATO force review which would seek to bring NATO strategy, force levels, and budget capabilities more closely into alignment.⁶²⁰

617 *FRUS 1961-63*, vol.XIII, Doc.178: JCS meeting with the President, 28 February 1963, pp.516-18.

618 NARA, RG 59, Bureau for European Affairs, 1959-1966, Box 2, End-1969 Paper on Force Requirements and the Triennial Review for Stikker 4-6 March 1963 Visit.

619 *FRUS 1961-63*, vol.XIII, Doc.196: Strategy Paper for NATO Ministerial Meeting, 17 May 1963, p.577.

620 The Special Force Review had been building momentum since January, and a preliminary draft of a new strategic review had been completed by April 1963. On the Stikker review, see *FRUS 1961-63*, vol.XIII, Doc.199, p.588. On Rusk and McNamara’s supporting statements for the review, see *FRUS 1961-1963*, Microfiche Supplement, Doc.38: SECTO 8, 23 May 1963. There is a copy of the draft version of The Military Appreciation as it Affects NATO in 1970 dated 10 April 1963 in BNA, DEFE 5/137, COS

One of Stikker's primary objects in his new study was to overcome the problem which had long plagued NATO force planning, which was the extent to which the major NATO commanders generated their force requirements independently of budgetary guidance based on static strategic guidance. Stikker hoped that this new exercise would allow for a fluid interplay of strategy, force goals, and budgets, and that none would be firmly fixed ahead of time. Stikker's proposal as it began to be elaborated soon ran into French objections, which centered on the argument that a strategic concept needed to be agreed upon *before* force planning could take place. Though this had been NATO procedure in the past, it was in part to escape problems seemingly endemic in this cycle that Stikker had made his current proposals. It briefly seemed that a compromise was attained in the fall in which the NATO military authorities would proceed with the preparation of the strategic concept while the NAC in Permanent Session created a Defense Planning Committee and subsidiary Defense Planning Working Group. The working group was to serve as the focal point to bring together input of the Secretariat, the Standing Group, major NATO commanders, Military Committee, and interested national representatives.⁶²¹

While the machinery for the Stikker review was in the nascent stages of operation, French authorities at NATO resolutely refused to accept the emerging draft of the new strategic concept. This document was issued as MC 100/1 (draft), and titled

148/63. This document was subsequently discussed in informal session by the NATO MC/CS at its 30th Meeting on 21-22 June.

621 Helga Haftendorn, *NATO and the Nuclear Revolution: A Crisis of Credibility, 1966-1967* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp.206-10, and Duffield, *Power Rules*, pp.170-72.

“Appreciation of the Military Situation as it Affects NATO up to 1970.”⁶²² The report stated that the need for a strategic reappraisal was needed because:

- a. The growth of an increasingly invulnerable Soviet nuclear capability;
- b. The certainty of enormous devastation in case of all-out nuclear exchange;
- c. As a consequence, the lesser credibility, under certain circumstances, of deterrence based on the threat of all-out nuclear war.⁶²³

The report went on to identify five major areas which required special attention. These included responding to the Soviet ability to launch a large-scale attack with little or no warning; the marked imbalance in military intelligence capabilities (implicitly favoring the Soviet bloc); the inadequacy of ballistic missile defense in the near future; concern with the growing submarine threat; and the increasing importance of space technology to the military field.⁶²⁴ While reiterating that major Soviet aggression against North America or Europe remained unlikely, the document stressed the need “to respond effectively to all but unambiguous major aggression without resort to strategic nuclear warfare.” In order to make this possible, the document stressed the importance of mobile, flexible forces equipped with tactical nuclear weapons, which would provide “the capability for controlled, discriminatory and militarily adequate nuclear operations” should conventional defense alone prove insufficient.⁶²⁵ The language of point c represented the compromise position, by which US authorities sought to introduce the flexible response concept into NATO’s strategy. It also proved to be the point which the French would not

622 NATO Archives, MC 100/1 (Draft), Appreciation of the Military Situation as it Affects NATO up to 1970, Note for the Members of the Military Committee in Permanent Session, 11 September 1963, and Pedlow, “NATO Strategy Documents”, p.xxiii.

623 NATO Archives, MC 100/1 (Draft), Appreciation, p.4.

624 NATO Archives, MC 100/1 (Draft), p.6.

625 This language in particular was evocative of counterforce strategy, and its inclusion seems out of line with even US official thought at the time.

accept. This was because the French independent nuclear deterrent was justified based on the strategy of “massive retaliation.”⁶²⁶

Concern over preparing contingency plans for Soviet action against Berlin spurred thinking about enhancing conventional forces in the NATO shield during the late Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations. This renewed emphasis on conventional forces, enforced pauses, and developing a range of options to deal with crisis situations all became part of the concept of flexible response. Unease within NATO prevented the adoption of a new strategic concept during the Kennedy administration. Though the French government was the most vocal in its opposition to flexible response, in many ways the French represented a view shared by almost all of the US’ allies. At the same time, “massive retaliation” was perceived by many to be an anachronistic strategy. As a result of this confusion, NATO strategy at the end of 1963 remained as contentious as ever.

While NATO’s military planners did explore the application of flexible response, especially in the context of the Berlin crises, it remains unclear how flexible response would have translated into military plans.⁶²⁷ On the one hand, the LIVE OAK organization continued to function. In fact, it was not until 3 November 1990, only a few minutes before German reunification was officially proclaimed, that the LIVE OAK organization ceased to function. It could, perhaps, be regarded as the institutionalized

626 NATO Archives, MC 100/1 (Draft), p.21.

627 NATO Archives, MC 100/1, 11 September 1963, NATO Archives. For the military authorities general support of the document, see discussion on MC 100/1 at (NATO) Military Committee in Chiefs of Staff Session, 2 July 1963.

manifestation of flexible response⁶²⁸ On the other hand, there was considerable skepticism about just what sorts of plans were developed. For all the effort, little seems to have come from the search for a tactical nuclear option within the spectrum of flexible response.⁶²⁹ And for all the effort the Kennedy administration expended, the alliance conventional forces were never substantially increased. Despite this, members of Kennedy's cabinet would remain faithful to the concept of flexible response, retaining it as a long-term goal into the Johnson administration.

628 Pedlow, "Allied Crisis Management for Berlin," p.87.

629 In January 1966, when questioned about the "adequacy of SHAPE plans for the use of nuclear weapons in ACE [Allied Command Europe]," SACEUR Lemnitzer responded by saying that, SHAPE had a wide range of plans for limited use of nuclear weapons which could be brought into play after political authority was granted to use them. Secretary McNamara's statement to Defense Minister von Hassel in London on November 26 that no rational plans existed in SHAPE might have been meant to refer to the political feasibility of such plans, but General Lemnitzer affirmed that the military plans did exist. The General noted that Holifield and other members of the Atomic Energy Committee had reviewed SHAPE nuclear planning and appeared to come away highly pleased. Nuclear weapons could be used selectively against fixed targets or against targets of opportunity presented by the enemy in battle. The German's were well aware that these plans existed, and, indeed, participated in their formulation. NARA, RG 59, Bureau of European Affairs, Records Relating to NATO Affairs, 1959-66 (Lot 67D516), Box 2, Memo of Meeting between Mr. Leddy and General Lemnitzer, 28 January 1966. However, McNamara contradicted this toward the end of his tenure as Secretary of Defense. Robert McNamara wrote in January 1968 that, "while the deterrent value of our theater nuclear capabilities is high, there are great uncertainties concerning the actual conduct and results of limited nuclear war." Memorandum for the President (draft), NATO Strategy and Force Structure, 16 January 1968. Available at the DOD FOIA website, folder: North Atlantic Treaty Organization, #331, <http://www.dod.mil/pubs/foi/nato/>. Looking back a decade after McNamara's attempt to grapple with the tactical nuclear weapon problem, SACEUR Gen. Andrew Goodpaster would tell President Nixon that, "the issue of tactical nuclear weapons had now been stagnant for 10 years." NARA, Nixon Presidential Materials, National Security Council, Name Files, Box 816, Memo for Record, Nixon-Goodpaster Conversation, 15 February 1973. I made these points previously in Davis, *The Challenge of Adaptation*, pp.77-78, n.123.

Chapter 6: The Long Road to Flexible Response

The US government remained committed to inducing a shift in alliance strategy towards flexible response under President Lyndon Johnson. This commitment was, however, muted for several years. For much of Johnson's presidency, the general feeling in the US government was that there was little to be gained by provoking another round of debate until attitudes in the alliance shifted. It was not until late 1966 that economic difficulties faced by both Britain and the United States in supporting their forces in West Germany stirred up another discussion of force levels and strategy. While this discussion was getting underway, NATO solidarity faced a trying challenge. French President De Gaulle's decision to withdraw France from NATO's integrated military command and expel allied forces from France proved to be a catalyst for efforts to reinvigorate the alliance. The French departure from the military command structure also provided the opportunity for the Johnson administration to resume the campaign to adopt flexible response. This chapter charts the strange resilience of flexible response in the 1960s.

For much of the 1960s, NATO seemed mired in a strategic vacuum. The matter of the MLF/ANF remained unresolved at the end of 1963. Johnson initially sided with those in the State Department who continued to see it as essential, especially in light of the problem with De Gaulle, to convince the Germans they were being treated as full and equal partners in the Alliance. He did agree, however, to establish a one year time table

to resolve the issue.⁶³⁰ The desire to see progress towards arms reduction with the Soviets intensified this problem. The Soviets saw the MLF/ANF concepts as attempts to arm the Germans with nuclear weapons. All their arms control proposals included proposals to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in any type of arrangement that hinted at previous NATO nuclear sharing regimes. The Johnson administration thus had to balance placating its German ally, whose stature only grew as a result of French obstruction, against arms control agreements with the Soviets.

Further complicating matters, the growing US involvement in Vietnam strained Washington's relations with its Western European allies and fueled an inflation that undermined the US economic position. The combination of these two factors generated domestic pressure in the United States for unilateral force reductions in Europe. There was Washington's complicated dance with the British, who were courted for their support in Southeast Asia, even if it was just for showing the flag. But Britain, even more acutely than the United States, felt an economic pinch in the later 1960s that made it difficult to sustain commitments both East of Suez and in Europe. Finally, increasing friction between De Gaulle and the Western allies exacerbated tensions in the alliance and led some to question whether or not the Alliance would survive to celebrate its second decade. It was not until the very end of the Johnson administration that NATO adopted flexible response in MC 14/3 and MC 48/3, which were approved in 1967/68. This marked the first formal re-formulation of the NATO strategic concept since 1957. It was also the last revision of NATO's strategic concept until the end of the Cold War. When

630 David Schwartz, *NATO's Nuclear Dilemmas*, pp.115-16, and Thomas Schwartz, *Lyndon Johnson and Europe*, p.41.

flexible response was finally adopted, it emerged as a watered down compromise that tried to be all things to all observers.⁶³¹ It was not until the final two decades of the Cold War that flexible response slowly took shape in terms of operational policy.

With the rejection of MC 100/1, it was clear that to most observers that formal progress on updating MC 14/2 and MC 48/2 documents was still many years off. This put increased pressure on Alliance planners to find ways to circumvent the impasse over strategy and press on with attempts to articulate future goals and purposes to the alliance. But in the absence of an agreed strategy, this process became increasingly problematic.

The coming of a new year did nothing to improve matters within NATO. Nineteen sixty-four was a year of many distractions for NATO's members. With the failure to agree to MC 100/1, NATO force planning continued to amble on with insufficient direction. In Britain, a Conservative government under Alec Douglas-Home limped towards an upcoming election having been undermined in part by the publicity

631 In a report drawn up for then National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger in 1969, the political scientist Robert Osgood wrote "Although in 1967 the allies (with the exception of France) subscribed to statements formulating a strategy of flexible and controlled response, agreement upon the elements of such a strategy was only general and partial. Thus, agreement that the initial response to anything short of a full-scale assault should be conventional was not accompanied by agreement on the circumstances under which tactical or strategic nuclear weapons should be used. The European allies (particularly the UK and FRG), more conscious than Americans of their geographic proximity to the potential battle zone and more inclined to adjust doctrine to capabilities, tend to stress an earlier demonstration tactical nuclear response followed by rapid escalation to strategic exchanges. The U.S. prefers a higher threshold of conventional resistance and a tactical nuclear response confined to Europe. There is now general agreement on the need to avoid an automatic massive nuclear response, but there are no convincing strategies or plans for fighting a controlled nuclear war—only theories and controversies. Considering the dilemmas and uncertainties of nuclear war in Europe and the divergencies [sic] of national interest, it is unlikely that any firm agreement on strategic doctrine will ever be reached. It does not exist in our own government." NARA, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Subject Files, Box 397, Robert E. Osgood, *The United States Position in the World: An Overview*, presented to Dr. Henry Kissinger under cover of a memorandum dated 20 August 1969, pp.29-30.

surrounding the Profumo scandal the previous year.⁶³² In the United States President Johnson was focused primarily on preparing for the upcoming election and securing his own electoral mandate to advance his domestic agenda.⁶³³ In foreign affairs, growing involvement in Vietnam preoccupied the Johnson administration's attention.⁶³⁴ Britain too faced difficulties in Southeast Asia, where the Sukarno regime in Indonesia continued its confrontation with Malaysia, necessitating a steady commitment of British forces to protect the newly independent Commonwealth member.⁶³⁵ Britain, Greece, Turkey, and the United States also became involved in a thorny dilemma regarding the island of Cyprus, where the outbreak of communal violence just before Christmas 1963 threatened to spill over into a conflict between Greece and Turkey.⁶³⁶ It seemed that if the situation in Cyprus could not be restored to some semblance of order, the cumulative effects could wreak great harm to the fabric of the alliance. Some observers thought the conflict would

632 In June 1963 British Secretary of State for the Army John Profumo had been forced to resign after having previously lied to Macmillan and the House of Commons about his illicit relations with Christine Keeler, a high priced call girl who had also had relations with a member of the Soviet embassy staff. Profumo's perjury and the ensuing security scandal had undermined the Macmillan government. Macmillan himself remained in office, but after a major operation in October, resigned as Prime Minister on 18 October. Horne, *Harold Macmillan*, vol.2, pp.456-67, 471-97.

633 Johnson's biographer Robert Dallek writes that "by the summer of 1964 [the presidential campaign] was the center of Johnson's political life." Robert Dallek, *Flawed Giant: Lyndon Johnson and His Times 1961-1973* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.121.

634 On the descent into Vietnam, see Davis Kaiser, *American Tragedy: Kennedy, Johnson, and the Origins of the Vietnam War* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2000); Frederik Logevall, *Choosing War: The Lost Chance for Peace and the Escalation of War in Vietnam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), and H. R. McMaster, *Dereliction of Duty: Lyndon Johnson, Robert McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Lies that Led to Vietnam* (New York: HarperCollins, 1997).

635 Malaysia emerged as a federated states by 1963 made up of the former colonial territories of Malaya, Singapore (which broke away from the federation in 1965), Sarawak, and Sabah (North Borneo), with Britain maintaining regional defense responsibilities. The confrontation with Indonesia lasted between 1963-1966. A. J. Stockwell, "Imperialism and Nationalism in South-East Asia", *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, vol.V: *The Twentieth Century*, ed. by Judith M. Brown and Wm. Roger Louis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.487.

636 For a recent treatment, see Alan James, *Keeping the Peace in the Cyprus Crisis of 1963-64* (Basingstoke, England: Palgrave, 2002).

tear apart NATO's southern flank, facilitating greater Soviet penetration of the Middle East.

Continuity in American Policy

In the wake of the French rejection of MC 100/1, Secretary of Defense McNamara gave an important speech to the Economic Club of New York which again attempted to set out the US view on strategy for the defense of the West.⁶³⁷ This speech is of particular interest given Kennedy's decision at the beginning of 1963 to move away from formal strategic statements (he had issued an executive order officially canceling NSC 5906/1, the last Basic National Security document of the Eisenhower era), and instead rely on pronouncement, both intergovernmental and publicly delivered by himself and senior members of his administration. It also came shortly after the signing of the Limited Test Ban Treaty with the Soviets. The direction McNamara took with the speech, however, did not seem to reflect the growing doubts Kennedy had about the need to strengthen NATO's conventional forces. McNamara himself seems to have remained faithful to the original direction of the Acheson Report well into the Johnson years. Secretary of State Rusk had also encouraged McNamara in a letter just prior to the

637 Remarks of Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara before the Economic Club of New York, Monday, 18 November 1963. Printed in *The Department of State Bulletin*, vLXLIX, no.1277, 16 December 1963, pp.914-921. The speech was also distributed by the State Department to the US' major NATO allies. The British government thought it important enough that it was circulated as a Cabinet paper. See BNA, CAB 129/115, CP(63)25, East-West Relations: Speech by Mr. McNamara, 28 November 1963. It was widely covered in the papers at the time, see: Foster Hailey, "McNamara Declares West Holds Strong Arms Lead". *New York Times*, 19 November 1963, p.1; "McNamara says West now has Superiority", *The Times*, 19 November 1963, p.12; and John G. Norris, "McNamara Warns West of Delusions", *The Washington Post*, 19 November 1963, p.A1. The speech was also reprinted in the Institute for Strategic Studies' journal *Survival*, v.6, n.1 (January-February 1964), pp.2-8.

Economic Club speech “to carry forward and elaborate the NATO policy approved by the President in April 1961.”⁶³⁸

McNamara stated that given the broad, contradictory range of opinions that had been evoked in its wake, it was necessary to make clear to the public “the problems that our military strategy and force structure are meant to address.”⁶³⁹ Continuing on with the theme that McNamara’s ‘Whiz Kids’ had begun articulating during the previous year, McNamara stressed that it was vital for NATO so cease to see itself as “essentially at bay, outmanned and outgunned except for a nuclear no longer exclusively ours.” Stressing the NATO was both more populous and more productive than the Warsaw Pact, he saw little justification for the continued belief that the West could not match the Soviet Union and its satellites in general purpose forces. McNamara argued that the long standing belief that the Soviet fielded some 160-175 divisions was greatly exaggerated; instead he thought that the numbers were probably closer to less than half that figure. Indeed, according to McNamara, NATO fielded “more men, and more combat troops...[and] more and better tactical aircraft” than their Warsaw Pact opposites. Give this reassessment, the US saw little reason for concern with the state of the balance in Central Europe. His attention was increasingly turning to tooling US forces for rapid, mobile responses to crises in other parts of the world.⁶⁴⁰

638 Rusk to McNamara, 17 November 1963, DDRS, 1998, F287, 3394.

639 Remarks of Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara before the Economic Club of New York, Monday, 18 November 1963. Printed in *The Department of State Bulletin*, vl.XLIX, no.1277, 16 December 1963, pp.914-921.

640 Ibid. As McNamara stated: “The actual contingencies that seem to be to me most likely and most significant are not those which would involve all, or even a major part of the Soviet Bloc or Chinese Communist armed forces, nor do they all involve Europe.”

Turning to the central premise of flexible response as a spectrum of potentialities, McNamara reiterated his conviction that nuclear weapons were an insufficient deterrent for responses to the low end of the spectrum. For McNamara, “the most difficult questions arise over the best means for meeting a variety of dangerous intermediate challenges in many parts of the world: those which threaten the possibility of sizable conflict while still not raising the immediate issue of the national survival of ourselves or of any member of our alliances.” Leaving little doubt as to the implications of such thinking for NATO, McNamara went on to state, “Most dangerously, approaching the upper end of the spectrum, there is the possibility of limited Soviet pressures on NATO territory itself, along the vast front running from Norway to Greece and Turkey.” By restating the case for flexible response (without actually using the phrase) so quickly after the French veto of MC 100/1, McNamara left little doubt for any interested European audience that the US administration’s position had not been shaken by the French veto.⁶⁴¹ His discussion of contingencies on NATO’s flanks was to become an increasingly common aspect of flexible response in the years to come, and by decades end was arguably the only aspect of flexible response that retained any meaning.

641 In Britain, the Permanent Undersecretary to the Foreign Office commented that the speech demolished the case for the MLF, made France’s tripwire (or massive retaliation) strategy seem like nonsense, and undermined US arguments that the Europeans should continue increasing their conventional forces on the Continent. Of course, this was a case of reading into the speech what one wanted. BNA, PREM 11/4218, Foreign Secretary’s Meeting with Prime Minister, 19 November 1963. Of course, initial reaction was in part muted by the course of events. President Kennedy’s assassination on 22 November was a great disappointment for many Europeans, as well as Americans. His popularity in Europe, buoyed by a summer trip which included his famous speech in Berlin, was at an all time high shortly before his assassination. See Thomas A. Schwartz, *Lyndon Johnson and Europe: In the Shadow of Vietnam* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003), pp.9-10.

Though the French rejected MC 100/1 in November 1963, the question of arriving at an agreed strategy for NATO continued to swirl beneath the surface. During preliminary discussions prior to the December 1963 NAC meeting, Stikker and McNamara agreed to once again put aside the issue of strategy in favor of proceeding with less overtly controversial analyses of existing forces and preparations for the next round of five-year force projections to replace the MC 26/4 force goals.⁶⁴² At SHAPE, SACEUR Lemnitzer proceeded with the application of MC 100/1 for planning purposes, despite occasional resistance from French General Ailleret. Lemnitzer was firmly under the conviction that it would not be possible to change MC 14/2 for some time, but so long as SACEUR continued to be an American who believed in flexible response this would not present any significant problems at the operational and planning level.⁶⁴³ However, despite Lemnitzer's own initiatives, the problem of strategy continued to bedevil progress on other fronts. Lieutenant General Baron De Cumont, Chairman of the NATO Military Committee, argued in mid-1964 that the Military Committee's failure to address anything of substance and make forward progress was directly attributable to "the absence of an understood and agreed strategy."⁶⁴⁴ But with strategy itself such a controversial topic, attention focused instead on the need to develop NATO's next force appraisal.

With the muting of the NATO strategy debate in 1964, issues relating to NATO force planning remained unresolved. In April the British Chiefs authorized yet another

642 NARA, RG 59, Bureau of European Affairs, 1959-1966, Box 2, MemCon btwn Stikker and McNamara, 15 December 1963.

643 NARA, RG 59, Conference Files, 1949-1972, Box 366, MemCon btwn Rusk and Lemnitzer, 14 December 1964.

644 NARA, RG 59, Bureau of European Affairs, 1959-1966, Box 2, MemCon btwn Baron De Cumont and Asst. Sec. of Def. (ISA) McNaughton, 9 July 1964.

round of internal appraisals of the requirements for forces to defend the Central Front.⁶⁴⁵

The initiation of this exercise provoked concern from Peter Thorneycroft, who had remained Minister of Defense in the Home government, about the potential implications of undertaking another such review. Thorneycroft pointed out to the Chiefs that the difficulties of these force requirement studies was that they ran the danger of returning levels of forces which were simply not practical within existing resources or the British assessment of the probability of conflict. In a memorandum from Acting CDS Richard Hull, the COS expressed their collective rationale for undertaking yet another review of NATO force requirements a year after their most recent review. First, Hull pointed out that though the JIC assessments indicated the Soviets had no intention of deliberately attacking the West, their intentions might be very different if NATO forces were reduced to a tripwire level. The study was thus to work out a force requirement which fit the existing British conception of strategy, to have something to present in NATO discussions and to help maintain the planning liaison with the Americans. This new review aimed to establish “what time levels various levels of forces can hold the assumed aggression before a political decision to use tactical nuclear weapons if, on military grounds, forced on us.” The intent was not to present the political leadership with a

645 This was in part an outgrowth of September 1963 talks between the COS and the JCS, and follow up talks in January 1964 when it was agreed that the UK contribution to the ongoing problem of force planning would be to provide an estimate for forces in Central Europe which agreed with the British conception of strategy. BNA, DEFE 5/150, COS 134/64, 16 April 1964, Briefs for the Chief of Defence Staff, Item III(b).

single fixed level of forces, but to provide for a range of choices that NATO would have the option of adopting.⁶⁴⁶

The planning paper for this study ruled out estimates of forces that were based on either the need to prevent the over-running of a NATO member country (no return to Lisbon goals) or on a small intrusion at a single point along.⁶⁴⁷ It was considered instead appropriate to use as a yardstick “the worst case for NATO which the shield forces ought to be manifestly capable of resisting if they are to remain credible in Soviet eyes-namely an aggression which is launched by forces currently deployed in East Germany with covert reinforcements only.”⁶⁴⁸ Based on the accepted British estimate, this was premised on 52 Soviet and satellite divisions facing the northern and central sectors of the Central Front. Of these, 30 were Soviet divisions, 8 Polish, 8 Czechoslovakian, and 6 East German divisions.⁶⁴⁹

While this planning study was getting under way, the major NATO commanders were proceeding with their own force requirement projections. When it became apparent to the British that these force projections reflected the existing strategic concepts (MC 14/2 and MC 48/2), alternative means of changing the MNCs thinking were considered. Since French intransigence towards the adoption of MC 100/1 had effectively derailed

646 BNA, DEFE 25/141, Memorandum for Thorneycroft, 5 May 1964.

647 It also did not consider Berlin, on the premise that it would initially be a tripartite, not a NATO responsibility.

648 BNA, DEFE 5/150, COS 125/64, NATO Force Requirements, 16 April 1964.

649 Ibid., and COS 134/64, 16 April 1964, Appendix to Item III(b): Assumption about Soviet Aggression and NATO Response to It. The estimate stated that there were a total of 77 Category I (combat ready), 25 Category II (60% combat ready; available with eight days of mobilization), and 8 Category III (30% combat ready; available within thirteen days of mobilization) directed against the Central Front. Of these, there were 26 Category I divisions stationed in East Germany. Also see CAB 158/52, JIC(64)18(Final), 17 September 1964, Soviet Bloc General Purpose Forces Confronting NATO which estimated total Soviet Army forces as 73 Category I Divisions, 39 Category II Divisions, and 28 Category III Divisions.

the process of bringing NATO strategy into line with the age of mutual deterrence, the tack that was now taken by the British was to reinterpret the missions of the major NATO commanders themselves. Mountbatten seems to have first conceived this idea which he first advanced in July 1964.⁶⁵⁰ He instructed the Defense Planning Staff to prepare a study on the matter, which was approved by the COS in late August. This paper argued that “general war is now in effect out of SACEUR’s competence.”⁶⁵¹ In other words, the British were now thinking along the lines of having NATO get out of the war planning business. Mountbatten planned to introduce this thinking about the major NATO commanders’ roles at an informal meeting of the Military Committee in Chiefs of Staff session in London that October.⁶⁵² There was little immediate rush, as NATO’s new Secretary General Manlio Brosio, was informing the Americans about this time that he thought there was “no possibility of reaching agreed force goals by December.”⁶⁵³ With the British and US elections in the fall of 1964, major policy initiatives were generally on hold in the waning months of the year, though the MLF issue still lingered unresolved.

The fall of 1964 witnessed a number of changes on the international scene. In the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev was forced from power by his Politburo colleagues, leaving the direction of future Soviet policy murky.⁶⁵⁴ More portentously, the People’s

650 BNA, DEFE 32/9, COS 49th Meeting/64, Min.5: NATO Long Term Planning (Confidential Annex)

651 BNA, DEFE 5/153, COS 245/64, 26 August 1964, Missions of Major NATO Commanders, and DEFE 6/92, DP 85/64.

652 BNA, DEFE 4/174, COS 55th Meeting/64, Min.5: NATO’s Force Posture.

653 *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XIII, Doc.39: Circular Airgram, 8 October 1964, p.85.

654 On Khrushchev’s fall, see Fursenko and Naftali, *Khrushchev’s Cold War*, pp.532-40. Fursenko and Naftali argues that with Khrushchev’s ouster, Soviet foreign policy gravitated towards efforts to “force Washington to accept Soviet interests,” viewing “with suspicion anything resembling a global partnership”. This strategy was initially pursued through the increased build-up in Soviet strategic weapons. It was not until the late 1960s, with the intensifying Sino-Soviet rivalry, that Soviet foreign policy gravitated back

Republic of China tested a nuclear device, making it the world's fifth nuclear power and raising concern about the dangers of nuclear proliferation.⁶⁵⁵ The Conservative Party in Britain, which had been in power since 1955, was defeated by Labor in the fall elections, while in the United States Lyndon Johnson won in a landslide over Republican candidate Berry Goldwater.

In October 1964 a Labor government headed by Harold Wilson returned to power in Britain. Since 1951 the country had been under the stewardship of Conservative Prime Ministers who had fought a long, rear guard action to hold on to elements of Britain's world role. The Wilson government had a narrow majority in the House of Commons and inherited a major budget deficit of £800 million which immediately called for severe measures.⁶⁵⁶ This greatly contributed to the pressure for reductions in defense spending. Some of the more radical members of Wilson's government were more willing to prune back Britain's remaining commitments, and put steady pressure on the military for considerable reductions. The role of Britain's independent nuclear deterrent had played a

towards Khrushchev's blend of cooperation where nuclear rivalry was concerned, while aggressively pursuing allies in the developing world. Britain's Joint Intelligence Committee in March 1964 had forecast that Soviet strategic policy would emphasize "increasing [the] size, diversity and security of their deterrent" while continuing to avoid general war and any limited hostilities that ran the risk of escalation into war. See BNA, CAB 158/50, JIC(63)85, 3 March 1964, Likely Developments in Soviet Policy up to 1970. In a subsequent study titled 'The Power Structure and the Problem of Succession', the JIC identified Brezhnev and Podgorny as Khrushchev's successor, but estimated that Khrushchev was "physically tough enough to remain in power for some years. CAB 158/53, JIC(64)43, 17 April 1964.

655 Johnson had warned the public about the "fearful possibility of nuclear spread" in *Time* magazine on 25 September 1964. Quoted in Schwartz, *Lyndon Johnson and Europe*, p.43.

656 Kenneth O. Morgan, *The People's Peace: British History 1945-1989* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp.243-44, and Ben Pimlott, *Harold Wilson* (London: HarperCollins, 1992), pp.350-51. The Wilson government was faced with the choice between devaluing sterling, introducing import quotas, or raising tariffs on imported goods. Wilson and his Chancellor of the Exchequer James Callaghan wanted to avoid devaluing sterling at all costs, which they feared would only contribute to the perception of Labour in power as financially maladroit, which might induce financial panic and further undermine Britain's position.

role in the Home's government electoral rhetoric. It seemed possible that Labor in power might seek to re-assess the Nassau relationship, perhaps even abandon Britain's independent deterrent altogether. Not surprisingly, the Wilson government quickly embarked on yet another major review of British defense policy.

Long term defense policy had been subject to periodic review throughout the Cold War period in Britain. Its most recent incarnation was the product of an initiative by Burke Trend, Permanent Secretary to the Cabinet, who had convinced Prime Minister Home to establish a Long-Term Study Group as a subcommittee of the Defense and Oversea Policy Committee in May 1964.⁶⁵⁷ This group, under Burke's chairmanship, prepared papers on the future of Britain's position in three important areas: the Far East, the Middle East, and Europe. These were nearing completion when the Wilson government came into office; a covering paper summarizing the conclusions of the three studies provided background or a general discussion on long-term defense issues held by the Prime Minister at his Chequers retreat in late November.

At Chequers, the Wilson government decided that it was imperative to make long-term reductions in defense expenditures, but had difficulty prioritizing which regions of the globe to reduce commitments in. Wilson, like many of his predecessors, initially put faith in a strong Anglo-American relationship, in no small part to help attain significant reductions in British defense burdens.⁶⁵⁸ In this vein, the British hoped to make

⁶⁵⁷ Dockrill, *Britain's Retreat East of Suez*, pp.50-1.

⁶⁵⁸ On the importance for the Wilson administration of the maintenance of close Anglo-American ties, see Jonathan Colman, *A 'special relationship'? Harold Wilson, Lyndon B. Johnson and Anglo-American Relations 'at the summit', 1964-68* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), pp.22-23, 49-50; Dockrill, *Britain's Retreat from East of Suez*, p.64.

substantial cuts in their own research and development costs by increasingly turning to American systems which could replace some of their own, particularly in the aircraft industry. And in order to avoid costly commitments to the MLF project-which continued to receive strong opposition from the British Chiefs on military grounds-the Wilson government proposed a counter-proposal known as the Atlantic Nuclear Force (ANF). The ANF was an attempt to entice the Americans to create a composite NATO nuclear force less the multilateral surface ship component which the British found so unworkable. Instead the British would fully commit both their V-bombers and Polaris submarines to NATO without the 'supreme national interest' clause that had been included in the Nassau agreement. It was hoped that the United States would also commit a suitable number of their own nuclear forces to NATO under the ANF concept.⁶⁵⁹ This would give both the British and-in lieu of actual weapons-the Germans greater control over US nuclear policy by placing more weapons under NATO's purview.

Wilson had the opportunity to present his administration's thinking to the US during a summit in Washington with President Johnson in December.⁶⁶⁰ The three major topics under discussion by Wilson and his rather large delegation were Britain's role East of Suez, US pressure for UK support in South Vietnam, and the Anglo-American divergence of opinion over the MLF/ANF concepts.⁶⁶¹ In reviewing the MLF situation in the lead up to the meeting, Johnson became increasingly aware of how limited support

659 BNA, CAB 129/120, C(65)48, Atlantic Nuclear Force; and Dockrill, *Britain's Retreat from East of Suez*, pp.61-62.

660 UK thinking about an ANF was broached by Foreign Secretary Patrick Gordon Walker in a conversation with Secretary of State Rusk on 26-27 October. *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol. XIII, Doc 43: Telegram, pp.93-95.

661 On the December 1964 Wilson-Johnson summit, see Coleman, *A 'special relationship'?*, pp.37-50, and Dockrill, *Britain's Retreat from East of Suez*, pp.71-75.

for the MLF was, either in Europe (where it was opposed vocally by the French and Soviets, and more quietly by the British) or domestically. McGeorge Bundy provided the final push in bringing about a reversal of Johnson's thinking when he indicated that Kennedy himself had strong reservations about MLF before his death. Johnson decided that henceforth the MLF would cease to be a central feature of America's policy towards his NATO allies, though the British were told that they were welcome to work out a solution with the Germans on their own.⁶⁶²

Wilson reported to the Cabinet upon his return to London that Johnson had been "particularly insistent on the value of the world-wide military role played by the United Kingdom" and on the continued discharge of the role by the United Kingdom.⁶⁶³ Though this had fitted well enough with Wilson's own views, the discussions had suggested fissures over a number of other matters. McNamara had told Gordon Walker and Healey that he felt that the UK must retain its current manpower, and its level of troop commitment to the European continent. Healey demurred, stressing the inevitable need for long-term reductions in forces deployed to the continent. While troop levels on the Central Front remained an irritant in 1965, it would not be too many years before financial pressures in the US made the Johnson team more sympathetic to the UK position. Rusk, too, cautioned about pushing for major changes in NATO planned forces, and now expressed some reservations about long, involved discussions of NATO

662 David Schwartz, *NATO's Nuclear Dilemmas*, pp. 118-22, and Thomas Schwartz, *Lyndon Johnson and Europe*, pp.44-45.

663 BNA, CAB 128/39, CC(64)14, Min.2, 11 December 1964. Secretary of State Rusk conveyed similar sentiments to Foreign Secretary Gordon Walker and Minister of Defence Healey. *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XII, Doc.236, Memcon, p.477.

strategy.⁶⁶⁴ Thus, the talks concluded with Wilson and company hearing what they wanted when it came to maintaining a role East of Suez, but with divergent views on NATO force levels and the ANF/MLF concepts unresolved.

At the December 1964 MC/CS and NAC meetings, ongoing discussions regarding strategy revealed no budging of the French position with its support of a tripwire strategy and massive retaliation. The Germans for their part were trying to take a position somewhere between France's position and the US support for flexible response, but not surprisingly, this proved difficult to articulate.⁶⁶⁵ At the 33rd NATO Military Committee in Chiefs of Staff session, the German representative, General Trettner, outlined his country's interpretation of strategy.⁶⁶⁶ The Germans envisaged a three-stage concept of graduated response on the Central Front in the event of Soviet aggression. The first phase was to be non-nuclear, though this was a misnomer. The Germans envisaged that a deliberate Soviet aggression would be met with conventional forces to determine the scope of the aggression, but the response would include the use of atomic demolition munitions on West German territory to funnel the Soviet advance and the use of tactical

664 *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XII, Doc.236, Memcon, pp.477-78.

665 During a series of high level meetings between US and German defense officials in the summer of 1963, it was clear that the Germans remained wedded to the concept of early use of tactical nuclear weapon to prevent either tactical defeat or the loss of territory, a position which they had been committed to for several years. The early use of tactical nuclear weapons in a constrained battlefield environment-from the German perspective-would impel the Soviets to disengage before a widespread nuclear exchange ensued. NARA, RG 59, Bureau of European Affairs, 1959-1966, Box 2, Memorandum for Record of a Conversation between McNamara and Von Hassel, 31 July 1963. Also Heuser, *NATO, Britain, France and the FRG*, pp.41-43. Heuser points out that German thinking at the time was summarized in a *Foreign Affairs* article by Defense Minister Kai-Uwe von Hassel. See Kai-Uwe von Hassel, "Organizing Western Defense: The Search for Consensus", *Foreign Affairs*, vol.43, no.2, (January 1965), pp.209-16.

666 This paragraph makes use of a summary of Trettner's views in BNA, DEFE 5/160, COS 106/65, 2 June 1965, Briefs for the Ninth Anglo/German Staff Talks. Trettner's presentation to the 33rd MC/CS is available at NATO Archives. For a nuanced account of German nuclear policy with a careful delineation of the differences in US and German views on the use of ADMs, see Heuser, *NATO, Britain, France and the FRG*, pp.132-37.

nuclear weapons in an anti-aircraft role. Should this response prove insufficient to hold or deter the Soviets from further action, then NATO would make full use of battlefield nuclear weapons (Davy Crocketts, atomic howitzers, and Honest John rockets) in the second phase, while avoiding the use of aircraft delivered tactical nuclear weapons, presumably in an attempt to induce similar limitations on the Soviets. If this was insufficient, then there would be no choice but to resort to an all out atomic exchange.

General Trettner's statement was amplified for the British during discussions between Minister of Defence Healey and German Minister of Defence Von Hassel the following April.⁶⁶⁷ Von Hassel explained that while the Germans, like the British and Americans, rejected massive retaliation as anachronistic, they felt the American conception of flexible response relied too heavily on an all-conventional phase that threatened the possibility that German territory would be over-run and held hostage by the Soviets. But this German conception of graduated responses, which attempted to navigate between massive retaliation and flexible response, suffered from the same problem of flexible response itself, in that there was no guarantee that the Soviets would play along with the conception of self-imposed limitations once NATO had made use of tactical nuclear weapons, whatever their form.

Given the continued inter-allied divergence over strategy, the NAC agreed to a continuation of the force planning exercise as the "best means of bringing about

667 For a summary of Von Hassel's views in BNA, DEFE 5/160, COS 106/65, 2 June 1965, Briefs for the Ninth Anglo/German Staff Talks. See also *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XIII, Doc.66: Circular Telegram, p.66, n.3.

modernization of [the] NATO strategic concept.”⁶⁶⁸ The British introduced a new dimension to the force planning exercise at the MC/CS. They called for an appraisal of the war fighting capabilities of NATO’s conventional forces. This review is generally referred to as the Mountbatten Exercise. The Mountbatten Exercise sought to get around the problem which the British and many others thought bedeviled force planning by asking what could be done with existing forces, rather than asking what forces were needed to attain a hypothetical-and contentious-level of deterrent strength. The idea was to identify particular weaknesses in existing forces. This would provide a measuring stick for future force levels and determine the time interval that political authorities would have before it became essential to make decisions regarding the employment of tactical nuclear weapons. This information could then serve as a general background for ministerial decisions on force planning.⁶⁶⁹

The Mountbatten Exercise concluded that NATO air forces would lose air superiority to the Soviets within two days of the outbreak of hostilities. NATO ground forces would only have the ability to delay Soviet advances from one to three days, with the shortest delay in the particularly vulnerable NORTHAG sector of the central front. Of particular import was the fact that there might be less than twenty-four hours for a political decision to be made to use tactical nuclear weapons to prevent the Soviets from overwhelming NATO defenses. In addition, if NATO chose to initially rely on a purely conventional defense, it might be at considerable cost to NATO’s airpower, and hence

668 *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XIII, Doc.66: Circular Telegram, p.67.

669 BNA, DEFE 5/160, COS 111/65, 11 June 1965, Briefs for the 34th Meeting of the MC/CS, and COS 113/65, 14 June 1965, SACEUR’s Current Conventional Capability Appraisal.

the ability to implement the tactical nuclear strike plan effectively. Finally, the Mountbatten Exercise made it clear that even with qualitative improvements of existing NATO forces, it would not be possible to sustain a defense against a substantial Soviet force even if NATO's non-nuclear forces were increased very considerably.⁶⁷⁰ And this, of course, had proven consistently to be an unreachable goal within the alliance.

As has been seen in the previous chapter, one of the outcomes of the 1963 Ottawa NAC meeting was the beginning of a Force Planning Exercise, which since the French rejection of MC 100/1 had become the primary focus for reconciling notions of strategy with force goals. Due to the many difficulties involved in this process, progress on the 1970 Force Goals was slow during 1964. During the course of 1965 two alternate force goals were developed. These goals were labeled Alpha and Bravo. The Alpha goals, reflecting the long tradition of NATO force goals dating back to Lisbon in 1952, represented a level considerably above existing NATO forces, both for conventional forces and for MRBMs. The Alpha forces were considered to be "reasonably able to carry out SACEUR's mission."⁶⁷¹ Generally speaking, these Alpha goals were subject to widespread alliance criticism on the basis that they were not realistic. They did find support, however, from the Germans and to an extent from the US JCS.

The Bravo goals, by contrast, were both quantitatively and qualitatively lower than the Alpha goals. Bravo forces were insufficient for the forward defense concept, and could support SACEUR's mission only if adequate provision was made for the "timely release of nuclear weapons." The Bravo goals in particular raised concern over

670 BNA, DEFE 5/160, COS 113/65, SACEUR's Current Conventional Capability Appraisal.

671 BNA, DEFE 5/162, COS 175/65, 1970 NATO Force Goals.

the safety of NATO's flanks, which were identified as particularly weak.⁶⁷² The Military Committee's report on these force goal options were presented to the Defense Planning Committee on 1 November 1965. The DPC then requested that a further supplementary report be developed stating in greater detail how NATO's flank capabilities might be improved.⁶⁷³

Anglo-American attitudes towards NATO were influenced by the British Labor government's 1965 defense review. On the one hand, pressing for a meaningful conventional option in NATO meant encouraging the British to help set an example in NATO councils by improving their NATO contribution. But the United States deepening involvement in Vietnam meant that the Johnson administration was also eager to see the British remain a player on the Southeast Asian stage. Prime Minister Wilson informed Secretary of State Rusk in May that he and most of his Cabinet colleagues favored drawing down the strength of the BAOR and RAF Germany by half in order to help support the East of Suez commitment.⁶⁷⁴

During discussions with the Americans in the summer of 1965, Chancellor of the Exchequer Callaghan made it clear that he meant to effect substantial savings in the costs of Britain's military spending, particularly in the realm of expenditures on overseas deployments. The perennial expense of maintaining the continental commitment of the British Army on the Rhine once again came under the microscope of Britain's Treasury.

672 Ibid.

673 BNA, DEFE 4/201, Annex to COS 30th Meeting/66, "Status Report on NATO Force Planning-Background" in DP 39/66(Final), 3 June 1966.

674 NARA, RG 59, Conference Files, 1949-1972, Box 377, MemCon btwn Rusk and Wilson, 14 May 1965.

The vibrant West German economy exacerbated both Britain and the US balance of payments difficulties. McNamara, while aware of Britain's financial difficulties, was very eager to prevent any diminution of Britain's continental commitment. With De Gaulle's policies already causing severe tensions in the alliance, McNamara saw any reduction in the British BAOR as liable to precipitate a second crisis the alliance might well not survive. McNamara suggested as a counter that the US and UK might try to eliminate needless duplication in other parts of the world. He suggested that one area that British commitments might be scaled back was in the enforcement of NATO's North Atlantic maritime barrier strategy. McNamara was prepared to inform SACLANT to accept that the US would take over sole enforcement of the barrier if British forces were withdrawn.⁶⁷⁵ In 1965 the US was sending a mixed message, indicating to the British that the East of Suez presence was more important than maritime force contributions to NATO, while at the same time urging the British to maintain the BAOR at current strength.

At the December 1965 North Atlantic Council, Secretary McNamara delivered an address which centered on the theme of "balance."⁶⁷⁶ In his speech, McNamara applauded the fact the NATO Force Planning Exercise with its five-year rolling plan was on the verge of becoming a reality after several years of hard bargaining. He foresaw that the 1970 force goals would require new guidance to be sent to the military authorities the following spring. He hoped that future force planning would be based on actual country plans, not "fictitious goals" that "overstate the difficulties of our task" and caused NATO

675 *FRUS 1964-68*, vol.XII, Doc.244: Memcon-U.K. Defense Review, 30 June 1965, pp.493-96.

676 The State Department briefing book categorized this as a major address to the Council.

to “give up kinds of capabilities we could have and which would prove useful to us.” In this vein, McNamara hoped that a regularized means of funding the ACE Mobile Force would be found which would help provide the timely reinforcement of the flanks which recent capabilities studies had highlighted a need for. McNamara foresaw the ACE Mobile Force as having considerable military and political potential for the alliance, if its potential could be financially supported. Before turning his attention to the situation in Southeast Asia and US concern over the growing threat of Chinese Communism, McNamara reiterated the need for the Alliance to find balance on a number of issues. These include balance between combat-ready M-day divisions and reserve forces; between combat and logistics forces; between “various elements of strategic mobility” for deployment along NATO’s entire line of defense; between the levels of acceptable standards of NATO units; between preparation for all-out nuclear conflict and “those better adapted to non-nuclear contingencies;” and finally the familiar US call for greater balance (or burden sharing) amongst the Allies contributions to the common defense.⁶⁷⁷

McNamara’s fellow Defense Ministers generally agreed to support the Resolution on Defense Planning, which included endorsement of the five-year rolling planning procedure. However, a number of countries accepted with the caveat that they would be unable to meet their Bravo force goals, though they hoped such problems could be worked out in the follow-on planning discussions.⁶⁷⁸ Perhaps most outspoken in this

677 NARA, RG 59, Conference Files, 1949-1972, Box 395 [Lot File 66D347], Secretary McNamara’s remarks to the North Atlantic Council, Tab 28.

678 The Turks requested that higher naval and air force standards be applied to their Bravo goals, but this was the exception. Canada, Denmark, France, Netherlands, Norway, and the United Kingdom all

regard was Defense Minister Healey of Great Britain, who stated that the “UK has not [the] slightest intention of carrying out” the Bravo recommendations. He denounced the whole concept of goals for NATO forces. He accused the military authorities of generating force goals which were wholly unrealistic, which then became an excuse for inertia within the alliance. Instead Healey felt that NATO should deal with the actual forces that countries could and would provide, and make the best available use of these resources. He advocated the continued work of the Defense Planning Working Group, which in part was meant to inject a civilian element into force planning. He also supported the development of future contingency studies and the ACE Mobile Force. Healey’s address also stressed that any future adjustment in NATO strategy would have to deal with “how to deter aggression when [the] threat made defense impossible.”⁶⁷⁹

In the midst of this ongoing debate over strategy and force planning, on 7 March, President De Gaulle sent his infamous letter to President Johnson informing him of his intentions to withdraw France from the integrated military commands of NATO and calling for the removal of all foreign troops and military bases from French territory by April 1967. In the letter, De Gaulle wrote, “France considers the changes which have taken place or in process of occurring since 1949 in Europe, Asia, and elsewhere, as well as evolution of her own situation and her own forces no longer justify insofar as that concerns her the arrangements of a military nature adopted after the conclusions of the alliance.” At the same time, he emphasized that France intended to remain part of the

expressed reservations about the requirements or premises of the Bravo goals. NARA, RG 59, Conference Files, 1949-1972, Box 396 [Lot File 66D347], SECTO 17, 16 December 1965.

⁶⁷⁹ NARA, RG 59, Conference Files, 1949-1972, Box 396 [Lot File 66D347], SECTO 17, 16 December 1965.

Treaty itself.⁶⁸⁰ De Gaulle's actions, which reflected long-term frustrations, further heightened the sense of crisis within the Alliance.⁶⁸¹ However, at the same time it opened the possibility-if further disintegration did not follow-of moving forward in areas where French obstruction in the past had led to a certain degree of stasis within the Alliance.⁶⁸²

The question which faced the other members of the Alliance, and which the Johnson administration had to take the lead on, was how best to respond to De Gaulle's challenge. This was complicated by De Gaulle's tactics, which presented a dilemma as France continued to support the North Atlantic Treaty itself, while pulling out of the integrated military structure of the Alliance. While avoiding a direct confrontation with De Gaulle, the American administration ultimately opted to press for measures which would strengthen the organization to shake it out of the malaise and meet the Gaullist challenge more effectively.⁶⁸³ Very early US opinion focused on the need for close consultation with Britain and West Germany. In part this was because of the need to

680 The letter was delivered to Ambassador Bohlen in Paris by Foreign Minister Couve de Murville with instructions that it be passed directly to President Johnson. De Gaulle sent similar letters to Prime Minister Wilson and Chancellor Erhard on 9 March. For copies of these letters, see NARA, RG 59, Conference Files, 1949-1972, Box 400 [Lot File 67D305]. De Gaulle's letter was followed by a further Aide-Memoire on 11 March, and a subsequent note to all NATO members on 29 March outlining steps that the French government would follow in extricating itself from NATO's military structure. *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XIII, Docs.136-37, 142, pp.322-26, 333-335.

681 On the growing divergence between the United States and France, see Costigliola, *France and the United States*, pp.126-44. In June 1965 the State Department was already expecting French moves to withdraw from NATO's integrated military structure. See *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XIII, Doc.89: Circular Telegram, pp.215-17.

682 Schwartz, *Lyndon Johnson and Europe*, p.110.

683 President Johnson appointed Dean Acheson to chair an interdepartmental group to prepare a response to De Gaulle's letter. Acheson and much State Department opinion favored meeting De Gaulle with a propaganda campaign aimed at demonstrating the wrong-headedness of his policies. Francis Bator and Bob Komer on the NSC staff argued for a more cautious approach, and Johnson himself ultimately favored the cautious over the confrontational. On the general reaction, see Costigliola, *France and the United States*, pp.145-46 and Schwartz, *Lyndon Johnson and Europe*, p.109-11. On Bator and Komer's support for a more cautious approach, see *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XIII, Docs.138 & 143, pp.326-28, 335-38.

address the issue of whether or not French forces would remain deployed in Germany, and under what conditions. There was also recognition that the French withdrawal was bound to bring the nuclear issue in NATO back to the forefront of Alliance conversations. Secretary Rusk counseled President Johnson in early April to consider authorizing tripartite discussions with the British and Germans over NATO nuclear issues at the ministerial level in the near future in order to take advantage of one problem to solve another.⁶⁸⁴ The need to make positive advances with the NATO allies less France resulted in President Johnson issuing NSAM 345 on 22 April 1966. In it the President requested the Secretaries of State and Defense initiate studies “for enlarging the participation in and understanding of nuclear planning by both the political and military authorities of our major NATO allies.”⁶⁸⁵ Though NSAM 345 called for studies of both a “hardware” solution to the nuclear sharing problem and a planning solution, emphasis lay with the planning solution. Any agreed upon NATO Nuclear Force plan was specifically not to include mixed-manned submarines or a surface fleet with nuclear delivery capability. Within a month a proposal reflecting State and Defense views was forwarded to the President for his review.

By late May of 1966, a joint State-Defense proposal responding to NSAM 345 had been prepared with the approval of Secretaries Rusk and McNamara. According to their report, through the vehicle of a Nuclear Planning Working Group, the Allies were getting their “first real appreciation of the problems associated with the use of nuclear

684 *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XIII, Doc.155: Memorandum from SecState Rusk to President Johnson, 11 April 1966, pp.363-65.

685 *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XIII, Doc.159: National Security Action Memorandum No. 345, pp.374-75.

weapons.”⁶⁸⁶ This led the participants to conclude that sufficient strategic forces already existed for a credible deterrent, but the use of these weapons would cause unacceptable damage to the NATO countries. The working group also agreed that sufficient tactical nuclear forces already existed in Europe, but that further study would be needed to see if it would be to NATO’s net advantage to initiate their use. The memorandum also suggested that a “war at sea, based on a naval blockade, is feasible and has political leverage, but cannot itself apply sufficient pressure to stop land operations.” It was hoped that a functional nuclear consultative group would provide that “in time, a coherent strategy can be built on some combination of the conventional defense, tactical nuclear weapons, and the war at sea.”⁶⁸⁷ It called for as a first step the calling of a tripartite meeting between representatives of Britain, Germany, and the United States to “narrow differences” over the nuclear problem in NATO. This was to prepare the background for McNamara and Rusk’s core proposal, which called for the establishment of a five-member permanent nuclear planning group in NATO. The aim was to institutionalize the existing Nuclear Planning Working Group, and to maintain limited membership to keep the group both effective and restricted.⁶⁸⁸

Amidst the challenge of the French withdrawal, in the summer of 1966 ongoing balance of payments difficulties forced the British government to consider drastic

686 The memorandum was written under Dean Acheson’s direction. See *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XIII, Doc.171: Memorandum from McNamara and Rusk, 28 May 1966, pp.402-3. One wonders why this was so late in coming, given the ongoing attempts since the early Kennedy administration to ‘educate’ the allies in the realities of nuclear weapons.

687 *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XIII, Doc.171: Memorandum from McNamara and Rusk, 28 May 1966, pp.402-3, and NARA, RG 59, Central Files, 1964-1966, Box 1585, DEF 12, Tel 4020, 18 February 1966.

688 DDRS, 2000, F 125, Doc. 1502, Memorandum to the President, 28 May 1966, Enclosure I: Consultation Arrangements.

financial measures, including devaluation of the pound, to shore up Britain's economic position.⁶⁸⁹ On 20 July, Prime Minister Wilson announced that the British government would seek £500 million reduction in public expenditures and institute a six-month wage and price freeze. Of the £500 million reduction, £100 million in savings were to be found in overseas defense expenditures. This again stimulated discussion about reductions in the Far East and in the BAOR. The latter by itself consumed approximately 25 per cent of Britain's overseas expenditures.⁶⁹⁰ On the same day as his announcement, Wilson informed the Erhard government in Bonn that the British wanted to resume bilateral discussions of the German offset payments for the BAOR. Chancellor of the Exchequer Callaghan was firmly in favor of informing the Germans that if a full offset agreement could not be reached, then the British would call for a substantial reduction in BAOR strength.⁶⁹¹ These discussions proceeded much more slowly than the British would have liked however, and pressure mounted from within Wilson's Cabinet for unilateral troop reductions if the Germans were not willing to be more cooperative.

To MC 48/3

Into the summer of 1966, the US position towards force planning and strategy remained wedded to the theme of flexible response which the Johnson team doggedly persisted with. During an address to the Defense Planning Committee in Permanent Session in July 1966, US Ambassador to NATO Harlan Cleveland stressed that current NATO risk assessments tended to cover only general war with no warning, which was

689 BNA, CAB 128/41, CC(66)35, CC(66)37, and CC(66)38 were all devoted to dealing with the economic crisis. See also Pimlott, *Harold Wilson*, pp.410-422.

690 Dockrill, *Britain's Retreat from East of Suez*, pp.161-62.

691 BNA, CAB 128/41, CC(66)38, 20 July 1966.

very much in the vein of massive retaliation. Cleveland stressed that this was the “hardest [situation] to meet yet the easiest one to plan for.” He was struck that the NATO military authorities had not devoted more attention to more likely contingencies such as changes in Soviet objectives, pressure on the NATO flanks, or contingencies with greater warning time.⁶⁹²

When the Defense Ministers met later that month, they finally agreed on the Force Plan for NATO down to 1970 and called for the military authorities to begin preparing an Appreciation of the Military Situation up to 1975. Denis Healey again stressed the problems which would arise for the United Kingdom contribution to NATO if something was not done to deal with the financial difficulties created by the balance of payments problem.⁶⁹³ The offset problem was soon to come to the fore of discussions between the British, West Germans, and United States governments. The NATO Chiefs of Staff, meanwhile, meeting in an informal session in Norfolk on 7 October issued instructions to the NATO Military Committee in Permanent Session and International Planning Staff to draft a new strategy paper. This new charge was discussed by the Military Committee in Permanent Session (MC/PS) on 13 October 1966.⁶⁹⁴ At the meeting of the MC/PS, Chairman Lt. Gen. Baron de Cumont, “invited comments for the benefit of the Staff who would have the difficult task of writing an ‘outline study on strategy.’” Lt. Gen. Gerhard Wessel, the German member, recommended starting from MC 100/1 because it was a

692 NARA, RG 59, Central Files, 1964-1966, DEF 6, Box 1580, Embtel Paris 775/1, 18 July 1966.

693 Ministerial Communiqué-NATO Defense Ministers, Paris, 25 July 1966, Available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/comm.htm>. See also Hafterndorn, *NATO and the Nuclear Revolution*, p.53.

694 NATO Archives, 236th Meeting of the Military Committee [CD #20], Item 3, 24 October 1966, Decisions Made at the Informal Norfolk Meeting of the Chiefs of Staff. See also Pedlow, “The Evolution of NATO Strategy”, p.xxiv.

more current document than MC 14/2. Despite using MC 100/1 as the starting point of discussions, it remained to be seen what sort of compromise could be worked out between the US flexible response position and the views of the European allies.

In the United Kingdom reduction of the BAOR was vital to bring about savings in defense that would allow the UK to maintain an East of Suez presence. In the United States, growing dissatisfaction with the Vietnam War led to Congressional pressure for reductions in US commitments overseas. Especially worrisome to Johnson was a nonbinding resolution by Democratic Senator Mike Mansfield in August 1966 which called for unilateral US troop reductions in Europe.⁶⁹⁵ Coupled with French actions, British pressure to reduce the BAOR, and West German difficulties providing offset purchases for the costs of US and UK forces, there seemed a legitimate fear that NATO might unravel before it reached its 20th anniversary in 1969. This helped accelerate thinking in the United States towards a trilateral approach to the multiple issues confronting NATO, including force levels, offset payments, nuclear sharing, and strategy.

In August, after a Wilson-Johnson summit in Washington, President Johnson put forward the idea of trilateral negotiations between the British, West Germans, and the United States which would deal with the interrelated issues of offset payments (both UK and US), troop levels, and nuclear planning.⁶⁹⁶ As Francis Bator, Johnson's Deputy Assistant at the NSC, argued there was a need for a "US-UK-FRG agreement on an allied

⁶⁹⁵Schwartz, *Lyndon Johnson and Europe*, pp.121-22.

⁶⁹⁶ *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XIII, Doc.198: Message from President Johnson to Prime Minister Wilson, pp.457-58. Wilson visited Johnson in Washington on 29 July, in part to reassure Johnson of Wilson's support in SE Asia given recent distancing the PM had carried out to quiet domestic political critics, and to reassure the Americans that the balance of payments crisis would be solved without devaluation. See Coleman, *A 'special relationship'?*, pp.115-16.

defense posture in Europe which will provide deterrence and the insurance of a reasonable conventional option.”⁶⁹⁷ The US position on trilateral talks was finally agreed after a heated debate at the LBJ Ranch in late August, where Bator and his allies in the State Department won over the President to the trilateral talks, with the US represented by the committed Europeanist and former High Commissioner to Germany, John McCloy.⁶⁹⁸ The idea was then passed on to the British and Germans to ascertain their willingness to go along.

Chancellor Erhard visited Washington in September, with the offset problem at the center of talks. Erhard arrived in Washington while facing political difficulties in Germany. US Ambassador McGhee in Bonn was warning the Johnson administration that if it pushed Erhard too hard for a full offset, the position supported by Secretary McNamara and the Treasury, or carried out unilateral troop withdrawals, it risked bring down the Erhard government.⁶⁹⁹ Johnson himself was sympathetic to Erhard’s position, and wanted to assist him as much as possible. The Germany delegation, however, was not entirely attracted to the idea of trilateral negotiations, pointing out that they were already engaged in financial discussions with the British, and preferred to work out the mutual problems of the offset and nuclear sharing bilaterally with the Americans. Erhard stressed that he had to “have a clear picture on nuclear matters. This was no longer avoidable.” This was because the strategy of flexible response had undermined the understanding of the man on the street, whereas during the era of massive retaliation

697 *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XIII, Doc.197: Briefing Memorandum from Bator to Johnson, p.455.

698 Schwartz, *Lyndon Johnson and Europe*, pp.124-25.

699 *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XV, Doc.171: Cable from Ambassador McGhee, pp.417-20.

there was a relative sense of security for the common man. The German position was not entirely clear, however. At one point the German delegation pointed out that discussion of troop reductions made the German public “more insecure and nervous.”⁷⁰⁰

Yet in reality, the greater the troop reduction, the more NATO would in fact have to rely on a trip wire strategy, which made early release of nuclear weapons more, not less, likely. Despite all the talk of nuclear sharing, Erhard’s American hosts were no doubt relieved to hear that though the Germans were still eager for a voice in nuclear strategy, there were no longer seeking a “hardware” solution to the problem.⁷⁰¹ This opened the way for the US to press on with its own design for a NATO nuclear planning group bereft of the MLF/ANF complications of the past.

During early October details for the Trilateral Talks were worked out between the German, British, and American governments. A brief hitch occurred when some of the smaller NATO members complained that the Trilateral Talks hinted at an interior directory within the alliance. In order to overcome this, US representative John McCloy invited NATO Secretary General Brosio to attend the first round of discussions, held in Bonn on 19-20 October. In addition, the negotiators intended to have documents prepared to present to the NAC and DPC meeting in December. Friction between the NATO Force Planning Exercise and the Trilateral Talks added an additional irritant to the overall process. Further complications arose at the end of October when Erhard’s coalition partners, the FDP, withdrew from government over proposed tax increases that would be needed to meet the budget with its substantial offset payments. Thus West

700 *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XV,Doc.174: MemCon, 25 September 1966, pp.423-28.

701 *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XIII, Doc.207: MemCon, 26 September 1966, p.472.

Germany's government was in flux for much of November.⁷⁰² While the Trilateral discussions proceeded, few decisions could be made while a new coalition government was being formed. The British, who were eager to make an announcement on BAOR reductions in December, became increasingly frustrated with the slow pace of the talks. They were only assuaged by the promise of US purchases in the UK to help offset the savings they hoped to meet through BAOR reductions.⁷⁰³ This US maneuver helped buy time for the new West German government to determine its own policy towards the Trilateral Talks.

The new West German government was formed on 1 December when the Bundestag elected Kurt Georg Kiesinger as Chancellor. Termed the "Grand Coalition," the new government included Socialist leader and former Berlin Mayor Willy Brandt as Vice Chancellor and Foreign Minister. As part of the negotiations which lead to the formation of the new government, it was agreed that while existing offset agreements would be honored, in the future the FRG would try to avoid entering into such agreements. This policy was endorsed by a meeting of the Kiesinger cabinet on 26 January 1967. This position, of course, caused alarm in both Washington and London, where it seemed to violate the spirit of the Tripartite Talks. The Wilson government made it clear to the Kiesinger government that if they did not retreat from this position,

702 For a thorough account of the Trilateral Talks, see Haftendorn, *NATO and the Nuclear Revolution*, pp.251-90. See also Duffield, *Power Rules*, pp.177-78, and Schwartz, *Lyndon Johnson and Europe*, pp.143-59.

703 The British Overseas and Defense Policy Committee agreed to accept the US offer on 25 November, and this decision was endorsed by the Cabinet on 29 November. BNA, CAB 148/25, OPD(66)46th Meeting, and CAB 128/41, CC(66)61, Min.2.

the UK would have no choice but to withdraw from the talks and announce unilateral reductions of the BAOR.

The British review of NATO strategy that followed was strongly influenced by a recent JIC review of Soviet intentions and capabilities. This review in turn grew out of a tripartite Anglo-German-US discussion on intelligence. A key factor in this review, one which had very important implications for flexible response as a doctrine in practice, was the implication of greater political warning time.⁷⁰⁴ This was of great import to the thrust of both British and American defense policy, in that greater political warning time made it more viable to argue that forces which were retained as strategic reserves in the respective countries could legitimately be deployed in times of heightened tension to strengthen the conventional deterrent in Europe.⁷⁰⁵ Further, a strategic reserve with the ability to rapidly deploy could serve the purpose of numerous potential contingencies. Hence, forces which had once been committed to the central front could now be discussed as potential reinforcements for the flanks as well. As long as the situation was hypothetical, and the forces did not have to be actually committed to any one region,

704 BNA, DEFE 5/171, COS 134/66, NATO Strategy-Assessment of the Implication of Deploying Forces Outside Germany. See also the discussion at DEFE 4/209, COS 63rd Meeting/66, Min.1, and Sir Richard Hull's comments to the 37th MC/CS, reported in DEFE 4/210, COS 68th Meeting/66, Min.1 (Annex). The new British threat assessment referred to in COS 134/66 and related to the Tripartite Discussions is in CAB 158/64, JIC(66)77. The British Chiefs were also concerned that if British forces in Germany fell to too low a level, it might result in two other complications. First, they were very interested in allied forces in Western Europe (excluding the French contribution) retaining a rough overall parity with German forces. There was concern that if the Germans became too preponderant in the central front, they would begin to demand senior NATO command positions which the British were not eager to see them possess. There was also a prestige issue involved for the British, who wanted to make sure that the British Commander-in-Chief in Germany remained command of sufficient allied forces to retain the respect of his Soviet counterpart when involved in discharging quadripartite responsibilities.

705 The British Chiefs had a number of caveats about redeploying forces to the United Kingdom from the central front. They felt it critical for UK forces to be returned to Germany "as soon as any evidence of instability in the political situation became apparent." BNA, DEFE 5/171, COS 136/66, NATO Strategy.

troublesome questions as to how much the strategic reserves really enhanced conventional deterrence could be avoided.

The British conception of NATO strategy in 1966 was little changed from that which had been expounded in 1963, and elements of which were of even longer standing. They continued to stress the critical importance of deterrence. Having rejected pure massive retaliation, they COS continued to argue that credible deterrence could not rest on strategic nuclear weapons alone. Instead an escalatory chain had to be established which included non-nuclear, tactical, and strategic weapons. These strategic weapons had to have an assured second-strike capability that could destroy Soviet urban and industrial centers. But the rub of the British position then always lay in determining the size of the non-nuclear Shield forces. Since the ink was dry on the Lisbon force goals, the movement had been towards reduced conventional forces, and yet cutting back to a tripwire level or allowing the West Germans to become the preponderant force on NATO's central front always prevented the British from embracing a tripwire concept. Instead the Chiefs now argued "The composition and deployment of the shield forces must be governed by the overriding requirement to gain time for governments to negotiate or take a decision on the use of tactical nuclear weapons."⁷⁰⁶ With NATO's non-nuclear forces unlikely to increase, the British Chiefs stressed that the window for political decision would range from one day down to a few hours. Recognizing that there might be a no difference in either side's perspective between a massive exchange of battlefield tactical nuclear weapons and all out strategic nuclear war, the British Chiefs

706 BNA, DEFE 5/171, COS 136/66, NATO Strategy.

felt that the number of tactical nuclear weapons needed for the purpose of suggesting NATO's willingness to escalate was actually "substantially below the number at present deployed."⁷⁰⁷ Perhaps most worrisome to German ears, Sir Richard Hull, in an address to NATO Military Committee in Chiefs of Staff session went so far as to suggest that "it must be realized that it will not be possible to maintain the integrity of the NATO area in every circumstance."⁷⁰⁸ In their recognition that NATO's long-standing adherence to a "forward strategy" might no longer be plausible, the British position was rather ahead of what the Germans or the United States would be willing to accept. By the following spring, the State Department and Department of Defense had hammered out the basic US approach to NATO strategy.

One of the most forceful expositions of British thinking regarding an updated strategy for NATO was given by Denis Healey at the December NATO Defense Planning Committee Meeting. Healey welcomed the circulation of a new draft political guidance for the NATO military authorities, particularly because it called attention to Soviet intentions, not just capabilities.⁷⁰⁹ He reiterated, as he had done during the proceeding two years, that it made little sense for NATO plans to be based on what the military authorities wanted (always a response to Soviet capabilities). For Healey, the whole purpose of NATO was to influence Soviet intentions. The only sensible approach to

⁷⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁸ BNA, DEFE 4/210, COS 68th Meeting/66, Min.1: Report on the 37th MC/CS and NATO Ministerial Meetings.

⁷⁰⁹ NARA, RG 59, Conference Files, 1966-1972, Box 431, DPC-VR(66)10, 14 December 1966. A number of NATO documents were under consideration at this meeting, especially the section on NATO Defense Planning. The document which included draft political guidance for the NATO military authorities was NATO document DPC/D(66)30. Secretary General Brosio was particularly interested in gaining Ministerial guidance on the formulation of political warning time and the relationship between tactical nuclear weapons and conventional forces.

military planning-in his mind-was to plan based on what governments would actually provide, not chase after chimerical contingencies or try to have a full conventional capability with which to face down the Soviets. Healey pointed out to his colleagues that NATO countries had in the past successively adopted force goals which it had then refused to meet. This was clear enough indication that the alliance was prepared to take certain risks. In doing so, Healey believed that NATO had “renounced the maximum possible flexibility in military response to various contingencies,” including the “ability to maintain or restore the integrity of NATO territory.” The keys for future planning, in Healey’s mind, were to establish how much political warning NATO was likely to get before any potential attack, how long hostilities might actually be expected to last if they did break out, and to what extent there was really a possibility of miscalculation on the part of the Soviets.⁷¹⁰ He went on to question whether it made any sense to think the Soviets might ‘miscalculate’ and launch a limited attack on Hamburg or other such contingencies in view of NATO’s [US] thousands of tactical nuclear weapons available for employment on the European continent. Since Healey accepted that recourse to tactical nuclear weapons would be made quickly, it made little sense for NATO to continue-officially at least-to argue for weeks or months worth of stockpiles. Healey’s sometimes impassioned address stresses several themes which had long become part of the British critique of NATO strategy. The emphasis on increased warning time could be

710 Healey stated: “I can’t help feeling that this idea of a major military attack [earlier cited 35 divisions] by the Russians as due to miscalculation is a fantasy which made some sense maybe 10 or 15 years ago, but which makes no sense in the world today, and it is difficult to see how it would make more sense in 5 or 10 years time.” NARA, RG 59, Conference Files, 1966-1972, Box 431, DPC-VR(66)10, 14 December 1966, p.25.

used to justify the redeployment of British forces from the continent, and the criticism of contingencies and the idea of being able to restore the integrity of the NATO area after the outbreak of hostilities were consonant with the British conception for a change in the nature of SACEUR's mission.⁷¹¹ The following month Healey would press US Undersecretary of State George Ball with the argument that questions regarding strategy and force levels should be dropped from the Tripartite Talks altogether in order that attention could be focused "specifically on [the] question of European Force Reductions."⁷¹²

Healey's address did provoke a number of responses from his fellow ministers. Defense Minister Greg Tidemand of Norway pointed out that countries closer to the Soviet border than Britain could not be as sanguine about Soviet intentions as Healey had suggested. Foreign Minister Brandt of Germany stressed that for Germany, given the destruction a tactical nuclear war would wreak on Germany, it was still essential for the alliance to maintain the ability for a sustained conventional defense. Further, the aim of defense policy "must in every case be to preserve or restore the integrity of the NATO area."⁷¹³ Secretary of Defense McNamara found Healey's conclusions erroneous in two regards. McNamara objected to Healey's suggestion that conventional forces were no longer required, and the suggestion that combat stores for over fifteen days of combat no

711 NARA, RG 59, Conference Files, 1966-1972, Box 431, DPC-VR(66)10, 14 December 1966. Healey expressed very similar sentiments in the more public forum of the House of Commons during the defense debate the following spring. See Hansard's *Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, Fifth Series, v.742 (27th February-10th March 1967), pp.108-13.

712 DDRS, 2001, F156, #1982, Emb. Tel. to Department of State, 24 January 1967.

713 NARA, RG 59, Conference Files, 1966-1972, Box 431, DPC-VR(66)10, 14 December 1966, p.29.

longer made sense.⁷¹⁴ Though no final decision was made on the issue of NATO political guidance to the military authorities—which would have been difficult to contemplate while the Trilateral discussions were still under way—it was agreed to pass along the relevant documents and discussion to the NATO Military Committee. These documents could then serve as background information while they were in the process of developing successors to MC 14/2 and MC 48/2.

By the spring of 1967, with the Trilateral talks pertinent to strategy having reached agreement the previous November, the NATO International Military Staff was preparing new draft threat assessments and strategy documents for consideration by the Military Committee for forwarding to the Defense Planning Committee by 1 April.⁷¹⁵ The State Department and Department of Defense had hammered out the basic US approach to NATO strategy for presentation in the NATO forum. The US position towards NATO strategy was laid down in a Joint State/Defense Department message to US representatives to NATO in March 1967. These instructions described the military objectives of the Alliance as the prevention of war, and failing that, maintenance of the security of the NATO area through the application of such force as was necessary.⁷¹⁶ While continuing to recognize that general war with the Soviets was unlikely, especially so long as the West maintained a viable second strike retaliatory capability, it departed from MC 14/2 in an important respect. Remember that MC 14/2 stated emphatically that

714 NARA, RG 59, Conference Files, 1966-1972, Box 431, DPC-VR(66)11, 14 December 1966, p.12.

715 BNA, DEFE 4/214, COS 22nd Meeting/67, Mins.101 & 102, 14 March 1967, and DEFE 5/173, COS 25/67, 15 March 1967, Proposed Strategic Concept for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and COS 26/67, 15 March 1967, Appreciation of the Military Situation as It Will Affect NATO through 1975.

716 NARA, RG 59, Subject-Numeric Files, Box 1584, Circular Tel. 165870, Joint State/Defense Message, 30 March 1967.

“in no case is there a concept of limited war with the Soviets.”⁷¹⁷ The State/Defense guidance of March 1967 stated instead that, “If the risk of escalation to nuclear war remains clear to them [the Soviets], a limited war in the NATO area is unlikely. Nonetheless, the probability of hostilities arising from miscalculation, which could escalate to greater intensity, cannot be ruled out.”⁷¹⁸ The guidance also recognized that the military threat could vary between different NATO regions, hence, “military weakness in the flank areas might prove tempting to a potential aggressor.”

The US also placed strong emphasis on the ability to provide rapid reinforcements to NATO during periods of heightened political tension. Paralleling British conclusions in this regard, the US paper suggested that political tensions might last weeks if not months. Thus, stress was placed on improving the ability of NATO to reinforce critical areas, especially the flanks, during times of heightened political tension. The level of forces already available for the Central Front were deemed generally adequate for the requirements of deterrence and facing the Soviets with the threat of unacceptable escalation should they move in that front. This document seemed to recognize that the steady pressure for increased conventional forces on the Central Front which had characterized the early Kennedy administration’s approach to the Alliance was not realistically attainable. But it did remain faithful to the general tenor of the flexible response approach by de-emphasizing language which harkened back to massive retaliation; which typically stressed the importance of a speedy NATO response to Soviet

717 M.C. 14/2 (Revised)(Final Decision), 23 May 1957, Pedlow, ed., *NATO Strategy Documents*, available at: <http://www.nato.int/archives/strategy.htm>.

718 NARA, RG 59, Subject-Numeric Files, Box 1584, Circular Tel. 165870, Joint State/Defense Message, 30 March 1967.

actions with the application of nuclear firepower. Instead the new stress on political warning time, flank defense, and use of contingency terminology was generally consistent with the direction which the US had been moving towards throughout the 1960s.

At the Defense Policy Committee meeting in May 1967, the NATO Defense Ministers approved the political guidance to initiate the strategy revision which had been stalled since the French veto of MC 100/1 in November 1963. In the political guidance issued to the military authorities, the issue of warning time remained unresolved, and the Defense Ministers could only “note” that estimates of warning time for a 80-division Warsaw Pact attack on the central front varied from 4 to 15 days. The guidance did call for the overall strategic concept to be revised to “allow NATO a greater flexibility and to provide for the employment as appropriate of one or more of direct defense, deliberate escalation, and general nuclear response, thus confronting the enemy with a credible threat of escalation in response to any type of aggression below the level of a major nuclear attack.”⁷¹⁹ The Military Committee in Chiefs of Staff Session approved MC 14/3, the new “Overall Strategic Concept for Defense of the North Atlantic Region,” at an informal meeting in Oslo on 16 September 1967. The document received the approval of the Defense Planning Committee in Ministerial Session on 12 December 1967.⁷²⁰ MC 48/3, the “Measures to Implement the Strategic Concept for the Defense of the NATO

719 DPC/D(67)23, Decisions of Defence Planning Committee in Ministerial Session, 9 May 1967. Pedlow, ed., *NATO Strategy Documents*, pp.333-44, available at: <http://www.nato.int/archives/strategy.htm>.

720 MC 14/3(Final), 16 January 1968. Pedlow, ed., *NATO Strategy Documents*, available at: <http://www.nato.int/archives/strategy.htm>.

Area,” which was the companion document to MC 14/3, was not formalized until December 1969.⁷²¹ After seven years of dogged persistence, the Kennedy-Johnson team had at last convinced their NATO partners to embrace a new strategic concept. The formal revision of the strategic concept, however, brought little change in NATO’s defense posture and force goals. Many of the dilemmas of the previous two decades remained unresolved, and indeed, perhaps they had no resolution. Over the next two decades, down to the end of the Cold War, many of these issues would be revisited again and again, but definitive solutions remained as elusive as ever.

⁷²¹ MC 48/3(Final), 8 December 1969. Pedlow, ed., *NATO Strategy Documents*, available at: <http://www.nato.int/archives/strategy.htm>.

Epilogue

At the Defense Policy Committee meeting in May 1967, the NATO Defense Ministers approved the political guidance to initiate the strategy revision which the United States government had been pushing for since the beginning of the Kennedy administration. The ministerial guidance called for the overall strategic concept to be revised to “allow NATO a greater flexibility and to provide for the employment as appropriate of one or more of direct defense, deliberate escalation, and general nuclear response, thus confronting the enemy with a credible threat of escalation in response to any type of aggression below the level of a major nuclear attack.”⁷²² Prior to the 1967 decision to shift to flexible response, NATO strategy was guided by two documents, MC 14/2, the “Overall Strategic Concept for the Defense of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Area” and MC 48/2, “Measures to Implement the Strategic Concept.” MC 14/2 as a document can be read as the apogee of massive retaliation. Two key phrases outlined the concept of massive retaliation: “in no case is there a concept of limited war with the Soviets,” and “NATO defense depends upon an immediate exploitation of our nuclear capability, whether or not the Soviets employ nuclear weapons.” While it is worth noting that MC 14/2 did make reference to the retention of “flexibility required to permit action to meet limited military situations short of general war,” this was intended only for regions *outside* of the NATO area.

722 DPC/D(67)23, Decisions of Defence Planning Committee in Ministerial Session, 9 May 1967. Pedlow, ed., *NATO Strategy Documents*, pp.333-44, available at: <http://www.nato.int/archives/strategy.htm>.

But the concept of “immediate exploitation of our nuclear capability” as NATO’s deterrent strategy was badly shaken publicly in 1957 after the Soviet launched their Sputnik satellite. Sputnik immediately seemed to undermine the existing strategy by creating the impression that the Soviets would soon have the ability to strike at America’s hitherto relatively secure deterrent strength with numerous intercontinental ballistic missiles. Public disquiet with massive retaliation, which extended to allied governments as well as their population, as a deterrent grew increasingly in the following years. Indeed even within the Eisenhower administration there was a growing desire to find a new strategy in the final years of the administration. Only Eisenhower’s calm insistence on the correctness of this policy prevented a flexible response-type strategy from finding favor in the US government *prior* to the Kennedy administration. Indeed, SACEUR Lauris Norstad issued a planning order to his NATO subordinates in December 1960 which certainly muddled the waters when it came to interpreting MC 14/2 and MC 48/2.

As it would turn out, replacing MC 14/2 with another strategy in the NATO context proved to be tremendously difficult. Clearly there was broad support for détente with the Soviets, long before the term gained widespread currency. Indeed, this was a major theme of British Prime Minister’s from after Stalin’s death. At the same time, most NATO leaders could not see through to abandon Churchill’s famous maxim-even if Churchill himself did late in his career-“We arm to parlay.” It seemed wise that if NATO were to disarm itself even in part, it would be best to secure reciprocal concessions from the Soviets. Doing so was made all the more difficult because of the

crisis which revolved around Berlin's status after 1958. Flexible response was an attempt by elements within the American government, championed in the early Kennedy administration to find an answer to the post-Sputnik NATO dilemma.

Many of the NATO nations saw reason to move away from massive retaliation as declared policy, but in many ways they remained wedded to a deterrent concept that was difficult to distinguish from massive retaliation in practice. Flexible response was inherently a program of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. Interestingly, it seems Kennedy himself may have largely abandoned the tenets of flexible response as a NATO strategy in the final year of his tragically foreshortened presidency. Nonetheless, flexible response came to have a bureaucratic life of its own. The problem for its American salesmen and their NATO allies, however, was that no one could ever clearly articulate what flexible response meant.

While flexible response defied definitive statement, it certainly had suggested improved conventional forces and the development of nuclear warfighting "options." The improved conventional force aspect of flexible response, advocated most clearly by elements in the US State Department and the US Army, hearkened back to the 1952 Lisbon force goals. The other element of flexible response having to do with the perceived need to create a range of possible nuclear options, proved very quixotic. A year after NATO's adoption of flexible response, the British Defense Planning Committee (formerly the Joint Planning Staff) wrote that:

NATO adopted a military posture which, as MNCs [Major NATO Commanders] have pointed out, was to some extent unrealistic. Delay in nuclear decision demands the sort of capability required to fight for longer conventionally. Such a

capability has not been provided. Without it, flexible response-with the differing interpretations put upon it by different people-is a concept with little hope of realistic implementation.⁷²³

Over the coming years, this point was stressed repeatedly. Without redressing the conventional force balance, NATO had little chance of really being able to implement “flexible response.”

With flexibility in nuclear response a non-starter, the Kennedy administration’s program devolved to strengthening NATO conventional force posture in Europe. The NATO allies of the United States proved utterly unwilling to countenance increased conventional forces. After Kennedy’s death, and especially with growing US involvement in Vietnam, it might have seemed sensible that the US government fall back on Eisenhower’s New Look in the context of its NATO policy. This would have meant continued reliance on nuclear deterrence to maintain the equilibrium in Europe, while permitting the US to pursue its desire for “flexibility” outside the NATO area. But flexible response retained a strong hold over members of the Johnson administration. Also, DeGaulle’s decision to withdraw France from the integrated military structure of the Alliance created a countervailing desire by the alliance’s other members to strengthen NATO as an institution. This seemingly made it all the more important for NATO to be adaptable to the needs of its members. In this context, flexible response, for all its decided ambiguity, gained a second lease on life in 1966 and 1967.

723 BNA, DEFE 6/106, DPN 225/68, The NATO and European Situation, 24 October 1968.

Détente

The deep ambiguity and in some cases inherent contradictions of flexible response as a strategy for NATO were never fully resolved. Indeed, the ambiguity of the document was essential to its adoption. But the other factor which made flexible response more palatable was that the formal statement of strategy itself was becoming increasingly less central to the NATO alliance during the later 1960s. In his *Détente and Confrontation*, Raymond Garthoff identified 1966 as a signal year in the shift towards fostering of détente by states on both sides of the Iron Curtain.⁷²⁴ Indeed, for President Johnson, bringing the arms race with the Soviets under control was a central priority in the final two years of his presidency.⁷²⁵ Recognizing the importance of keeping the alliance relevant amidst DeGaulle's challenge and the widespread desire for détente, the US government also supported the formation of a NATO study group to look at "The Future Tasks of the Alliance," better known as the Harmel Report, at the end of 1966. In December 1967 the alliance adopted the Harmel Report. It gave expression to the growing desire, both in the United States and Western Europe, to pursue détente while continuing to emphasize the importance of NATO as a deterrent.

US involvement in Vietnam, tensions over the Middle East, and delicate relations amongst the allies, both in NATO and the Warsaw Pact, limited the pace of détente in 1966 and 1967. In an attempt to demonstrate NATO wide support for détente after the completion of the Harmel Report, the NAC issued a communiqué, the so-called "Rejkavik signal," at its June 1968 meeting calling for mutual and balanced force

⁷²⁴ Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation*, p.106f.

⁷²⁵ Schwartz, *Lyndon Johnson and Europe*, p.206.

reductions and the signing of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), which was signed on 1 July 1968, was an important step along the path to détente, even if it was somewhat overshadowed by other events at the time. Of even greater importance to President Johnson was the agreement by the Soviets to announce concurrently with the NPT signing talks on limitations on offensive nuclear weapon delivery systems to begin in the near future.⁷²⁶ Johnson hoped that a summit held towards the end of 1968 might be the occasion for a significant breakthrough in limiting the nuclear arms race.

Impact of the Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia

Progress on détente in 1968, however, came to an abrupt halt on 20 August when Soviet forces (with some token representation from select Warsaw Pact countries) invaded Czechoslovakia. The West had been well-aware of and welcomed the limited reform in Czechoslovakia's Communist system which began in early 1968. It had seemed to outside observers that the Czechoslovakian leadership, headed by Alexander Dubček, was being careful not to provoke a repetition of the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956. In March 1968 at a meeting of the Warsaw Pact countries-less the troublesome Romanian head of state Nicolae Ceausecu-Soviet premier Leonid Brezhnev warned the reform minded Dubček against precipitating anything which might create turmoil in the Czechoslovakian Army or lead to public criticism of its alliance with the Soviet Union.⁷²⁷ The Soviets hoped that thus warned, Dubček would keep matters in Czechoslovakia under control. During the summer the Warsaw Pact held maneuvers in Czechoslovakia.

⁷²⁶ Ibid., p.209.

⁷²⁷ Mastny, "Was 1968 a Strategic Watershed of the Cold War?", p.155.

These were meant to send a deliberate message to Dubček and his followers not to stray too far from the fold. It seemed to the NATO allies that once the maneuvers had ended that the Soviets had made their point and would not thereafter resort to force.

The Soviet Politburo, however, had already authorized Defense Minister Grechko to begin planning for military intervention there should it become necessary.⁷²⁸ When NATO issued the “Rejkavik signal,” it reassured the Soviets that the West was more interested in détente and arms control than confrontation.⁷²⁹ Nonetheless, concern over the potential Western reaction to a Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia weakened Brezhnev’s resolve for military intervention. The Soviets continued to hope that political pressure alone would be sufficient to curb Dubček’s reformist tendencies, and it was not until 6 August that the Politburo authorized a full-scale military invasion.⁷³⁰

Though NATO authorities were well aware of the Soviet military buildup, the reading of political intentions was such that when the invasion came on 20 August, many in the West were considerably surprised. When Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin went to the White House to inform President Johnson, the President was so caught off guard-and so intent on discussing a potential summit-that he seemed nearly unable to comprehend what Dobrynin had to say. Indeed, the President’s surprise reflected itself in a NATO-wide shock. Despite having had a very good read on the scale of Soviet troop deployments in Central Europe, the Soviet decision to invade totally caught the West off guard. It was this failure to read Soviet *intentions* correctly that was most significant to

728 Ibid., p.156.

729 Ibid., p.159.

730 Ibid., p.163.

understanding the long-term NATO reaction to the Czechoslovakian Crisis. Henceforth, NATO military authorities would revert to the position that they could only deduce NATO's defense requirements based on Soviet capabilities, since judging Soviet intentions was so problematic.⁷³¹

Though the Soviets were not uninterested in détente, their priorities were hardly lock-step with those of the NATO allies. First, the Soviets had little interest in pursuing arms limitation agreements for nuclear delivery vehicles until they could confidently bargain from a position of parity, or better yet, superiority. The Soviets were also concerned with managing dissent within the Warsaw Pact while keeping a wary eye on China, then in the midst of the tumultuous Cultural Revolution. Over the next several years this concern with Soviet intentions coupled with the perception that Warsaw Pact modernization was stealing a march on the West contributed to a muted revival of NATO's military posture. This process would grow over the course of the decade. An important element of the NATO revival had to do with the British and US attention turning toward Europe. The British, who for reasons of economy had been accelerating the draw down of their East of Suez presence during the later 1960s, made a strengthened commitment to NATO part and parcel of their bid to demonstrate their desire to join the European Community. The end of US involvement in Vietnam in 1973 also played an important role, as the US military, especially the US Army, reconstituted their focus in the painful post-Vietnam years by turning their attention back to the problems of a

731 General Goodpaster, who was Lyman Lemnitzer's successor as SACEUR, made this point in a discussion with the British Chiefs of Staff one year after the Czechoslovakian invasion. BNA, DEFE 4/241, COS 35th Meeting/69, Min. 1, 3 September 1969.

hypothetical war fought on the North European plain. It was in the context of the strategy of flexible response that both the British and the Americans were able to justify this renewed emphasis on NATO's strategic dilemmas.

The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia had two short term impacts on relations with the West. It served to undermine the moves toward détente which the Johnson administration had been pursuing, and contributed directly to the cancellation of President Johnson planned summit in Moscow with the Soviet leadership in October 1968. The invasion also temporarily halted the moves toward unilateral troop reduction in NATO during 1968. However, 1969 saw the resumption of moves toward détente with the Soviets and of discussion of unilateral troop reductions amongst various members of the NATO alliance. During the next several years, the pressures for troop reductions were partially countered by the Alliance bureaucracy and the Nixon administration by tying NATO troop reductions to Soviet willingness to negotiate balanced force reductions in Europe.

Renewed Détente

While the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia had ended the chance for a summit during the final months of Johnson's presidency, much to President Johnson own disappointment, it did not end a general desire for détente in either in the United States nor Western Europe. Nineteen sixty-nine brought to power two new governments in the West which committed themselves to helping resolve Cold War tensions. In January 1969, Richard Nixon was inaugurated as President of the United States. In October, Willy Brandt, who had previously served as Mayor of West Berlin and as Foreign

Minister in Chancellor Kiesinger's Grand Coalition, became the first postwar Social Democratic Chancellor of West Germany. While both shared a desire for departures which would help end the Cold War, their respective policies sometimes generated friction. President Nixon and his National Security Adviser, Henry Kissinger, in particular, were often concerned that Brandt's policies would undermine the delicate interlinked diplomacy they aimed to develop. In the end, both the policies pursued by the Nixon administration and Brandt's Ostpolitik initiatives helped foster the climate of renewed détente with the Soviets, though both Nixon and Brandt fell from power over domestic scandals which prevented them from seeing their visions reach maturity.

When President Nixon came to office, he and his chief foreign policy advisor, Henry Kissinger, had a vision for American foreign policy in the 1970s as an "era of negotiations." It was a vision predicated on advancing détente with the Soviets, escaping from the seemingly unending cycle of crisis diplomacy, and restoring stability to world affairs.⁷³² Speaking to a group of Fellows from the Harvard Center for International Affairs in late 1971, Kissinger informed them, "The administration came into office when the intellectual capital of U.S. postwar policy had been used up and when the conditions determining postwar policy had been altered." It was thus necessary to:

732 Melvin Small, *The Presidency of Richard Nixon* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1999), pp.94-125 takes a favorable view of Nixon's approach to the Soviet Union and China, crediting Nixon with the diplomatic openings which "marked the beginning of the end of the cold war." For more critical views of Nixon era foreign policy, see William Bundy, *A Tangled Web: The Making of Foreign Policy in the Nixon Presidency* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998), and Robert Dallek, *Nixon and Kissinger: Partners in Power* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007). For two recent studies on the role of Henry Kissinger in the Nixon administration's foreign policy, see, Jussi Hanhimäki, *The Flawed Architect: Henry Kissinger and American Foreign Policy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), and Jeremi Suri, *Henry Kissinger and the American Century* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2007). There is a great deal of detail on the mechanics of US-Soviet arms control negotiations in Raymond L. Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1985).

adjust our foreign policy to the new facts of life. It is beyond the physical and psychological capacity of the U.S. to make itself responsible for every part of the world. We hope in the first term to clear away the underbush [*sic*] of the old period. In the second term, we could try to construct a new international settlement-which will be more stable, less crisis-conscious, and less dependent on decisions in one capital.⁷³³

Their ability to pursue that vision, however, rested in part on their ability to extricate the country from the Vietnam War. Nixon and Kissinger, well aware that the domestic mood pressed hard for the withdrawal of US forces, were determined to win a settlement in Vietnam which would not saddle the United States with the onus of having ‘lost’ the war or abandoned its ally, South Vietnam. As a result of this conviction, the Nixon administration continued the US commitment to South Vietnam into 1973, ultimately with frustratingly little to show for it.⁷³⁴

In the midst of the ongoing commitment to Vietnam, which domestically served to further undermine support for US deployments abroad, the Nixon administration was also undertaking the review of US strategy and military posture which characterized the first year of any US administration. The day after Nixon’s inauguration, at the behest of the President, Kissinger directed that a study be prepared on US military posture and the balance of power which would present the implications on security and foreign policy for a range of different force levels.⁷³⁵ By the fall the national security apparatus had determined a general posture for both strategic and general purpose forces had been

733 Quoted in Suri, *Henry Kissinger and the American Century*, pp.199-200.

734 George C. Herring, *America’s Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*, 3rd edn. (New York: McGraw Hill, 1996), pp.243-47. See also Jeffrey Kimball, *Nixon’s Vietnam War* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998); and Robert Schulzinger, *A Time for War: The United States and Vietnam, 1941-1975* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

735 Nixon Library (Online), National Security Study Memorandum [hereafter NSSM] 3, 21 January 1969. Available at: <http://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/nationalsecuritymemoranda.php>.

determined. Nixon communicated the general lines of administration planning to Congress in the *First Annual Report to Congress on United States Foreign Policy for the 1970s*. Regarding strategic forces, the administration rejected either retreating to a “finite deterrence” posture or ramping up the production of strategic nuclear forces excessively, aiming instead to keep pace with the Soviets to maintain a rough parity. This was referred to as the strategy of “sufficiency”.⁷³⁶ In the realm of commitments, a significant shift in policy had been intimated in Nixon’s informal remarks to reporters on Guam in July 1969. This statement, subsequently referred to as the Nixon Doctrine, signaled a retreat in the long-term from wide-ranging commitments throughout Asia and the Middle East.⁷³⁷ Henceforth the United States would provide assistance to regional allies in Asia, but rely on them to provide the manpower. In Western Europe, by contrast, the Nixon administration reiterated their commitment to the existing strategy of flexible response, and promised to maintain US forces there at existing levels through “at least” mid-1971. The President assured Prime Minister Harold Wilson of this during a visit by the latter to the US in January 1970, and publicized the position in his *First Annual Report to the Congress on the United States Foreign Policy for the 1970’s*, which was transmitted to Congress in February.⁷³⁸

736 Richard Nixon, *First Annual Report to the Congress on the United States Foreign Policy for the 1970’s*, 18 February 1970. See also the discussion of sufficiency in Terriff, *The Nixon Administration and the Making of U.S. Nuclear Strategy*, pp.27-8.

737 Don Oberdorfer, “U.S. Bars New Asia War Role”, *The Washington Post*, 26 July 1969, p.A1; and Robert B. Semple, Jr., “Nixon Plans Cut in Military Role for U.S. in Asia”, *New York Times*, 26 July 1969, p.1.

738 Prime Minister Wilson was invited to attend an NSC meeting on 28 January 1970, during which general US policy towards Europe was discussed. At the meeting, Nixon stated, “there is no reduction of our NATO commitment. Certainly this can be a matter for negotiation, but we cannot reduce our level of

Notwithstanding this statement in principle, the Nixon administration was interested in reviewing alternative U.S. force deployments in Europe as well.⁷³⁹ There had been significant congressional pressure since the late Johnson administration, spearheaded by Senator Mike Mansfield, for reduced US force levels in Europe.⁷⁴⁰ While Nixon's comments in his *First Annual Report to Congress on United States Foreign Policy* had aimed to reassure the United States' NATO allies that there would not be precipitate reductions, the Nixon administration was aware that Congressional and public pressure for defense reductions might necessitate a change in US force deployments in Europe. Shortly after President Nixon's FY 1971 budget was transmitted to Congress in early February, it became clear that there was significant Congressional pressure for reductions well beyond the \$5 billion cuts proposed by the administration.⁷⁴¹ While Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird described the defense budget as "rock bottom" and JCS Chairman Gen. Earle Wheeler stressed that projected force levels were "at the borderline of acceptable military risk in the present circumstances," the Pentagon position

commitment except on a mutual basis." See *FRUS 1969-1976*, vol.I, Doc.56, p.185. Richard Nixon, *First Annual Report to the Congress on the United States Foreign Policy for the 1970's*. 18 February 1970.

739 Nixon Library (Online), NSSM 84, U.S. Strategies and Forces for NATO, 21 November 1969. NSSM 84 called for "a study of the alternative U.S. force deployments in NATO, their political and budgetary implications, and their consequences for NATO strategy", to be prepared for submission to the NSC Defense Program Review Committee by 1 February 1970.

740 A nonbinding resolution calling for unilateral US troop reductions in NATO Europe was first introduced by Democratic Senator Mike Mansfield in August 1966. Thomas A. Schwartz, *Lyndon Johnson and Europe: In the Shadow of Vietnam* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003), pp.121-22, and Phil Williams, *The Senate and US Troops in Europe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), pp.143-55.

741 A number of prominent Congressional Democrats had called for large cuts in defense in their televised response to President Nixon's State of the Union message. "Democrats Assail Spending for Defense In TV Reply to State of Union Address", *Wall Street Journal*, 9 February 1970, p.2. Several weeks later, the *New York Times* reported a group of 50 Congressmen were advocating close study of the defense budget with an eye towards greater cuts. Robert M. Smith, "Wide Congressional Interest Stirred by Move to Study Defense Budget Closely and Offer Alternatives," Special to *The New York Times*, 2 March 1970, p.13. A Senate committee investigation of the defense budget was announced at the beginning of May. "12 Senators Plan Defense Budget Probes," *Chicago Tribune*, 3 May 1970, p.20.

was soon to be assailed even within the administration.⁷⁴² Concern over declining government revenues led the Bureau of the Budget to press the Department of Defense to trim another \$3 billion from their FY 1972 projections.⁷⁴³ In 1968, spurred by the cost of the war in Vietnam and the expanding domestic social welfare spending of the Johnson era, the federal budget deficit had hit a record high of \$25.1 billion.⁷⁴⁴ By early 1970 it was clear that the somewhat rosy economic projections which the Nixon administration had embraced for planning purposes were not going to be born out. Indeed, economic indicators suggested difficult times ahead. Secretary of Defense Laird was soon convinced that considerable reductions in defense would have to be made, which would “cause severe reductions in our military capabilities and will require some reductions in US commitments.”⁷⁴⁵ Laird informed his fellow NATO defense ministers at a NATO Defense Planning Committee meeting in early June that unless European financial help was forthcoming to offset the expense of US troop deployments, the US would be forced to consider reducing its forces deployed in NATO Europe.⁷⁴⁶

742 Both are quoted in Robert M. Smith, “Wide Congressional Interest Stirred by Move to Study Defense Budget Closely and Offer Alternatives,” Special to *The New York Times*, 2 March 1970, p.13.

743 NARA, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional (“H) Files, DPRC Mtgs., Box H-99, Memorandum for Dr. Kissinger, re: DPRC Meeting (23 March) on BOB and DOD positions on Fiscal and Strategy Guidance, 21 March 1970.

744 On growing economic problems, see Kunz, *Butter and Guns*, p.193, and James T. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945-1974* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp.737-38.

745 Laird listed the following changes as necessitated by the budget shortfalls: Retirement of 3-4 attack carriers; inactivation of 2 Army divisions; reduction of 4 Air Force fighter wings; retirement of all 4 anti-submarine warfare carriers; reduction of 130-140 of the oldest B-52 bombers; large reductions in continental air defense; reduction of 800,000 military and civilian personnel in the Department of Defense; and cancellation of some major procurement programs. This was all detailed in a Memorandum for the President, re: The Defense Budget-Fiscal Year 1971 and Beyond, 31 May 1970. There is a copy of the memorandum in NARA, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional (“H) Files, NSC Mtgs., Box H-29.

746 Laird’s comments to the Defense Planning Committee were relayed to Kissinger by his NSC staff in a memorandum in early October. NARA, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional (“H) Files, NSC Mtgs., Box H-29, Memorandum for Mr. Kissinger, re: NSC Meeting on Burden Sharing, 9 October 1970

Thus, in the summer of 1970, it seemed that budgetary and Congressional pressure would combine to undermine President Nixon's recent declarations that the level of US troops in Europe would not be reduced unilaterally. However, within the administration a number of advocates emerged in favor of holding the line on US conventional forces in NATO. This group included the State Department, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger.

In response to Laird's memorandum, President Nixon instructed the Defense Program Review Committee (an adjunct of the NSC established in the fall of 1969), to undertake a careful review of the defense budget.⁷⁴⁷ An initial discussion over the implications of the defense cuts was held at San Clemente—Nixon's Western White House—at the end of June attended by the President's senior defense advisers. Kissinger inveighed against the current SIOP plan, which he referred to as a "horror strategy."⁷⁴⁸ Repeating arguments that had been advanced by Kennedy's advisers ten years before, he stressed the need to "develop serious, non-suicidal options for the strategic forces by expanding upon or supplementing the standard SIOP options." As a corollary, it would "be necessary to strengthen and improve the General Purpose Forces to insure that the President has adequate options in various contingencies, especially NATO."⁷⁴⁹

747 NARA, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional ("H) Files, NSC Mtgs., Box H-29, Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense from President Nixon, 2 June 1970.

748 On Kissinger's attempts to change the SIOP strategy, see William Burr, "The Nixon Administration, the 'Horror Strategy,' and the Search for Limited Nuclear Options, 1969-1972", *Journal of Cold War Studies*, vol. 7 (Summer 2005), pp.34-78; and Terriff, *The Nixon Administration and the Making of U.S. Nuclear Strategy*, pp.53-68, 78-81, 87-96.

749 These comments are from two documents in NARA, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional ("H) Files, DPRC Mtgs., Box H-100. They are titled Defense Budget Preview Session, San Clemente, July 28, 1970 and President's Review of Defense Posture, San Clemente, July 28, 1970-Selected Comments.

Nixon recognized that the US and NATO were “at a hell of a disadvantage in conventional forces with respect to the Soviet Union,” implicitly rejecting the direction that McNamara had taken since his Economic Club speech in 1963. Nonetheless, Nixon feared that the time was fast approaching that the US would have to “bite the NATO bullet” and consider US force reductions in Europe.⁷⁵⁰ Kissinger, however, would remain a consistent supporter of maintaining US general purpose forces in NATO. Six weeks after the San Clemente meeting, Kissinger continued to urge President Nixon not to consider reducing general purpose forces too far, lest it invite the Soviets to exploit the West in their area of greatest weakness.⁷⁵¹

Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird was Nixon’s adviser who seemed most willing to “bite the [NATO] bullet.” While Kissinger and the Joint Chiefs continued to advocate maintaining US forces at their present levels, or even increasing them to authorized strength, Laird proposed an alternative to the President. Laying out the strategic environment, Laird pointed out that the “Soviet achievement of a fully credible strategic retaliatory capability, and a momentum which threatens to enable them to match or exceed in quantity, at least, the strategic delivery capability of the U.S.” had served to diminish the U.S. deterrent “against Soviet political and military initiatives at the lower end of the spectrum of conflict.”⁷⁵² On this, both Laird and Kissinger could agree, but

750 NARA, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional (“H) Files, DPRC Mtgs., Box H-100, President’s Review of Defense Posture, San Clemente, July 28, 1970-Selected Comments.

751 NARA, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional (“H) Files, NSC Mtgs., Box H-29, Memorandum for the President, re: August 19 NSC Meeting on Defense Program, 18 August 1970.

752 NARA, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Subject Files, Box 319, Melvin Laird, *Strategy for Peace: A National Security Strategy of Realistic Deterrence*, Memorandum for the President from the Secretary of Defense, 6 November 1970, pp.5-6. It was transmitted to the President under an EYES ONLY

the conclusions they drew from it differed considerably. Laird emphasized what he saw as a paradox of past US policy in which US strategic nuclear forces were designed primarily for deterrence, while general purpose forces were designed for “warfighting” and the role of tactical nuclear weapons was “never firmly established by the previous administration.”⁷⁵³

The answer, for Laird, was in reconfiguring general purpose forces and tactical nuclear weapons to place emphasis on their deterrent value, not on warfighting. This might well mean exploring a “new” strategic concept for NATO, in which future force plans that stressed “reduced ground troops augmented with modernized TAC NUCS.”⁷⁵⁴ The implication of the strategic nuclear balance made theater deterrence in Europe a priority. Laird advocated “establishing a ‘self-contained’ deterrent in Western Europe against a range of possible initiatives by the Soviet,” running all the way up to “full-scale conventional or tactical nuclear attack.”⁷⁵⁵ Of course, this sounded a good deal like the arguments used in the 1950s to support troop reductions as combat power was increased by the introduction of tactical nuclear weapons. And the “self-contained” language suggested an interest in turning theater defense over to the Europeans. In a sense, this would have been consistent with extending the Nixon doctrine to include NATO. Part and parcel with Laird’s analysis was recognition that US forces in Europe would be reduced to a level of 100,000 to 150,000 troops in the future, ostensibly under the

cover memorandum from Laird dated 7 November. The report itself is also available in DDRS, 2002, F178-179, 3043.

753 Ibid., pp.15-16. For background and analysis on the warfighting-deterrence debate, see Daalder, *The Nature and Practice of Flexible Response*, pp.112-28.

754 Laird, *A Strategy for Peace: A National Security Strategy of Realistic Deterrence*, pp.24, 28.

755 Laird, *A Strategy for Peace: A National Security Strategy of Realistic Deterrence*, p.9.

provisions of the Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions or Congressionally dictated withdrawals.⁷⁵⁶ Laird continued to attempt to press his conceptual basis for “realistic deterrence” in his the two subsequent annual defense budget requests to Congress, but it was never fully integrated into the Nixon administration’s national security strategy.⁷⁵⁷

From 27 September to 5 October President Nixon traveled to Europe, visiting Italy, Yugoslavia, Spain, and Ireland. Speaking with major NATO commanders at NATO’s Southern Command (AFSOUTH) headquarters in Naples, Italy, President Nixon repeated the assurances given earlier in the year that the US would not unilaterally withdraw its forces from NATO. On the issue of burden sharing, the President stated his preference for greater European efforts to be made at improving their own defenses rather than direct payments to offset the costs of US forces deployed in NATO Europe.⁷⁵⁸

Coinciding with Nixon’s travels, ten of the European NATO members’ defense ministers, known as the EuroGroup, meeting in Brussels agreed to make contributions to help offset the costs of US forces.⁷⁵⁹ This effort had been coordinated by West German Defense Minister Helmut Schmidt and Denis Healey of Britain in response to Laird’s presentation

⁷⁵⁶ Ibid., p.56.

⁷⁵⁷ Laird had hoped his *Strategy for Peace: A National Security Strategy of Realistic Deterrence* would have been more closely integrated into the NSC and DPRC guidance for the Nixon administration’s first Five-Year Defense program, but this did not come to pass. Nonetheless, he incorporated broad features of it into his *Statement of Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird Before the House Armed Services Committee on the FY 1972-1976 Defense Program and the 1972 Defense Budget* of 9 March 1971. It was issued as tentative strategic guidance for the Department of Defense FY 1973 budget planning, but encountered internal DOD resistance. NARA, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Subject File, Box 319, Memorandum for Dr. Kissinger, 5 February 1971.

⁷⁵⁸ Nixon had pressed the Europeans to do so in a speech on 30 September in Naples, Italy. He reiterated this position to his national security staff in a meeting on 14 October. Both are quoted in NSDM 88. Nixon Library (Online), NSDM 88: US Force Levels in Europe and “Burden-Sharing”, 15 October 1970. Available at: <http://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/nationalsecuritymemoranda.php>.

⁷⁵⁹ “Report 10 Europe Countries Pledge NATO Aid Boost”, *Chicago Tribune*, 2 October 1970, p.3; “U.S. pushes NATO cost sharing”, *Christian Science Monitor*, 2 October 1970, p.2; and “West Europe agrees to meet more of its own defence bill”, *The Times*, 2 October 1970, p.6.

to the June NATO Defense Planning Committee meeting.⁷⁶⁰ Since June, however, Harold Wilson's Labor government had fallen from power in Britain. It was replaced by a Conservative government led by Edward Heath. Heath and his Defense Minister, Lord Carrington, proved less interested in making direct payment to the Americans, and more willing to consider improving their own forces, pending a review of their military and financial position.⁷⁶¹ Before departing Ireland, President Nixon reiterated that the US would "maintain our present strength," and "continue to talk with our allies with regard to how...we can meet our responsibilities together."⁷⁶²

With the upcoming December NAC meeting rapidly approaching and guidance preparation of the FY 1973 budget getting under way, the Nixon administration needed to establish its policy towards NATO for the coming year. In order to prevent any further erosion of NATO's defense position in the short term pending progress on the Mutual and Balanced Force Talks, the Nixon administration continued to support a program of improvements in NATO's conventional force posture. In late November the NSC endorsed NSDM 95, "U.S. Strategy and Forces for NATO." It stated that given the strategic balance between the US and the USSR, it was "vital that NATO have a credible conventional defense posture to deter and, if necessary, defend against conventional

760 Denis Healey, "Paying for security in Europe", *The Times*, 1 October 1970, p.12.

761 "West Europe agrees to meet more of its own defence bill", *The Times*, 2 October 1970, p.6. Lord Carrington wrote in his memoirs that, "it was NATO that mattered most to us, and here I simply claim that we 'kept the show on the road' and demonstrated that we intended to play a marginally greater rather than a marginally smaller part than heretofore. It is a modest claim but a true one." Lord Carrington, *Reflect on Things Past: The Memoirs of Lord Carrington* (London: Collins, 1988), p.251.

762 Richard Nixon, "Remarks to Reporters Summarizing His European Trip", 4 October 1970. John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online]. Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database). Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=2697>.

attack by Warsaw Pact forces.” It called specifically for increased emphasis “given to defense by conventional forces,” which could provide “a strong and credible initial conventional defense against a full-scale attack, assuming a period and of mobilization by both sides.”⁷⁶³ At a DPRC meeting the following February, it was agreed that the US would continue to “plan all our forces with a real war-fighting capability.”⁷⁶⁴ This emphasis on the ability to defend credibly, rather than simply deter, was a victory for Kissinger and the Joint Chiefs outlook over Secretary of Defense Laird.⁷⁶⁵ The administration hoped, however, that the forces would be provided especially by the Europeans. At an NSC meeting on 14 October, President Nixon stated that rather than press the Europeans for more contributions to support the costs of US forces in Europe, a viable NATO strategy would “require more adequate forces from the Europeans.”⁷⁶⁶ This could be seen as an attempt in the long-term to apply the salient features of the Nixon Doctrine to Europe as well as Asia.

At the subsequent December DPC and NAC meetings, Secretary of State William Rogers reaffirmed the US government’s commitment to NATO’s current strategy of “flexibility of response” and pressed the Allies to endorse the recommendations of AD-

763 Nixon Library (Online), National Security Decision Memoranda [hereafter NSDM] 95: U.S. Strategy and Forces for NATO, 25 November 1970. Available at <http://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/nationalsecuritymemoranda.php>.

764 NARA, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional (“H”) Files, DPRC Mtgs., Box H-101, Memorandum for Undersecretary of State, et. al., re: Foreign Policy, State, and Defense Posture Statements, 22 February 1971.

765 NSC staffer K. Wayne Smith reported to Kissinger that within the Department of Defense, Laird’s “Strategy of Realistic Deterrence” had “encountered opposition in the preparation of the DOD Posture Statement”, and, as a result, “was largely discarded and DOD proceeded with internal planning based on past Presidential guidance (NSDMs 16 and 27, etc.)” NARA, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional (“H”) Files, DPRC Mtgs., Box H-102, Memorandum for Dr. Kissinger, re: DPRC Meeting Scheduled for March 22, 1971.

766 Nixon Library (Online), NSDM 88: US Force Levels in Europe and “Burden-Sharing”, 15 October 1970. Available at: <http://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/nationalsecuritymemoranda.php>

70, the “Study on Alliance Defense Problems for the 1970s.”⁷⁶⁷ AD-70 was approved at the Defense Planning Committee meeting on 2 December.⁷⁶⁸ It called for a wide range of qualitative improvements in NATO’s conventional forces. These included giving priority to armor and anti-tank equipment; reducing the vulnerability of tactical aircraft; improving ASW, naval air defense, and maritime surveillance capabilities; improving local and augmentation forces for the flanks; improving mobilization and reinforcement reception capabilities; improved communications facilities for crisis management; and increasing NATO war reserve stocks to a minimum of 30 days.⁷⁶⁹

Affecting conventional force improvement was as difficult as ever, however.⁷⁷⁰ In the US, Senator Mansfield introduced binding legislation on 11 May 1971 which called for a 50 per cent reduction in US forces in Europe.⁷⁷¹ A speech by Soviet premier Leonid Brezhnev on 14 May that called for force reduction talks with the West provided the Nixon administration with sufficient ammunition to derail Mansfield’s proposal. The administration was able to argue that unilateral cuts in US forces would undermine the United States bargaining position with the Soviets.⁷⁷² The amendment was defeated by a

767 NARA, RG 59, Conference Files, 1966-1972 [Lot 71D227], Box 522, Secretary of State Rogers Briefing Book for the NATO Ministerial Meeting, Brussels, 2-4 December 1970.

768 NATO Final Communiqué, 4 December 1970, available at: <http://www.hq.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c701203a.htm>.

769 “Alliance Defense for the Seventies”, at annex to NATO Final Communiqué, 4 December 1970, available at: <http://www.hq.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c701203b.htm>. Also NARA, RG 59, Conference Files, 1966-1972 [Lot 71D227], Box 522, Secretary of State Rogers Briefing Book for the NATO Ministerial Meeting, Brussels, 2-4 December 1970.

770 Duffield, *Power Rules*, pp.199-201, and Kugler, *Commitment to Purpose*, pp.270-71.

771 Williams, *The Senate and US Troops in Europe*, pp.169ff.

772 Duffield, *Power Rules*, p.202.

vote of 61-36, which the Nixon administration was eager to emphasize as confirming its “support of a responsible US policy toward NATO.”⁷⁷³

The Nixon administration continued to press its European partners to fulfill the provisions of AD-70 as the best means to defuse Congressional pressure in the US for unilateral force reductions. Shortly after the introduction of the Mansfield Amendment, K. Wayne Smith, a member of Kissinger’s NSC staff, wrote that:

It is clear that a major underpinning of the present U.S. policy toward NATO is our belief that we are more likely to get substantial Allied force improvements if we maintain and improve our forces than if we reduce. In turn, our success of obtaining these improvements and the larger European burden associated with them will be the acid test of the Administration’s policy. It could also be a major factor, if successful, in convincing Congress and the public opinion that U.S. force levels should be maintained.⁷⁷⁴

Presuming that the Allies would follow through on the AD-70 measures and strengthen their capabilities for conventional defense, President Nixon supported continued measures to improve US combat forces in Europe qualitatively. For President Nixon, the forces were critical more for their diplomatic effect than for their warfighting capability. Nixon was concerned that should US forces be reduced down to a trip wire size force, it would become “impossible” for anyone to believe that the US President would actually support Europe’s defense.⁷⁷⁵ While Nixon generally conceded that military plans for Europe’s defense were “probably irrelevant,” NSDM 133 of September 1971 reaffirmed the basic principles of NSDM 95. It stated, “Our objective shall be to ensure that the size

773 NARA, RG 59, Conference Files, 1966-1972, Box 529, Secretary of State Roger’s remarks to the North Atlantic Council, 3 June 1971, p.14.

774 NARA, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional (“H”) Files, DPRC Mtgs., Box H-102, Memorandum for Dr. Kissinger, re: DPRC Meeting on U.S. Allied Forces for NATO (1972-1976), 17 May 1971.

775 *FRUS 1969-1976*, vol.I, Minutes of NSC Meeting on Defense Strategy, 13 August 1971, p.332.

and structure of U.S. forces is consistent with a strategy of initial conventional defense for a period of 90 days during which NATO's warfighting capabilities would stop a Pact attack and stabilize the military situation without major loss of NATO territory."⁷⁷⁶

In Great Britain, Edward Heath's Conservative government, in power since June 1970, initially aimed to provide what support it could to NATO efforts at meeting AD-70. Heath's government hoped to do what it could in order to help defuse pressure on the Nixon administration for unilateral reductions.⁷⁷⁷ Part and parcel with this, Secretary of State for Defense Lord Carrington requested that he be updated on the status of studies on NATO strategy.⁷⁷⁸ What emerged from the exchange between Carrington and his military advisers was a clear sense that, for the British, little had changed since the Mountbatten Exercise in 1965. Focusing on the worst-case conventional scenario, an ongoing review of NATO's vulnerability in the central region of NATO's front (the West German frontier with the Warsaw Pact), estimated that 73 Warsaw Pact divisions would be sent against 23 NATO divisions. As had been the case in 1965, the study was seen as confirming "beyond any reasonable doubt that the duration of conventional action...is likely to be very short." Only if NATO was able to build up its forces during a period of extended warning time prior to hostilities to a force of 35-40 divisions-presumably without a matching escalation by the Warsaw Pact-could the planners envision anything

⁷⁷⁶ Nixon Library (Online), NSDM 133, U.S. Strategy and Forces for Europe; Allied Force Improvements, 22 September 1971.

⁷⁷⁷ BNA, CAB 128/49, CM(71)26, Min.2, 18 May 1971.

⁷⁷⁸ Lord Carrington requested information of the status of studies bearing in NATO strategy on 17 May 1971. BNA, DEFE 13/880, ref. to MO 13/1/16/1. A preliminary reply was sent to Lord Carrington on 30 June, followed with clarification on 3 December 1971.

like the extended conventional hostilities that the American's envisioned.⁷⁷⁹ After having weighed these conclusions, Lord Carrington wrote to CDS Admiral Peter Hill-Norton that he could "see no possibility in the foreseeable future of increasing NATO's conventional forces to a point at which protracted conventional defense would become a practicable proposition."⁷⁸⁰ He went on to write that, "It may be that there is no satisfactory alternative to the strategy of flexibility in response; but the way in which we seek to implement that strategy may repay further thought."⁷⁸¹ Shortly thereafter NATO's Nuclear Planning Group accepted a German-US paper on Follow-On Use of Tactical Nuclear Weapons which endorsed the long-standing view in NATO military circles that tactical nuclear weapons would require early use in the face of major Warsaw Pact conventional aggression.⁷⁸² Returning to the problem several months later, CDS Hill-Norton pointed out that the only way to increase flexibility, especially the time before decision would be required regarding the use of tactical nuclear weapons, would be to move away from the concept of forward defense. However, this was widely understood to be politically completely unacceptable to the Germans. Carrington agreed

779 BNA, DEFE 13/880, W77/03, 30 June 1971. This reply to Carrington's request was signed by the Chief of the Defense Staff, Admiral Norton-Hill, and the Chief Scientific Adviser. The study discussed in their reply was a Defense Planning Staff Central Region Study (DOAE Project 147), which had been underway for over a year. Interestingly, there was some hint that the Joint Intelligence Committee was reducing its estimate of combat-ready Warsaw Pact divisions, perhaps reflecting the long-standing campaign by Robert McNamara to have these figure re-assessed by the European NATO allies. However, JIC(A)71/28 of 23 April 1971, referenced in the above memorandum, is not yet open for researchers.

780 BNA, DEFE 13/880, MO 13/1/16/1, 16 August 1971.

781 BNA, DEFE 13/880, MO 13/1/16/1, 16 August 1971.

782 NPG(71)6, Follow-On Use of Tactical Nuclear Weapons, 1 August 1971 was probably adopted at the 26th-27th October meeting of the Nuclear Planning Group in Brussels. CDS Hill-Norton refers to it in BNA, DEFE 13/880, W77/03, 3 December 1971 [there is another copy in DEFE 25/299]. NPG(71)6 was one of a number of studies the NPG was conducting in 1970-72, and presented to the NPG Defense Ministers between May 1971 and May 1973. See J. Michael Legge, *Theater Nuclear Weapons and the Strategy of Flexible Response* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1983), pp.26-28.

that any further discussion of revising NATO's forward defense strategy could be postponed, though he believed that pressure for US withdrawals, the MBFR talks, and rising costs of manpower and equipment made it inevitable that NATO would have to make do with smaller forces in Central Europe in the future.⁷⁸³

Given the general problems of many Western economies in the 1970s, Carrington's prediction that there would be no foreseeable increases in NATO's conventional forces to make a major conventional defense possible were well on the mark. The British soon faced a number of severe economic challenges which meant yet another round of extensive defense cuts had to be considered.⁷⁸⁴ In addition, a debilitating coal strike in January 1972, troubles in Northern Ireland which required the dispatch of British troops, and tense relations with Iceland over fisheries created a number of other headaches from 1972 forward. Admission to the European Community on 1 January 1973 did little to alleviate Britain's long-standing economic problems. The dramatic rise in oil prices that resulted from the Arab oil embargo after the October 1973 Yom Kippur War considerably exacerbated Britain's (and the West's, generally) economic problems. When the Heath government fell in the spring 1974 elections, Harold Wilson returned to power as Prime Minister. Successive Labor governments, under Wilson from 1974-76 and James Callaghan from 1976-79, proved no more adept than the Conservatives at shaking Britain loose from her economic malaise. Between 1973 and 1979, inflation in Britain would run slightly above 15 per cent annually. The

⁷⁸³ BNA, DEFE 25/299, MO 13/1/16/1, 6 December 1971.

⁷⁸⁴ For a discussion of the 1973-74 British defense review, see the memoirs of Michael Carver, who served as Chief of the Defense Staff from 1973 to 1976. Michael Carver, *Out of Step: The Memoirs of Field Marshal Lord Carver* (London: Hutchinson, 1989), pp.447-57.

economic nadir for Britain came in 1976 when the Callaghan government was forced to accept an extensive bailout by the International Monetary Fund.⁷⁸⁵

Even before all this came to pass, the Nixon administration was considering ways in which to improve the strained relations between the United States and Western Europe.⁷⁸⁶ Different approaches to détente and economic problems on both sides of the Atlantic contributed to the sense in the early 1970s that US and European interests were drifting apart. During the previous year, the Nixon administration's attention had been pre-occupied with a number of high profile events. These included Nixon's dramatic first visit to Communist China; a US-Soviet summit that witnessed the signing of the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT); and the November 1972 US Presidential elections. When the Nixon administration launched the Linebacker II bombing campaign against North Vietnam in December 1972, ostensibly to spur peace talks, simmering anti-war and anti-US sentiment burst forth in a steady stream of protests.⁷⁸⁷ In order to appease Europeans, the President and National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger soon proclaimed that 1973 would be the "Year of Europe."⁷⁸⁸ On 23 January 1973, Henry

785 Hitchcock, *The Struggle for Europe*, p.314.

786 Nixon discussed the need in September 1972 to make sure the Europeans understood that trade problems with the US could have implications in the political arena. If the European Community adopted an anti-US trade policy, "NATO could blow apart." Nixon wanted to remain quiet on the issue until after the election, then consider what policy options could be developed for the coming year. *FRUS 1969-1976*, vol.I: Doc.120, Memorandum for the President's File, pp.411-13. See also Ernest Conine, "U.S.-Europe Foreign Policy Elite Jittery Over Public Opinion", *Los Angeles Times*, 5 January 1973, p.D11.

787 Jussi Hanhimäki has written, "In Europe, all leading politicians and newspapers expressed horror at the sudden U.S. escalation of violence." Hanhimäki, *Flawed Architect*, p.254.

788 Nixon announced at a press conference on 31 January that the problems of Europe would "be put on the front burner," in the coming year. Quoted in Dallek, *Nixon and Kissinger*, p.466. At a press conference on 23 April, Kissinger stressed the need to "articulate a clear set of objectives together with our allies... Then those allies who seek reassurance of America's commitment will find it not in verbal reaffirmations of loyalty, but in an agreed framework of purpose." Henry Kissinger, "A New Atlantic Charter", 23 April 1973, reprinted in *Survival*, vol.XV, n.4 (July/August 1973), pp.188-92. Robert Dallek

Kissinger and Le Duc Tho initialed the Paris Agreements, which provided for the end of the US involvement in Vietnam. Freed from this distraction, and with President Nixon having been successfully re-elected, the administration seemed poised to devote much needed attention to the frayed alliance.

The question amongst the European allies was, what exactly were the American's proposing in this new initiative.⁷⁸⁹ Kissinger spoke in general terms about the need to bridge differences over economics and security policy. In his discussion of difference between the US and the Europeans over security policy, Kissinger stated that:

While the Atlantic Alliance is committed to a strategy of flexible response in principle, the requirements of flexibility are complex and expensive. Flexibility by its nature requires sensitivity to new conditions and continued consultation among the allies to respond to changing circumstances. And we must give substance to the defense posture that our strategy defines. Flexible response cannot be simply a slogan wrapped around the defense structure that emerges from the lowest common denominator compromises driven by domestic considerations. It must be seen by ourselves and by potential adversaries as a credible, substantial and rational posture of defense.⁷⁹⁰

Two days after Kissinger speech, the *New York Times* carried a front page article which conveyed a clarification by White House officials that the speech was meant to signal the Nixon administration's desire to sign a major document on agreed principles with the NATO allies in the fall of 1973.⁷⁹¹

has written that the "Year of Europe" was "no more than a public relations ploy", while Jussi Hanhimäki's is more balanced, calling it "an unfortunate sound bite for a commendable initiative." See Dallek, *Nixon and Kissinger*, p.466, and Hanhimäki, *Flawed Architect*, p.275.

789 "Europe reacts to Kissinger plan: some applause, many questions", *The Christian Science Monitor*, 25 April 1973, p.1.

790 Henry Kissinger, "A New Atlantic Charter", 23 April 1973, reprinted in *Survival*, v.XV, n.4 (July/August 1973), p.190.

791 Bernard Gwertzman, "Nixon Would Sign a New 'Charter' in Europe in Fall", *New York Times*, 25 April 1973, p.1.

Conflicting currents at home and abroad undermined the attention “The Year of Europe” received, however. President Nixon’s own attention, however, became increasingly pre-occupied over the course of 1973 with the emerging Watergate scandal. The scandal would of course eventually drive him from the presidency, leading to his resignation on 9 August 1974. As the President’s attention was diverted to defending his political position at home, Henry Kissinger increasingly played an important role in directing US foreign policy. But Kissinger’s own attention remained focused on major initiatives with the Soviets, Chinese, and the brewing tensions in the Middle East. Renewed pressure in the US Senate for troop withdrawals increased European wariness of US intentions. The October 1973 Yom Kippur War sharply exposed differences in the transatlantic relationship. Because of their dependence on Middle Eastern oil, the West Europeans could not afford to alienate Arab opinion by supporting Israel. When the United States acceded to Israel’s request to provide emergency arms, the Western European allies provided no assistance, much to the annoyance of the Nixon administration. Nixon and Kissinger’s decision to move US forces worldwide to heightened alert during the crisis further aroused the NATO allies, who were not consulted before the alert was initiated. By the fall of 1973 little had come of the proclaimed new policy initiative to improve transatlantic relations.

While the President and newly installed Secretary of State Kissinger were privately piqued with their European allies by year’s end, the Department of Defense was refocusing its attention on the NATO alliance. This was particularly the case for the US Army. In the wake of the painful withdrawal from Vietnam, the US Army turned its full

attention back to the potential European battlefield. This was both out of concern that NATO responsibilities (and the Soviet threat) had been neglected because of Vietnam, and because the post-Vietnam Army was an institution badly in search of focus. The challenge of preparing to meet the Warsaw Pact on the plains of Central Europe proved to be the perfect confluence of these two trends. James Schlesinger, who became Nixon's third Secretary of Defense in the July 1973, proved to be a strong advocate of the renewed engagement with Europe. He continued as Secretary of Defense under President Ford until leaving office over policy differences with Ford in November 1975.⁷⁹²

Schlesinger held a PhD in Economics from the University of Virginia; had worked at the RAND Corporation between 1963 and 1969; and served in the Nixon administration in the Bureau of Budget, on the Atomic Energy Commission, and briefly in the spring of 1973 as director of the Central Intelligence Agency.⁷⁹³

Schlesinger laid out his thinking about NATO's defense to his fellow NATO defense ministers before he was even confirmed.⁷⁹⁴ At a meeting of the NATO Defense

792 Melvin Laird, Nixon's first Secretary of Defense, had agreed to serve a maximum of four years. He was replaced in January 1973 by Eliot Richardson. Richardson served a mere four months as Secretary of Defense, before President Nixon asked him to become Attorney General. The rapid changeover between late 1972 and mid-1973 probably marginalized the Department of Defense to some extent in administration councils prior to Schlesinger's appointment. Roger R. Trask and Alfred R. Goldberg, *The Department of Defense 1947-1997: Organization and Leaders* (Washington, DC: Historical Office, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1997), p.90.

793 Ibid., p.91.

794 Schlesinger quickly became well-known for the promulgation of a new US strategic nuclear doctrine. Though referred to as the Schlesinger Doctrine, its antecedents predated Schlesinger's term as Secretary of Defense. Nuclear strategy had been under ongoing review in Kissinger's NSC staff, and the doctrine to which Schlesinger's name was attached was largely developed before he took office. The new doctrine was essentially a publicization of the flexibility in strategic nuclear targeting that civilian authorities had sought since Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara had first flirted with the "no cities" doctrine in 1961-62. On Schlesinger's role in publicizing a new strategic doctrine, see Terriff, *The Nixon Administration and the Making of U.S. Nuclear Strategy*, pp.187-91. For the best recent study, see William Burr, "The Nixon Administration, the 'Horror Strategy,' and the Search for Limited Nuclear Options, 1969-1972",

Planning Committee in June 1973, Secretary of Defense (designate) Schlesinger admonished his colleagues that NATO needed to improve its “doctrines for the tactical use of nuclear weapons.” These tactical nuclear weapons were to “serve both as a direct deterrent to a nuclear attack by the Pact and as a serious hedge against a major breakdown in our conventional defenses.”⁷⁹⁵ As for conventional forces, Schlesinger-resurrecting the argument that Robert McNamara had made in his Economic Club speech in November 1963-stated, “There is no inherent reason why the Pact should have conventional superiority over NATO. Nor is there any reason to believe that such advantages as the Pact presently poses are insurmountable.”⁷⁹⁶ He went on to point out that NATO, irrespective of manpower costs, was spending more than the Pact on its deployed forces. This seemed to imply that NATO had the resources for “a powerful non-nuclear defense at M-day” despite quantitative inferiority in tanks and mechanized vehicles.⁷⁹⁷ Throughout his tenure as Secretary of Defense, Schlesinger advocated increased defense budgets and improvements in US strategic and general purpose forces. This emphasis on conventional force defense resonated well in the United States Army, which used the reorientation towards Europe to refocus itself as an institution in the years

Journal of Cold War Studies, vol.7 (Summer 2005), pp.34-78. The new doctrine, outlined in NSDM 242, was approved by President Nixon on 17 January 1974. Nixon Library (Online), NSDM 242: Policy for Planning the Employment of Nuclear Weapons, 17 January 1974. Available at <http://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/nationalsecuritymemoranda.php>.

795 Principal Remarks by Secretary of Defense-Designate James R. Schlesinger at NATO Defense Planning Committee Ministerial Meeting, Brussels, 7 June 1973, p.4. DOD FOIA available online at <http://www.dod.mil/pubs/foi/nato/>.

796 Ibid., p.5.

797 Ibid.

after Vietnam.⁷⁹⁸ Indeed, the US military generally turned its attention back to Europe and the challenge of a potential conflict with the Warsaw Pact. For the remainder of the 1970s and 1980s, this challenge once again became the dominant motif in US defense planning.

Theater Nuclear Force Modernization Debate in the Carter-Reagan Era

From the end of 1979 through 1983 a spirited public debate raged within the West European NATO countries over the deployment of U.S. long-range theater nuclear forces (LRNTF) as counterweight to the Soviet SS-20 missile system. While in fact the original NATO decision to deploy the missiles had less to do with the SS-20 *per se* than with the vagaries of alliance politics, as will be seen below, the public debate in the West focused on the need to counter this Soviet weapon system.

The SS-20 was an intermediate range ballistic missile with a three warhead MIRV capacity on a mobile launcher.⁷⁹⁹ This platform was a modernization of the earlier SS-4 (a MRBM) and SS-5 (an IRBM) which had been deployed around the Eurasian periphery in the 1950s and 1960s. All three systems were meant to serve as counterweights to the United States' forward base nuclear capability, giving the Soviet Union the ability to threaten both bomber bases and ballistic missile submarine basis. The SS-20 was a considerable qualitative leap over the earlier SS-4s and SS-5s with improved targeting navigation and mobility. The first SS-20 deployment sites were begun in 1976, and by

798 Richard Lock-Pullan, "'An Inward Looking Time': The United States Army, 1973-1976", *The Journal of Military History*, v.67, n.2 (April 2003), p.486.

799 For an extended discussion of the development and doctrine behind Soviet theater nuclear forces, see Raymond L. Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan*, rev. edn. (Washington, D. C.: Brookings Institution, 1994), pp.958-969.

the following year two complexes were operational.⁸⁰⁰ The deployment was not meant primarily to gain political advantage, though this was to be the Western perception initially. Raymond Garthoff argued that there was a “compelling military-technical rationale for the SS-20 deployment.” Once the system was in place, the Soviets were not easily compelled to abandon an advantage gained.⁸⁰¹

In October 1977 a NATO ministerial conference of its Nuclear Planning Group formed a task force to study the implications of NATO modernizing tactical nuclear forces in Europe. There was little desire within the Carter administration to push tactical nuclear modernization in 1977. However, several of America’s NATO partners, concerned that the strategic nuclear parity implied in the ongoing SALT II negotiations would trade American security for West Europe’s, began to push for a strengthened tactical nuclear posture to help compensate for both the conventional force imbalance between NATO and the Warsaw Pact and the fear that SALT II would eliminate the nuclear “umbrella” under which Western Europe become accustomed.⁸⁰² One of the leading advocates of tactical nuclear force modernization in Europe was Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, who was worried that the Carter administration, in its eagerness to work a deal with the Soviets, was neglecting the potential political blackmail that the Soviets would have over the West Germans if the SS-20 missile system was not countered.⁸⁰³ In April 1978, NATO relations ebbed when the Carter administration, after canvassing its

800 Ibid., p.964.

801 Ibid., p.965.

802 Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation*, p.940.

803 Jeffrey Herf, *War By Other Means: Soviet Power, West German Resistance, and the Battle of the Euromissiles* (New York: The Free Press, 1991), p.54.

NATO allies to help support development of an enhanced radiation weapon, popularly known as the neutron bomb, publicly announced its decision to cancel the program.⁸⁰⁴

Raymond Garthoff argued that the Carter administration's decision to undertake a modernization of NATO's long range tactical nuclear forces was decided upon not to counter the Soviet deployment of the SS-20, but instead to placate NATO alliance members. The aim was to boost confidence in the Carter administration's leadership, which had been shaken by the decision to cancel development of the neutron bomb.⁸⁰⁵

At a NATO summit held in Guadeloupe in January 1979, attended by President Carter, Prime Minister Callaghan of Britain, President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing of France, and Chancellor Schmidt of Germany, it was decided that NATO would push ahead with the development and deployment of a new LRTNF. The European consensus was that the system should be based on a ground-launched cruise missile (GLCM). Carter agreed to the project on the basis that there was plenty of support from the European governments themselves, so the United States would not take the heat alone. This was particularly important in the wake of the hostile public reaction that the enhanced radiation weapon ("neutron bomb") had received in many quarters. And in order not to appear overly confrontational, a "two-tracked" policy was arrived at, where the United States would continue to seek an agreement with the Soviets which would contemplate halting deployment of the LRTNF in return for Soviet withdrawal of the SS-20s, while at the

804 For the appraisal by Carter's Secretary of State of the damage this issue caused, see Cyrus Vance, *Hard Choices: Critical Years in America's Foreign Policy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), pp.67-69, 92-97. Also see Herf, *War By Other Means*, p.62.

805 Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation*, p.945.

same time proceeding with the development and deployment of the LRTNF as a counterweight to the SS-20s.⁸⁰⁶

While the “two-track” or “dual-track” negotiating strategy was getting under way, the NATO committee charged with developing the deployment plan had settled on a mixed force of Pershing II tactical missiles and GLCMs by the spring of 1979. The Pershing II was chosen because it could replace 108 existing Pershing IA launchers that were already set up in West Germany. Along with the 108 Pershing II missiles, 464 GLCMs (which were deployed in “flights” of sixteen) were planned for deployment as well.⁸⁰⁷ But when it became necessary for the continental West European governments to secure legislative approval in October, several of the leaders began to quibble, suggesting that more attention be given to negotiating with the Soviets before deployment decisions were made. However, sufficient consensus was achieved at the governmental level that the North Atlantic Council was able to announce its unanimous support for the “two-track” policy on 12 December 1979.⁸⁰⁸

But the North Atlantic Council decision, far from marking the end of the debate on the issue in the West, marked the beginning of a far more public, and far more vociferous debate over the deployment of LRTNF in Western Europe. This debate was to become known as the battle of the Euromissiles. It took place on two levels. On the one hand, it became a contentious issue in the arms control negotiations between the

806 Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation*, p.947. Also see Margaret Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years* (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), pp.240-41.

807 Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation*, pp.948-49.

808 Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation*, pp.952-3, and Herf, *War By Other Means*, p.113.

United States and the Soviets⁸⁰⁹, both of who found it difficult to agree to the terms of the debate. But the debate also became a domestic fight in many of the NATO countries of Western Europe, in which the radical left saw the deployment of the LRTNF as an American attempt to destabilize the Cold War through aggressive new force posturing, while much of the conservative end of the spectrum saw the missiles as a necessary counterbalance to the Soviet SS-20s. Ultimately those favoring deployment carried the day. This was particularly the case in Germany where Helmut Kohl's Christian Democratic Union ran on a platform that explicitly endorsed the deployment of the American LRTNF in Germany. The election of 6 March 1983 resulted in the defeat of the anti-missile party (the Social Democrats) and demonstrated the willingness of the West German electorate to push on with deployment.⁸¹⁰ The Euromissile debate proved to be the last phase of the NATO strategy debate during the Cold War. In 1987 the Intermediate Nuclear Force Treaty began the process of eliminating these weapons from the European theater. Within four years the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union would pass from history, and NATO would embark on a new discussion of its proper role in the post-Cold War world.

* * *

In April 1949, the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty brought into existence what has proven to be the longest-running multilateral alliance in history. Until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, NATO protected the interests of a community of

809 On failed preliminary talks on TNF at Geneva in the fall of 1980, Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation*, p.956.

810 Herf, *War By Other Means*, p.174.

states who often had divergent perceptions of the world around them. They were united, however, in their perceived need to contain Soviet expansion on the European continent and, having checked that expansion, to maintain a degree of solidarity that would deter Soviet aggression in the future. The NATO alliance became a fundamental feature of the Cold War order; a key to the security architecture of a continent which had been drawn into nearly cataclysmic conflagrations twice before in the twentieth century. During the first two decades of the Cold War, Western statesmen and military leaders struggled to determine the proper strategic outlook for the alliance. This process often led to intense debates about the nature of nuclear deterrence, the importance of conventional forces in the nuclear age, the proper balance between member contributions to the common defense, and the nature of Alliance responses to Soviet actions.

In 1952, the NATO alliance agreed to the Lisbon force goals, which ostensibly would have provided the capability for a conventional defense of Europe against large-scale Soviet aggression. These goals were never met. Over twenty-five years ago, Samuel Wells, Jr. pointed out that the Truman administration's post-Korean War buildup was not simply premised on a dramatic expansion of conventional forces, but, "just as important, it poured money as a furious rate into the improvement of American strategic nuclear forces."⁸¹¹ More recently, Andrew Johnston's recent analysis strongly suggests that these force goals were primarily a mask for American and British strategic cultures, which relied on peripheral approaches to alliance engagement. In the case of NATO in the nuclear age, this meant that both nations veered away from extensive commitments of

811 Samuel F. Wells, Jr., "The Origins of Massive Retaliation," *Political Science Quarterly*, v.96, no.1 (Spring 1981), pp.49-50.

ground forces, and instead preferred to contribute strategic airpower, and, to a lesser degree, naval power. While the United States and Britain may have shared a preference for strategic airpower, it is also true that the articulation of the Lisbon force goals, whatever their original intent, became a default position for NATO's military authorities.⁸¹²

Despite repeated attempts to generate new approaches to force planning, it proved difficult to get the military planners to develop force levels that differed dramatically from the Lisbon force goals for standing forces. In May 1956, a year-and-a-half after the adoption of MC 48 supposedly codified massive retaliation in NATO strategy, US CJS Arthur Radford pointed out that SACEUR Gruenther was "still basing his recommendations on the Lisbon goals."⁸¹³ The resilience is explained in part from the tendency of military planners to favor estimates based on Soviet capabilities, rather than intentions. On the one hand, military planners could always legitimately argue that gauging Soviet intentions was more of a political than strictly military affair. In addition, Soviet intentions proved just erratic enough—Hungary (1956), Czechoslovakia (1968), and Afghanistan (1979) provided NATO military authorities with the evidence—to justify military planning based on capabilities alone. Reflecting an outlook common in the Cold War Western military, Colin Powell has written, "In the past, determining what we needed militarily had been easy. Lay out the Soviet threat and come up with whatever

812 This is not to say that the Lisbon goals were not reduced, which of course they were.

813 DDEL, DDEP (Ann Whitman File), NSC, Box 7, 285th Meeting of the NSC, 17 May 1956, p.17. That Gruenther was doing so is perhaps all the more notable given that President Eisenhower had probably promoted General Ridgway up to Army Chief of Staff in 1953 in part to put his friend and confidant Gruenther in a position to guide NATO planning in ways more conducive to Eisenhower's own thinking. That said, Eisenhower himself was rethinking his approach to nuclear weapons and their role as weapons or deterrents in the period from 1953 to 1957.

was required to meet it.”⁸¹⁴ Aside from Robert McNamara’s attempt in 1963-64 to revise the estimates of Soviet forces downward, belief in Soviet conventional superiority remained remarkably entrenched. It should also be remembered that McNamara was trying to use the reduced estimates not to suggest that NATO force goals should be lowered, but rather that NATO had a reasonable chance of creating a viable conventional option if existing force goals were met. Thus, McNamara’s use of the reduced estimates was an attempt to make the strategy of flexible response more conducive to the other members of the alliance.

There was a strong interest in both Britain and the United States to move towards a more radical interpretation of the “new look.”⁸¹⁵ The object in this case was to revise NATO force goals downward in order to allow both countries to recall their legions from NATO’s continental commitment. This would have allowed both the United States and Britain to achieve greater economies in defense spending and retain their forces for greater Cold War flexibility. This attempt, however, foundered on West German and continental concern that both countries were trying to renege on those commitments. President Eisenhower was concerned about the potential political split with the NATO allies, which might encourage the continental allies to drift towards neutralism. These concerns prompted Eisenhower to put this second “new look” at NATO strategy more or less on permanent hold for the remainder of his administration, but it does appear, however, that he encouraged General Maxwell Taylor, then Army Chief of Staff, to pursue the reorganization of the US Army’s divisions along the Pentomic design. This

814 Colin Powell, *My American Journey*, with Joseph Persico (New York: Random House, 1995), p.451.

815 This is especially true from 1956-57.

allowed Eisenhower to considerably reduce US personnel in Europe, while ostensibly maintaining units with equivalent, or greater given their dependence on tactical nuclear weapons, firepower.

During the next two administrations, the United States pressed its NATO allies to adopt flexible response as a means of breaking out of the perceived impasse over strategy that developed in the final years of the Eisenhower administration. While Kennedy seized on flexible response in order to appear to have a dynamic new approach to the Cold War (in the same way the Eisenhower's "new look" was intended to demonstrate a break from the failed containment policies of the Truman administration), flexible response was ill-attuned to the sensibilities of America's NATO allies. Though massive retaliation certainly lost its traction, especially after Sputnik, and no longer served as reassuring public diplomacy to concerned West European populations, West European leaders were not uncomfortable with the premise of extended deterrence as the basis for their security. This is a fact easily obscured by the considerable debate over the need for a NATO MRBM force and the often-colorful challenge presented by De Gaulle's alternatives to American leadership in Europe. After Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara moved away from his flirtation with the nuclear counterforce strategy, flexible response in NATO was essentially reduced to the timeworn exhortation for the Europeans to improve their conventional forces. This argument never won many European allies over. As a result, when NATO adopted flexible response as the official strategy in 1967-68, it essentially served only as a declaratory policy, bringing little real change in the alliance's defense posture. Indeed, even the United States government,

which maintained an almost perverse attachment to flexible response despite the views of its allies, found itself hard-pressed to give any real meaning to the new strategy until after its entanglement in Southeast Asia came to an end in 1975.

Throughout the first twenty years of the Alliance, inter-alliance debates over strategy ranged back and forth across the Atlantic. When NATO finally settled on flexible response as its strategy in 1968, it nominally adopted a containment strategy that had enjoyed widespread acceptance within the US government for nearly a decade. Yet the strategy as adopted was in many ways an ambivalent compromise that did little to solve the essential strategic dilemma that NATO never fully resolved. To various degrees, none of America's European NATO allies or Canada ever fully accepted the need for a strategy of flexible response before 1968. It was only in the decades after the adoption of flexible response that NATO found justification for that strategy. This occurred due to a confluence of factors. These including a renewed interests in NATO's flanks; Britain's decision to focus its military establishment toward European defense once commitments "East of Suez" were wound down; the US Army's shift towards an exclusively European focus after the end of US involvement in the Vietnam War; and the articulation by the US Navy of the Maritime Strategy, especially once it was embraced by the Reagan administration in the 1980s. Almost all of this, however, came after the adoption of flexible response.

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Appendix I: A Note on NATO Organization

The basic initial structure of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was largely the result of a series of Working Group initiatives given substance by the North Atlantic Council in three meetings between August 1949 and January 1950.⁸¹⁶ Article 9 of the North Atlantic Treaty created a council, known as the North Atlantic Council (NAC), in which each constituent member was represented and had a single vote. Typically at NAC meetings, member states are represented by their foreign ministers or their designated deputies. Eventually a NAC in permanent session, presided over by the NATO Secretary General, was created where members were represented by their ambassadors who were assigned to NATO headquarters. Subsequently, ministerial meetings were held biannually. In addition, ministerial meetings of defense ministers, referred to as the North Atlantic Defense Committee, were also held from time to time, though less frequently than the NAC ministerial meetings.

Before NATO's formal mechanisms were fully developed, the North Atlantic Council made use of five Regional Planning Groups (RPG) to develop plans and force goals. These included the Western European RPG, the Northern European RPG, the Southern European/Mediterranean RPG, the North Atlantic RPG, and the Canada-United States RPG. Initially US participation was carefully proscribed by the formula of "participation as appropriate", by which the JCS sought to "protect thoroughly U.S.

⁸¹⁶ The basic structure is laid out in NSC 57, "Organization of the Atlantic Pact", 13 September 1949, discussed at the 45th Meeting of the NSC, 15 September 1949. HSTL, President's Secretary's Files, Box 178. Printed as 'Report of the Working Group on Organization, to the North Atlantic Council', *FRUS 1949*, vol.IV, pp.330-37.

interests”.⁸¹⁷ This position of limited membership caused concern amongst allies, who felt-appropriately enough-that it represented rather limited US commitment to participating in continental defense.⁸¹⁸ In addition, the force goals that were drawn up generally lacked coherence, and tended to be wish lists assembled by the respective countries. After the initial planning phase, the Regional Planning Groups would be phased out of existence. Their planning functions were then largely assumed by the major NATO commanders.

The NAC was authorized to create subsidiary bodies as it saw fit.⁸¹⁹ Under the Defense Committee a Military Committee was formed.⁸²⁰ It had one military representative from each member nation and was responsible for providing recommendations to the Defense Committee. Like the NAC, the Military Committee eventually stood in permanent session, with biannual meetings of the NATO member’s respective military chiefs of staff. Finally, a sort of executive for the Military Committee, known as the Standing Group, was formed.⁸²¹ It included France, the UK, and the US, and operated continuously in Washington.⁸²² While the Standing Group was

⁸¹⁷ *FRUS 1949*, vol.IV, Sec. of Def. Johnson to Sec. of State Acheson, 2 September 1949, pp.322-3. Louis Johnson replaced James Forrestal as Secretary of Defense in April 1949. Forrestal was hospitalized and committed suicide shortly after leaving office.

⁸¹⁸ See Bevin’s remarks to Acheson at their meeting in Washington prior to the first NAC. *FRUS 1949*, vol.IV, Memcon, 14 September 1949, pp.325-6.

⁸¹⁹ Article 9, North Atlantic Treaty, Kaplan, *United States and NATO*, p.229. A copy of the North Atlantic Treaty can be found in a number of places, for instance at the NATO website: www.nato.int.

⁸²⁰ For an instructive view of the role of the Military Committee in NATO planning, see Douglas L. Bland, *The Military Committee of the North Atlantic Alliance: A Study of Structure and Strategy* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1991).

⁸²¹ Kaplan, *United States and NATO*, pp.139-40, and Robert E. Osgood, *NATO: The Entangling Alliance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), p.46fn.

⁸²² Douglas Bland argues that inherent structural weakness in the Military Committee relations with the Standing Group allowed the latter body to usurp many of its functions and play the critical role in

technically subordinate to NATO's Military Committee, in practice it often eclipsed the Military Committee in importance. This, in turn, created tension with many of NATO's smaller members, who were always concerned that the Standing Group not become an inner-directory of NATO. After the French pulled out of NATO's military structure in 1966, the Standing Group was dissolved. Its functions were then taken over by an International Planning Team which served under the Secretary General.

Appendix II: Contingency Planning for Berlin

LIVE OAK Contingency Plans for Berlin

Land Operations

Operation FREE STYLE-Submitted in June 1960, this plan called for a company-sized probe to push towards Berlin from the British zone of the FRG.

Operation TRADE WIND-Submitted in June 1960, this plan called for a battalion-sized probe.

Operation JUNE BALL-Approved in the summer of 1961 after considerable resistance from the British COS, this called for a division-sized probe.

Operation BACK STROKE-Approved in early 1962, this called for a company-sized probe to be launched from Berlin towards the FRG.

Operation LUCKY STRIKE-Approved in early 1962, this called for a battalion-sized probe from Berlin to the FRG.

Air Operations

QBAL-The Quadripartite Berlin Airlift, essentially a repeat of the 1948-49 airlift. This plan had been on the books before LIVE OAK was formed. The US resisted associating it with LIVE OAK planning because they felt resorting to an airlift before challenging the Soviet interruption of ground access would send the wrong signal to the Soviets.

Operation JACK PINE-Approved in May 1960, it was a composite plan which called for a military airlift to maintain logistic support for the Berlin garrison, provided for the evacuation of Allied non-combatants, and prepared for military airlift to replace any cancelled civilian flights to the city.

Naval Countermeasures

DEEP SEA was formed in December 1962 and reported directly to the Quadripartite Washington Ambassadorial Group. It was not subordinate to LIVE OAK.

NATO Contingency Plans for Berlin⁸²³

Phase 1: The initial phase in which operations would be of a reconnaissance nature to determine whether the Russians were really serious and intended to block air and/or ground access by military actions.

Phase 2: A pause, assuming we had the choice, in which we would take such political action as going to the United Nations, strong economic counter-measures and possible blockade of some kind; and to prepare for further military operations by reinforcing tripartite forces and taking appropriate NATO alert measures.

Phase 3: Stronger military measures, assuming that the first two phases had not led to the re-opening of access.

Phase 4: Nuclear action.

BERCONS

BERCON ALPHA 1-A large-scale fighter escort operation in a Berlin corridor.

BERCON ALPHA 2-A conventional battle for air superiority over East Berlin.

BERCON BRAVO-NATO air operation using five low-yield, air burst nuclear weapons against selected targets with the object of demonstrating the Western will to use nuclear weapons.

BERCON CHARLIE 1-Reinforced division attack along the axis of Helmstedt-Berlin.

BERCON CHARLIE 2-Two division attack in front of the Kassel area.

BERCON CHARLIE 3-Three division attack from Helmstedt along the line of the Mittelland Canal to the Elbe River.

BERCON CHARLIE 4-Three division attack from the Thuringer Wald.

BERCON DELTA

MARCONS-Maritime Contingency Plans

⁸²³ BNA, DEFE 5/123, COS(62)39.

Appendix III: NATO Meetings, 1949-1970

1949

17 September 1949, 1st NAC, Washington⁸²⁴

Final Communiqué of the North Atlantic Council

Chairman: Mr. Acheson, Secretary of State of the USA

The Council agrees its terms of reference and organization. It creates a Defence Committee, a Military Committee and Military Standing Group as well as five Regional Planning Groups.

5 October 1949, 1st Session of NATO Defense Committee⁸²⁵

6 Oct 1949, MC/CS 1

[Held in Washington, DC, and Chaired by General Bradley]

18 November 1949, NAC, Washington⁸²⁶

Final Communiqué of the North Atlantic Council

Chairman: Mr. Acheson

The Council establishes a Defence Financial and Economic Committee and a Military Production and Supply Board.

29 Nov 1949, MC/CS 2⁸²⁷

[No agenda given] Strategic Concept for the Defense of the North Atlantic Area (MC 3/1, 3/2); Review of Progress of Planning of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (MC 5); Report of Meetings of Regional Planning Groups; General Report of Actions of the Standing Group.

1 Dec 1949

Defense Committee issued **DC 6/1, 'The Strategic Concept for the Defense of the North Atlantic Area'**, the first strategic concept to be issued with ministerial authority. The new strategic concept was approved by the North Atlantic Council on 6 January 1950.⁸²⁸

⁸²⁴ *FRUS 1949*, vol.IV, pp.329-37.

⁸²⁵ *DCER*, v.15, Doc.386.

⁸²⁶ *FRUS 1949*, vol.IV, p.352.

⁸²⁷ British National Archives [hereafter BNA], DEFE 6/11, JP(49)150.

⁸²⁸ On the history of NATO strategic plans, see "The Evolution of NATO Strategy 1949-1969", Gregory W. Pedlow in *NATO Strategy Documents 1949-1969*, www.nato.int/archives/strategy.htm. DC 6/1 is also printed in *FRUS 1949*, vol.IV, pp.352-56.

1950

6 January 1950, NAC, Washington⁸²⁹

Final Communiqué of the North Atlantic Council

Chairman: Mr. Acheson

The Defence Committee's recommendations regarding the strategic concept approved.

28 March 1950, MC/CS 3

[No agenda given] Approval of Strategic Guidance to Regional Groups; Progress on Defense Planning (MC 5/1); NATO Medium Term Defense Plan and Comments There-on

Approval of MC 14, 'Strategic Guidance for North Atlantic Regional Planning'.

1 April 1950

Defense Committee approved and issued SG 13/16 as **DC 13, 'North Atlantic Treaty Organization Medium Term Plan'**. "The adoption of DC 13 on 1 April 1950...marked the end of the initial formulation of NATO's strategy. This strategy was contained in three basic documents: DC 6/1, which set forth the overall strategic concept; MC 14, which provided more specific strategic guidance for use in defence planning; and DC 13, which included both of these aspects as well as considerable detailed regional planning."⁸³⁰

15-18 May 1950, NAC, London⁸³¹

Final Communiqué of the North Atlantic Council

Chairman: Mr. Acheson

The Defence Committee's recommendations regarding the strategic concept approved.

16-18 September 1950, NAC, New York⁸³²

Final Communiqué of the North Atlantic Council

Chairman: Mr. Acheson

Integrated military force to be set up under centralized command The Federal Republic of Germany to contribute to defence of Western Europe.

⁸²⁹ *FRUS 1949*, vol.IV, pp.365-66; NARA, RG 59, S/ISA Files, Lot 52-56, North Atlantic Council.

⁸³⁰ Pedlow, "The Evolution of NATO Strategy", pp.xiv-xv.

⁸³¹ *FRUS 1950*, vol.III, pp.100-25; BNA, CAB 128/17, CM(50)29, CAB 129/39, CP(50)92, and CAB 129/40, CP(50)118.

⁸³² *FRUS 1950*, vol.III, pp.308-37; BNA, CAB 129/42, CP(50)220-CP(50)223.

1950 (Cont.)

26 September 1950, NAC, New York⁸³³

Final Communiqué of the North Atlantic Council

Chairman: Mr. Acheson

Integrated military force to be set up under centralized command-- The Federal Republic of Germany to contribute to defence of Western Europe.

24 Oct 1950, MC/CS 4

[No agenda given] Report on Progress of Planning (MC 5/2); Report on Regional Short Term Plans (MC 23); Report on Revised Medium Term Plans (MC 26); Guidance on Collective Balancing of Forces.

18-19 December 1950, NAC, Brussels⁸³⁴

Final Communiqué of the North Atlantic Council

Chairman: Mr. P. van Zeeland, Foreign Minister of Belgium

Council appoints General Eisenhower to be SACEUR - Approves creation of a Defence Production Board - Invites the three Occupying Powers to explore with the German Federal Government Germany's participation in defence.

1951

January 1951

General Dwight D. Eisenhower becomes SACEUR.⁸³⁵ Retired in May 1952.

15-20 September 1951, NAC, Ottawa⁸³⁶

Final Communiqué of the North Atlantic Council

Chairman: Mr. P. van Zeeland

For the first time Foreign, Defence and Economic/ Finance Ministers meet in the Council - Temporary Council Committee (TCC) and a Ministerial Committee on the Atlantic Community created - Infrastructure programme agreed.

⁸³³ *FRUS 1950*, vol.III, pp.348-52.

⁸³⁴ BNA, CAB 129/44, CP(51)1.

⁸³⁵ SACEUR's Tour of NATO Capitals, *FRUS 1951*, vol.III, pt.1, pp.392-459. See also Thomas M. Sisk, "Forging the Weapon: Eisenhower as NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe, 1950-1952", in *Eisenhower: A Centenary Assessment*, ed. by Günter Bischof and Stephen E. Ambrose (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana University Press, 1995), pp.64-83.

⁸³⁶ *FRUS 1951*, vol.III, pt.1, pp.616-92; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files (1949-1972) Box 13; BNA, CAB 129/47, CP(51)239, CP(51)251, and CP(51)266.

August 1951

Admiral Lynde McCormick becomes SACLANT. Retired in April 1954.

20 Nov 1951, MC/CS 5

[No agenda given] Military Progress of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (MC 5/3); Progress Report on Command Arrangements for the Mediterranean and Middle East.

-British COS Brief: JP(51)189, DEFE 6/19, BNA

24-28 November 1951, NAC, Rome⁸³⁷

Final Communiqué of the North Atlantic Council

Chairman: Mr. L.B. Pearson, Secretary for External Affairs, Canada

Greece and Turkey invited to adhere to the North Atlantic Treaty TCC and North Atlantic Community Committee both present interim reports - Relations between the proposed European Defence Community and NATO to be examined.

1952

11 Feb 1952, MC/CS 6⁸³⁸

Military Progress Report (MC 5/4); Report on the Military Effectiveness of Arrangements Proposed by the Paris Conference (MC 40); Standardization of Small Arms Ammunition; Command Arrangements in the Mediterranean/Middle East; Revision of the Terms of Reference of the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (MC 22/12).

20-25 February 1952, NAC, Lisbon⁸³⁹

Final Communiqué of the North Atlantic Council

Chairman: Mr. L.B. Pearson

Accession of Greece and Turkey - Proposed European Defence Community - TCC recommendations adopted - Infrastructure- Military terms of reference revised - Adaptation of NATO's organization by appointment of a Secretary General heading a unified international secretariat and establishment of the North Atlantic Council in permanent session in Paris - Atlantic Community Committee's report adopted.

-British COS Brief: JP(52)13, DEFE 6/120 and COS(52)100, DEFE 5/37, BNA.

August 1952

⁸³⁷ *FRUS 1951*, vol.III, pt.1, pp.693-754; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files (1949-1972), Box 14; BNA, CAB 129/49, CP(52)2.

⁸³⁸ BNA, DEFE 5/37, COS(52)100.

⁸³⁹ *FRUS 1952-1954*, vol.V, pp.111-98; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files (1949-1972), Boxes 15-16.

General Matthew B. Ridgway becomes SACEUR. Transferred in July 1953.

9 Dec 1952, MC/CS 7⁸⁴⁰

Military Progress of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Report on NATO Exercises; Standardization of Small Arms Ammunition; Strategic Guidance; Estimate of the Strength and Capabilities of the Soviet Bloc from Now through 1954; Military Estimate of the Risk; Defensive Arming of Merchant Shipping -British COS Briefs: COS(52)660 & COS(52)661, DEFE 5/43, BNA.

15-18 December 1952, NAC, Paris⁸⁴¹

Final Communiqué of the North Atlantic Council

Chairman: Mr. O.B. Kraft, Foreign Minister of Denmark.

Secretary General's Report - Military Committee's Report - Annual Review and Infrastructure - Resolutions approved on economic cooperation, on Indo-China and on the proposed European Defence Community.

1953

18 April 1953, MC/CS 8

Military Review of the 1952 Annual Review; Future Infrastructure Planning; 1953 Annual review; Military Progress of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Report 5); Revised NATO Force Requirements as of 31 December 1954; Estimate of the Military Risk.

23-25 April 1953, NAC, Paris⁸⁴²

Final Communiqué of the North Atlantic Council

Chairman: Lord Ismay, Secretary General of NATO.

Adoption of short- and long-term goals for NATO forces and of a three-year cost-sharing formula for infrastructure - Correlation of production programs - Exchange of views on political subjects - Collective defence policy reaffirmed.

July 1953

General Alfred M. Gruenther becomes SACEUR. Retired in November 1956.

9 Dec 1953, MC/CS 9⁸⁴³

⁸⁴⁰ BNA, DEFE 5/43, COS(52)660 & COS(52)661.

⁸⁴¹ NARA, RG 59, Conference Files (1949-1972), Box 19.

⁸⁴² NARA, RG 59, Conference Files (1949-1972), Boxes 22-23; DDEL, DDE, NSC, Box 4, 141st NSC Meeting, 29 April 1953.

⁸⁴³ BNA, DEFE 6/24, JP(53)137.

Military Comments on the 1953 Annual Review; Guidance for the 1954 Annual Review; Military Progress Report for the December 1953 Meeting; NATO Force Requirement as of 31 December 1956; Estimate of the Military Risk; NATO Exercises, 1953.

14-16 December 1953, NAC, Paris⁸⁴⁴

Final Communiqué of the North Atlantic Council

Chairman: Mr. G. Bidault, Foreign Minister of France.

Exchange of views on political matters - Long-term defence plans and improvement of quality of NATO defence forces - provision of latest weapons to support defence system - Co-ordination of national civil defense plans.
-US Review.⁸⁴⁵

1954

February 1954

Admiral Jerauld Wright becomes SACLANT.⁸⁴⁶ Retired in February 1960.

23 April 1954, NAC, Paris⁸⁴⁷

Final Communiqué of the North Atlantic Council

Chairman: Mr. G. Bidault.

Reaffirmation of the Alliance's goals and of its position regarding the proposed European Defence Community - Approval of Resolution regarding non-recognition of the "German Democratic Republic" - IndoChina.

August 1954

French Assembly votes down the EDC.

22 October 1954, NAC, Paris⁸⁴⁸

Final Communiqué

Chairman: Mr. S. Stephanopoulos, Foreign Minister of Greece.

Signing of the Paris Agreements - The Council endorses the decisions taken at the London and Paris Conferences and invites the Federal Republic of Germany to join NATO.

⁸⁴⁴ NARA, RG 59, Conference Files (1949-1972), Box 26.

⁸⁴⁵ DDEL, DDE, NSC, Box 5, 177th NSC Meeting, 24 December 1953.

⁸⁴⁶ David M. Key, Jr. *Admiral Jerauld Wright: Warrior Among Diplomats* (Manhattan, KS: Sunflower University Press, 2001).

⁸⁴⁷ *FRUS 1952-1954*, vol. V, pp.508-22; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files (1949-1972), Boxes 37-43; *DCER*, v.20, Doc.281.

⁸⁴⁸ NARA, RG 59, Conference Files (1949-1972), Boxes 59-60.

22 Nov 1954, MC/CS 10⁸⁴⁹

Most Effective Pattern of Military Strength for the Next Few Years; Capabilities Study Allied Command Europe (ACE) 1957; Capabilities Study for Allied Command Atlantic 1957; Capabilities Study for Channel Command 1957; Coordination Among NATO Commands and Between NATO Command Forces and Forces Retained Under National Command; Progress Report on 1954 Annual Review Approval by MC of **MC 48, 'The Most Effective Pattern of NATO Military Strength for the Next Few Years'**. This document called explicitly for the use of nuclear weapons from the outset of a conflict with the Soviets, whether or not the Soviets did. Thus, it is generally seen as the incorporation of the Eisenhower administration's doctrine of 'massive retaliation' into NATO strategy. It was approved by NAC Ministerial Session on 17 December 1954.

13 Dec 1954, MC/CS 11

Military Comments on the 1954 Annual Review Report; Military Progress of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Report 7); Action Required to Implement the Council Resolution on Section IV of the Final Act of the London Conference; Presentation by SACEUR on 'The Most Effective Pattern of Military Strength for the Next Few Years.'

17-18 December 1954, NAC, Paris⁸⁵⁰

Final Communiqué

Chairman: Mr. S. Stephanopoulos.

Approves measures fully associating the Federal Republic of Germany with NATO - Trieste settlement.

1955

9-11 May 1955, NAC, Paris⁸⁵¹

Final Communiqué

Chairman: Mr. S. Stephanopoulos.

Federal Republic of Germany accedes to the Treaty - Defensive character of the Alliance - Declarations regarding Italy - Examination of international situation, including the Austrian State Treaty, the Three Power proposal to the USSR

⁸⁴⁹ BNA, DEFE 5/54, COS(54)300.

⁸⁵⁰ NARA, RG 59, Conference Files (1949-1972), Boxes 64-65; DDEL, DDE, NSC, Box 6, 229th NSC Meeting, 21 December 1954; *DCER*, v.20, Docs:377-82.

⁸⁵¹ *FRUS 1955-1957*, vol.IV, Docs. 2-8, pp.6-23; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files, 1949-1972, [Lot 60 D 627, CF 443-447]; DDEL, DDE, NSC, Box 6, 249th Meeting of the NSC; *DCER*, v.21, Docs.186-87.

regarding the settlement of outstanding issues, and the situation in the Middle and Far East.

16 July 1955, 16th NAC, Paris

Final Communiqué

Chairman: Mr. S. Stephanopoulos.

Exchange of views prior to the Four-Power Meeting at Geneva.

26 Sep 1955

MC issued **MC 48/1, 'The Most Effective Pattern of NATO Military Strength for the Next Few Years-Report No.2'**, and final approval followed at the 12th MC/CS meeting on 9 December 1955.

12 October 1955, NAC, Paris⁸⁵²

Final Communiqué

Chairman: Lord Ismay.

Defence Ministers meet to consider the Annual Review.

25 October 1955, NAC, Paris

Final Communiqué

Chairman: Mr. K Gudmundsson, Foreign Minister of Iceland.

Exchange of views prior to resumption of the Four-Power meeting at Geneva.

9 Dec 1955, MC/CS 12

Intelligence Briefing; Most Effective Pattern of NATO Military Strength for the Next Few Years (Report 2); SACEUR's 1955 Report on Future Capabilities Plans, 1957; Future Capabilities Plan 1957-Allied Command Atlantic; Future Capabilities Plan, 1957-Channel Command; Air Defense Command and Control in NATO Europe; Military Comments on the 1955 Annual Review Report; Military Progress of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Report 8)

15-16 December 1955, NAC, Paris⁸⁵³

Final Communiqué

Chairman: Mr. K. Gudmundsson.

Assessment of negative outcome of the Geneva meeting- Its effect on German reunification - Reaffirmation of the Federal German Government as sole representative of the German people - Decision to equip NATO forces with atomic weapons - Adoption of principles to strengthen European air defence.

⁸⁵² *FRUS 1955-1957*, vol.IV, Doc. 9, pp.23-26; DDEL, DDE, NSC, Box 7, 262nd NSC Meeting, 20 October 1955. *DCER*, v.21, Docs.216-18.

⁸⁵³ *FRUS 1955-1957*, vol.IV, Docs.10-16, pp.26-50; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files (1949-1972), Boxes 96-97 [Lot 60 D 627, CF 633-645]; DDEL, DDE, NSC, Box 7, 271st NSC Meeting, 22 December 1955.

1956

27 April 1956, MC/CS 13

Strategic Background to the Future NATO Common Infrastructure Program; Future NATO Common Infrastructure Program; Other Business (Submarine Repair Facilities at Bartin, Turkey).

4-5 May 1956, NAC, Paris⁸⁵⁴

Final Communiqué

Chairman: Mr. K. Gudmundsson.

Committee of Three Foreign Ministers appointed to advise the Council on ways and means to extend cooperation in non-military fields and to strengthen unity in the Atlantic community.

18-19 Oct 1956, MC/CS 14⁸⁵⁵

NATO Electronic Warfare Policy; Overall Organization of the Integrated NATO Forces; Division of Responsibility in Wartime Between the National Territorial Commanders and the Major and Subordinate NATO Commanders; Overall Strategic Concept for the Defense of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (MC 14/2); Supreme Commanders' Pattern of Forces Studies; Higher NATO Military Structure.

November 1956

General Lauris Norstad (USAF) becomes SACEUR. Retired in November 1962.

5-6 Dec 1956, MC/CS 15

Intelligence Briefing; Allied Command Europe Counter-Surprise Military Alert System; Military Posture of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Military Progress of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Report 9); Political Directive to the NATO Military Authorities; Supreme Commanders' Pattern of Forces Studies; Higher NATO Military Structure; Rules of Engagement of Unidentified Aircraft by NATO Fighters in Peacetime.

⁸⁵⁴ Docs.18-29, *FRUS 1955-1957*, vol.IV, pp.51-77; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files, 1949-1972, Boxes 104-06 [Lot 62 D 181, CF 689-708]; BNA, CAB 129/81, CP(56)142; *Documents on Canadian External Relations*, vol.22: 1956-1957, Part 1 (Ottawa: Canadian Government Publishing, 2001), pp.920-40.

⁸⁵⁵ BNA, DEFE 5/71, COS(56)377.

1956 (Cont.)

11-14 December 1956, NAC, Paris⁸⁵⁶

Final Communiqué

Chairman: Mr. G. Martino, Foreign Minister of Italy.

Committee of Three's report approved - Review of international situation including Suez and the Hungarian insurrection - Resignation of Lord Ismay and appointment of Mr. Spaak - Adoption of Resolutions on (i) peaceful settlement of disputes between NATO members and (ii) the Report of the Committee of Three.

-US Preview.⁸⁵⁷

-Directive to the NATO Military Authorities from the North Atlantic Council.⁸⁵⁸

1957

6 April 1957, MC/CS 16

Overall Strategic Concept for the Defense of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; Measures to Implement the Strategic Concept; Proposed Reductions in United Kingdom Forces; Organization of the IBERLANT Command.

2-3 May 1957, NAC, Paris⁸⁵⁹

Final Communiqué

Chairman: Mr. G. Martino and Lord Ismay.

Reaffirmation of Alliance's right to possess atomic weapons - Decision to intensify the effort to reunify Germany through free elections - Middle East Security.

-British Records.⁸⁶⁰

23 May 1957

⁸⁵⁶ *FRUS 1955-1957*, vol.IV, Docs.40-54, pp.103-65; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files, 1949-1972, Boxes 119-23 [Lot 62 D 181, CF807-828]; *Documents on Canadian External Relations*, vol.22: 1956-1957, Part 1 (Ottawa: Canadian Government Publishing, 2001), pp.1061-85.

⁸⁵⁷ DDEL, Dulles Papers, WHMS, Box 4, MemCon, 3 December 1956.

⁸⁵⁸ The Political Directive issued to the NATO Military Authorities on 13 December 1956, DDEL, Norstad Papers, Box 90, Folder: NATO General (6). It contains two parts: 1) Analysis of Soviet Intentions, and 2) The Directive. This initiated (formally) the process that lead to MC 14/2, MC 48/2, and MC 70.

⁸⁵⁹ *FRUS 1955-1957*, vol.IV, Docs.56, pp.167-69; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files: Lot 62 D 181, CF 870-886A; *Documents on Canadian External Relations*, vol.22: 1956-1957, Part 1 (Ottawa: Canadian Government Publishing, 2001), pp.1149-56.

⁸⁶⁰ BNA, PREM 11/1829B, Macmillan Cabinet Papers.

Two new strategy documents were issued; **MC 14/2, 'Overall Strategic Concept for the Defence of the NATO Area' and MC 48/2, 'Measures to Implement the Strategic Concept'**. "The most controversial issue was the documents declarations that 'in no case is there a NATO concept of limited war with the Soviets'."⁸⁶¹ [Not formally superceded until the issue of MC 14/3 in January 1968 ad MC 48/3 in December 1969].

9-10 July 1957, MC/CS 17

Higher NATO Military Structure; Minimum Force Studies; Disarmament.

11 Dec 1957, MC/CS 18⁸⁶²

Overall Organization of the Integrated NATO Forces; Oral Intelligence Briefing; Contents of the 1957 Annual Review Report; Military Progress of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Report 10); Progress Report by Standing Group on MC 70; Oral Presentation on Main Infrastructure Problems; 1958 NATO Common Infrastructure Program.

16-19 December 1957, NAC, Paris⁸⁶³

Final Communiqué

Chairman: Mr. P.H. Spaak, Secretary General of NATO.

Heads of Government meet in the Council - They issue a Declaration rededicating themselves to the principles and aims Of the Treaty and reaffirming their common position regarding the maintenance of peace and security - Reiteration of desire to engage in talks on disarmament - Decision to stock nuclear warheads in Europe and place IRBMs at the disposal of SACEUR - Decision to increase political co-operation Scientific Committee created.

1958

13-14 March 1958, MC/CS 19

Oral Presentation by United States on Missiles; Minimum Essential Force Requirements, 1958-1963; Estimate of Infrastructure Requirements for the Period 1958-1963.

14 Aril 1958, MC/CS 20⁸⁶⁴

Discussion of MC 78 and MCM-71-58; Military Planning Factors; Ministers of

⁸⁶¹ Pedlow, "The Evolution of NATO Strategy", p.xx.

⁸⁶² BNA, DEFE 6/44, JP(57)155.

⁸⁶³ *FRUS 1955-1957*, vol.IV, Docs.70-82, pp.218-59; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files: Lot 63 D 123, CF 931-953; DDEL, DDE, NSC, Box 9, 348th NSC Meeting, 12 December 1957; BNA, PREM 11/1845.

⁸⁶⁴ BNA, DEFE 6/50, JP(58)44.

Defense Conference, 15-17 April 1958.

15-17 April 1958, NAC, Paris⁸⁶⁵

Final Communiqué

Chairman: Mr. P.H. Spaak.

Defence Ministers reaffirm NATO's defensive strategy.

5-7 May 1958, NAC, Copenhagen⁸⁶⁶

Final Communiqué

Chairman: Mr. P.H. Spaak.

Alliance's activities in the context of the international situation Attention drawn to need for economic cooperation - Discussion of a possible Summit Conference -

Hope expressed for expert talks on East West disarmament.

-Dulles Address.⁸⁶⁷

25-26 Nov 1958, MC/CS 21⁸⁶⁸

Integration of Air Defense in NATO Europe; Analysis of Military Implications of the 1958 Annual Review; Naval Control of Merchant Shipping Outside the NATO Area.

11-12 Dec 1958, MC/CS 22⁸⁶⁹

Oral Presentation by SACEUR of Progress on IRBM and Special Ammunition Storage Project; Military Progress of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Report 11); Supreme Commanders' Reviews on Infrastructure; Convening Sessions of the Military Committee in Chiefs of Staff Session.

16-18 December 1958, NAC, Paris⁸⁷⁰

Final Communiqué

Chairman: Mr. P.H. Spaak.

Political Consultation to be improved by study of long term political questions - Economic questions - Defensive strategy reaffirmed.

Declaration on Berlin.

⁸⁶⁵ *FRUS 1958-1960*, vol.VII, pt.1, Docs.131-34, pp.314-319; NARA, RG 59, Central Files, 740.5/4-258, 4-1558, 4-1758, 4-2358.

⁸⁶⁶ *FRUS 1958-1960*, vol.VII, pt.1, Docs.136-50, pp.320-51; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files: Lot 63 D 123, CF 997-1017.

⁸⁶⁷ DDEL, Dulles Papers, Gerald C. Smith Series, Box 1, Folder: Smith's Files 1958 (3), Secretary's Remarks at NATO Ministerial Meeting, Copenhagen, May 5-7, 1958.

⁸⁶⁸ BNA, DEFE 5/87, COS(58)271.

⁸⁶⁹ BNA, DEFE 5/87, COS(58)292.

⁸⁷⁰ *FRUS 1958-1960*, vol.VII, pt.1, Docs.163-82, pp.366-404; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files: Lot 64 D 560, CF 1161-1179; DDEL, DDE, NSC, Box 10, 390th NSC Meeting, 11 December 1958.

1959

Early 1959

Tripartite Planning Staff (France, United Kingdom, United States) organized to prepare contingency studies for Berlin. These lead to **LIVE OAK** and BERCON plans.

2-4 April 1959, NAC, Washington⁸⁷¹

Final Communiqué

Chairman: Mr. P.H. Spaak.

Tenth anniversary of the Treaty - Four Power report on Germany Allied interdependence endorsed - Mr. Spaak calls for further impetus to work of the Alliance.

9-10 Dec 1959, MC/CS 23⁸⁷²

Military Progress of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Report 12); 1959 Yearly Infrastructure Report; 1960 NATO Common Infrastructure Program; Infrastructure Requirements During the Period 1961-1963; Military Portion of Ministerial Meeting, 15-17 December 1959.

15-22 December 1959, NAC, Paris⁸⁷³

Final Communiqué

Chairman: Mr. P.H. Spaak.

Inauguration of Porte Dauphine building - Three day examination of the state of the Alliance - General and controlled disarmament its aim - Preparation of future Summit Conference.

1960

March 1960

Admiral Robert L. Dennison becomes SACLANT. Retired in April 1963.

31 March - 1 April 1960, NAC, Paris.⁸⁷⁴

Final Communiqué

Chairman : Mr P. H. Spaak.

⁸⁷¹ *FRUS 1958-1960*, vol.VII, pt.1, Docs.208-10, pp.447-54; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files: Lot 64 D 560, CF 1228-1239; BNA, CAB 129/97, C(59)64.

⁸⁷² BNA, DEFE 5/98, COS(59)320 & COS(59)323.

⁸⁷³ *FRUS 1958-1960*, vol.VII, pt.1, Docs.234-45, pp.527-61; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files: Lot 64 D 560, CF 1549-1568; BNA, DEFE 32/13, MM 18/59.

⁸⁷⁴ *FRUS 1958-1960*, vol.VII, pt.1, Docs.252-53, pp.577-80; NARA, RG 59, Central File 396.1-PA; DDEL, DDE, NSC, Box 12, 441st NSC Meeting.

Defence Ministers examine ways to meet defence requirements.

4 April 1960, MC/CS 24⁸⁷⁵

Subjects Related to Defense Ministers Meeting (Logistics); Long Term Planning; Strategic Reserve for SACEUR; Electronics Warfare; Psychological Warfare; Liaison with CENTO.

2-4 May 1960, NAC, Istanbul⁸⁷⁶

Final Communiqué

Chairman : Mr. P. H. Spaak.

Continuation of preparation for the Summit Conference - Satisfaction with the system of continuous Allied consultation.

13-14 Dec 1960, MC/CS 25⁸⁷⁷

The Military Progress of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Report 13); 1960 Yearly Infrastructure Report; 1961 NATO Common Infrastructure Program; Logistics in Peace and War; Civil Emergency Planning; Liaison between NATO and CENTO.

16-18 December 1960, NAC, Paris⁸⁷⁸

Final Communiqué

Chairman : Mr P. H. Spaak.

Lack of progress on disarmament deplored - 1958 Berlin Declaration reaffirmed - U.S. suggestion concerning MRBM multilateral force Creation of OECD welcomed - Development of Communist economic offensive.

1961

10 April 1961, MC/CS 26⁸⁷⁹

NATO Response to Armed Action; Status Report on Defense of the Balkan Area; Status Report on the Reorganization of NATO Naval Commands; Long Term Planning; Military Aspects of Control of MRBMs and Other Tactical Nuclear Weapons in Allies Command Europe; Major Commanders' Statements on Force Requirements for End-1966.

⁸⁷⁵ BNA, DEFE 5/101, COS(60)87.

⁸⁷⁶ *FRUS 1958-1960*, vol.VII, pt.1, Docs.255-56, pp.583-90; NARA, RG 59, Conference File: Lot 64 D 559, CF 1650-1661.

⁸⁷⁷ BNA, DEFE 5/109, COS(60)352.

⁸⁷⁸ *FRUS 1958-1960*, vol.VII, pt.1, Docs.275-77, pp.668-83; NARA, RG 59, Conference File: Lot 64 D 559, CF 1802-1813.

⁸⁷⁹ BNA, DEFE 5/112, COS(61)113.

20 April 1961

US National Security Action Memorandum 40; “first priority should be given, in NATO programs for the European area, to preparing for the more likely contingencies, i.e., those short of nuclear or massive nonnuclear attack”.⁸⁸⁰

21 April 1962

Acheson meets with NAC in private session.⁸⁸¹

8-10 May 1961, NAC, Oslo⁸⁸²

Final Communiqué

Chairman : Mr. D. U. Stikker, Secretary General of NATO.

Position on Germany confirmed - Disarmament - Challenge of less developed areas of the world - Means to help Greek and Turkish development programs considered.

13-14 December 1961, NAC, Paris⁸⁸³

Final Communiqué

Chairman : Mr. D. U. Stikker.

German question, particularly Berlin following the erection of the Wall - Soviet refusal to hold talks on disarmament regretted - NATO threatens no one - Greek and Turkish development programs.

11-12 Dec 1961, MC/CS 27⁸⁸⁴

Military Activities of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; 1962 NATO Common Infrastructure Program; Force Requirements for End-1966; Defense of the Balkan Area; Relative Importance of Local Defensive Strength in Deterring Hostile Local Actions; Overall NATO Naval Command Structure and Boundaries; Progress Report on NATO Long-Term Planning.

1962

4-6 May 1962, NAC, Athens⁸⁸⁵

⁸⁸⁰ Pedlow, “The Evolution of NATO Strategy”, p.xxi.

⁸⁸¹ *FRUS 1961-1963*, vol.XIII, Doc.102, pp.295-99.

⁸⁸² *FRUS 1961-1963*, vol.XIII, pp.301-3; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files: Lot 65 D 533, CF 1855-1867.

⁸⁸³ *FRUS 1961-1963*, vol.XIII, Docs.116-20, pp.335-45; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files: Lot 65 D 366, CF 2002-2014.

⁸⁸⁴ BNA, DEFE 5/121, COS(61)477.

⁸⁸⁵ Address by Secretary of Defense McNamara at the Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, Athens, 5 May 1962, *FRUS 1961-63*, vol.VIII, Doc.82, p.276; *FRUS 1961-1963*, vol.XIII, pp.388-93; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files: Lot 65 D 533, CF 2095-2103.

Final Communiqué

Chairman : Mr. D. U. Stikker.

Disarmament - Berlin - Procedures relating to the role of nuclear weapons ("*Athens guidelines*") - U.S. commitment to NATO of Polaris submarines - Triennial review - Political, Scientific and Economic questions - Economic development of Greece and Turkey - Greece's defence problems - The Defence Ministers met separately on 3rd May, vd. paragraph 10 of the communiqué.

21 May 1962, MC/CS 28⁸⁸⁶

Oral Reports on Standing Group Projects; Overall NATO Naval Command Structure and Boundaries; NATO Long-Term Planning; Biological and Chemical Warfare.

10-11 Dec 1962, MC/CS 29⁸⁸⁷

Military Activities of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization During 1962; 1963 NATO Common Infrastructure Program; Overall NATO Naval Command Structure and Boundaries; Long Term Threat Assessment.

13-14 December 1962, NAC, Paris⁸⁸⁸

Final Communiqué

Chairman : Mr. D. U. Stikker.

Cuban missile crisis - Berlin - Political Consultation to be intensified disarmament - Triennial Review - Nuclear problems - Defence Ministers meeting on 15th December.

1963

January 1963

General Lyman Lemnitzer becomes SACEUR.⁸⁸⁹ Retired in 1969.

April 1963

Admiral Harold P. Smith becomes SACLANT. Retired in April 1965.

22-24 May 1963, NAC, Ottawa⁸⁹⁰

⁸⁸⁶ BNA, DEFE 5/126, COS(62)193 & DEFE 5/127, COS(62)218.

⁸⁸⁷ BNA, DEFE 5/132, COS(62)469.

⁸⁸⁸ Address by Secretary of Defense McNamara at the Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, Paris, 14 December 1962, *FRUS 1961-63*, vol.VIII, Doc.120, p.439; *FRUS 1961-1963*, vol.XIII, pp.454-67; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files: Lot 65 D 533, CF 2204, and Central Files: 396.1-PA/1-1063, 12-2162.

⁸⁸⁹ L. James Binder, *Lemnitzer: A Soldier for His Time* (Washington: Brassey's, 1997), pp.312-38.

Final Communiqué

Chairman : Mr. D. U. Stikker.

Berlin - Cuba - Laos - Disarmament - Political Consultation - Organization of nuclear forces assigned to SACEUR - Balance between conventional and nuclear arms - Defence problems of Greece.

21-22 June 1963, MC/CS 30⁸⁹¹

Overall NATO Naval Command Structure and Boundaries; Internal Structure; Status Report of the Standing Group for Ballistic Missiles in NATO; Appreciation of the Military Situation as it Affects NATO up to 1970; Deficiencies in NATO Maritime Forces.

Sept 1963

MC 100/1, 'Appreciation of the Military Situation as It affects NATO up to 1970'. "The document envisioned three stages of defence: an attempt to contain aggression with conventional weapons, a rapid escalation to the use of tactical nuclear weapons under certain circumstances, and a gradual use of nuclear weapons."⁸⁹²

13 Dec 1963, MC/CS 31⁸⁹³

Military Activities of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization During 1963; 1964 NATO Common Infrastructure Program; Overall NATO Naval Command Structure and Boundaries.

16-17 December 1963, NAC, Paris⁸⁹⁴

Final Communiqué

Chairman : Mr. D. U. Stikker.

President Johnson's pledge to support Alliance - Faith in the principles of the U.N. Charter - International situation reviewed - Developments in S-E Asia and the Caribbean - Questions regarding nuclear and other forces- Western economic development - Military and economic problems of Greece and Turkey - Civil emergency planning.

⁸⁹⁰ *FRUS 1961-1963*, Docs.196-200, vol.XIII, pp.575-91; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files: Lot 66 D 110, CF 2260-2263. Also RG 59, Bureau of European Affairs 1959-66, Box 2, Secretary's Remarks on NATO Defense Policy.

⁸⁹¹ BNA, DEFE 5/139, COS 214/63 & DEFE 5/140, COS 222/63.

⁸⁹² Pedlow, "The Evolution of NATO Strategy", p.xxiii.

⁸⁹³ BNA, DEFE 5/145, COS 393/63.

⁸⁹⁴ *FRUS 1961-1963*, vol.XIII, pp.639-40 (Editorial Note); NARA, RG 59, Conference Files: Lot 66 D 110, CF 2345-2346, 2354. Also see RG 59, Bureau of European Affairs, 1959-1966, Box 2, Memcon-Stikker, McNamara and Bundy, 15 December 1963.

1964

12-14 May 1964, NAC, The Hague⁸⁹⁵

Final Communiqué

Chairman : Mr. D. U. Stikker.

Annual political appraisal - Berlin and Germany - Disarmament - Military and economic problems of Greece and Turkey - Cyprus Resignation of Secretary General Stikker and appointment of Mr. Manlio Brosio.

8 June 1964, MC/CS 32⁸⁹⁶

Address by SecGen Stikker; Status Report by Standing Groups; Requirement for Ballistic Missiles in NATO; Status report by SACLANT on NATO Naval Command Structure and Boundaries; Presentations by SACEUR.

11 Dec 1964, MC/CS 33⁸⁹⁷

Infrastructure Reports; NATO Force Planning Exercise; Long Term Planning Report; Report on Requirement for Ballistic Missiles in NATO; NATO Naval Command Structure and Boundaries; Report on FALLEX 64.

15-17 December 1964, NAC, Paris⁸⁹⁸

Final Communiqué

Chairman : Mr. M. Brosio, Secretary General of NATO.

East-West relations - State Of the Alliance to be examined - Berlin and Germany - Cohesion of member states - Disarmament - Strategic questions- Military and economic problems of Greece and Turkey Cyprus "watching brief" - Civil emergency planning.

1965

April 1965

Admiral Thomas H. Moorer becomes SACLANT. Became CNO in June 1967.

11-12 May 1965, NAC, London⁸⁹⁹

⁸⁹⁵ *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol. XIII, Doc.24, pp.53-54; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files, 1949-1972, Box 349-50 [Lot 66 D 110, CF 2396].

⁸⁹⁶ BNA, DEFE 5/152, COS 171/64; -NARA, RG 59, Bureau for European Affairs, 1959-1966, Box 2, Memcon with Lt. Gen. Baron C.P. de Cumont and John McNaughton (Asst. Sec. of Defense for ISA), 9 July 1964.

⁸⁹⁷ BNA, DEFE 5/155, COS 313/64.

⁸⁹⁸ *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol. XIII, Doc.66, pp.168-69; NARA, RG 59, Conference File: Lot 66 D 110, CF 2462-2472 and Central File: DEF 4 NATO, CA-6521.

Final Communiqué

Chairman: Mr. M. Brosio.

Causes of tension - Progress of political consultation -

Situations outside the NATO area - Cyprus "watching brief" - United Nations

Disarmament - Defence Ministers to meet in June

Three-Power Declaration on Germany.

31 May - 1 June 1965, NAC, Paris⁹⁰⁰

Final Communiqué

Chairman: Mr. M. Brosio.

Defence Ministers examine studies on strategy, force requirements and resources

- Greek and Turkish defence problems - Ways to improve consultation on defence.

17 June 1965, MC/CS 34⁹⁰¹

NATO Command Structure; Proliferation of Interallied Headquarters; NATO Force Planning Exercise; Appraisal of Current Conventional War Capabilities; Mission of the Major NATO Commanders; FALLEX 66.

10 Dec 1965, MC/CS 35

Standing Group Intelligence Appreciation; Infrastructure; NATO Force Planning Exercise; Proliferation of Interallied Headquarters; Overall NATO Command Structures; FALLEX 66; FALLEX 68; Naval Element for ACE Mobile Force.

14-16 December 1965, NAC, Paris⁹⁰²

Final Communiqué

Chairman : Mr. M. Brosio.

East-West relations - Berlin and Germany - Problems outside the NATO area -

Developing countries - Disarmament and arms control - Strategic questions -

Allied Command Mobile Force - Defence assistance program for Greece and

Turkey - Cyprus "watching-brief" - Civil emergency planning.

1966

Mar 1966

Withdrawal of French from NATO integrated military command.

⁸⁹⁹ *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XIII, Doc.85, pp.209-10; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files: Lot 66 D 347, CF 2503-2512, Central Files: NATO 3 UK(LO).

⁹⁰⁰ *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XIII, Doc.87, pp.212-13; NARA, RG 59, Central Files: DEF12 NATO.

⁹⁰¹ BNA, DEFE 5/160, COS 111/65.

⁹⁰² NARA, RG 59, Conference Files: Lot 66 D 347, CF 2574-2583.

7-8 June 1966, NAC, Paris⁹⁰³

Final Communiqué

Chairman : Mr. M. Brosio.

State of the Alliance - Measures following from the French withdrawal European security and Germany - Defensive nature of the Treaty - European settlement problems - Report on East- West relations to be prepared Nuclear proliferation - Cyprus "watching brief" - Economic co-operation - Developing countries - Assistance to Greece and Turkey - Defence Ministers - Science and technology.

16 June 1966, MC/CS 36⁹⁰⁴

NATO Force Planning, 1970 Force Goals; Possible Method's for Improving Capabilities on the Flanks; Internationalization of Standing Group Intelligence Committee; Command Structure in Mediterranean/Black Sea Area; Naval Command Structure; FALLEX 68.

25 July 1966, NAC, Paris⁹⁰⁵

Final Communiqué

Chairman : Mr. M. Brosio.

Defence Ministers review progress on strategy, force requirements and resources - Balance of payment difficulties - NATO flanks - ACE Mobile Force- Five-year defence planning review.

7 Oct 1966

"On 7 October 1966 an informal session of the Military Committee reassessed the threat facing NATO and re-examined allied strategic objectives region by region. The Military Committee then called for allied flexibility of choice to meet varying contingencies."⁹⁰⁶

An informal meeting of the Chiefs of Staff was held at Norfolk on 7 October. The meeting was subsequently discussed by the Military Committee in Permanent Session (236th Meeting) on 13 October 1966.⁹⁰⁷ At the meeting of the MC in Permanent Session, the Chairman, Lt. Gen. Baron de Cumont, "invited comments for the benefit of the Staff who would have the difficult task of writing an 'outline study on strategy.'" Lt. Gen. Gerhard Wessel, the German member, recommended starting from MC 100/1 because it was a more current document than MC 14/2.

⁹⁰³ *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XIII, pp.409-16; NARA, RG 59, Central Files: NATO 3 BEL(BR) and DEF 4 NATO.

⁹⁰⁴ BNA, DEFE 5/169, COS 71/66 DEFE 5/168 & COS 72/66.

⁹⁰⁵ NARA, RG 59, Subject-Numeric Files, 1964-1966, Box 1568; Also RG 59, Central Files: DEF 12 NATO.

⁹⁰⁶ Pedlow, "The Evolution of NATO Strategy", p.xxiv.

⁹⁰⁷ Record-MC 236, 24 October 1966, 236th Meeting of the Military Committee, Item 3: Decisions Made at the Informal Norfolk Meeting of the Chiefs of Staff, NATO Archives, CD#20.

12-13 Dec 1966, MC/CS 37⁹⁰⁸

Strategy; FALLEX 66; FALLEX 68; Strategy; Defense Planning; NATO Common Infrastructure Program; NATO Command Reports on Command Structure.

15-16 December 1966, Paris⁹⁰⁹

Final Communiqué

Chairman: Mr. M. Brosio.

Declaration on Germany - East- West relations - Outer Space Disarmament - Economic questions and Kennedy Round - Resolution on Technological Co-operation - Aid to Greece and Turkey- Cyprus "*watching brief*" - Broad analysis of international developments since signing of Treaty to be commissioned - Civil emergency planning.

Defence Ministers meet as Defence Planning Committee on 14th December - They agree to establish the Nuclear Defence Affairs Committee and a Nuclear Planning Group - Crisis management - Defence studies - NATO force questions - Satellite communication program.

Council and International Staff to move to Brussels.

In Annex:

Declaration on Germany

Resolution on International Technological Co-Operation

Resolution of the North Atlantic Council

1967

6th-7th April 1967, Washington⁹¹⁰

Nuclear Planning Group

Chairman: Mr. M. Brosio.

First meeting of the NPG - Review of the strategic nuclear threat - Discussion of tactical nuclear forces - Atomic demolition munitions discussed - Future work program agreed.

9th May 1967, Paris

Final Communiqué

Chairman: Mr. M. Brosio.

Defence Planning Committee reviews military situation - Overall level of forces to be maintained.

⁹⁰⁸ NARA, RG 59, Subject-Numeric Files, 1964-1966, Box 1567; BNA, DEFE 5/171, COS 135/66.

⁹⁰⁹ *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XIII, pp.516-27; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files: Lot 67 D 586, CF 109-119.

⁹¹⁰ *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XIII, pp.554-58; NARA, RG 59, Central Files: NATO 8-2, and NATO 3 FR(PA).

9 May 1967, MC/CS 38

NATO-Wide Communications System; Defense Planning; SHAPE Special Study on Defense Planning; External Reinforcement for the Flanks; Infrastructure; NATO Satellite Communications System.

June 1967

Admiral Ephraim P. Holmes became SACLANT. Retired in September 1970.

13th-14th June 1967, Luxembourg⁹¹¹

Final Communiqué

Chairman: Mr. M. Brosio.

International situation - Middle East - East-West Relations - Berlin and Germany - Disarmament - Cyprus "*Watching Brief*" - Interim report on the Future Tasks of the Alliance - Resolution on Technological Co-operation.

16 Sep 1967

Informal Meeting of the Military Committee in Chiefs of Staff Session, meeting in Oslo, approved **MC 14/3, 'Overall Strategic Concept for the Defence of the NATO Area'**. It was approved by the Defence Planning Committee on 12 December 1967 and the final version was issued on 16 January 1968.⁹¹²

29th September 1967, Ankara

Nuclear Planning Group

Chairman: Mr. M. Brosio.

Possible use of atomic demolition munitions - Possible tactical use of nuclear weapons in the Central and Southern regions of ACE - Anti-ballistic missile defence - National participation in military nuclear planning.

11 Dec 1967, MC/CS 39

Defense Planning; Preparation of MC 48/3; SHAPE Special Study on Defense Planning 1972; External Reinforcement of the Flanks; Statement by SACLANT on STAVNAVFORLANT and MARCONFORLANT Planning Process.

13th-14th December 1967, Brussels⁹¹³

Final Communiqué

Chairman: Mr. M. Brosio.

First Ministerial Meeting to be held in new Brussels Headquarters Report on the Future Tasks of the Alliance, "*Harmel Report*" approved Proposals of the North Atlantic Assembly - Disarmament and Arms Control - Germany and Berlin -

⁹¹¹ *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XIII, pp.585-90; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files: Lot 68 D 453, CF 186-192.

⁹¹² Pedlow, "The Evolution of NATO Strategy", p.xxiv.

⁹¹³ *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XIII, pp.646-52; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files: Lot 68 D 453, CF 242-251.

Cyprus "*Watching Brief*" - Technological Co-operation - Civil Emergency Planning
- Defence Planning Committee - Standing Naval Force Atlantic.
Report on Future Tasks of the Alliance annexed to Communiqué.

1968

18th-19th April 1968, The Hague⁹¹⁴

Nuclear Planning Group

Chairman: Mr. M. Brosio.

Anti-ballistic missile defence - Studies concerning tactical use of nuclear weapons.

6 May 1968, MC/CS 40

Defense Planning: Maritime Contingency Forces Concept, Roles and Tasks of NATO Naval Forces and Their Relationship to Other NATO Forces, MC 48/3, Updating of Emergency Defense Plans of the MNCs; Operations, Training, and Organization; Communications.

10th May 1968, Brussels⁹¹⁵

Defence Planning Committee

Chairman: Mr. M. Brosio.

Defence Planning Committee reviews force goals - Infrastructure to be continued
- NATO flanks - Reservists - Nuclear defence affairs.

24th-25th June 1968, Reykjavik⁹¹⁶

North Atlantic Council

Chairman: Mr. M. Brosio.

Berlin - Future Tasks - East- West relations - Disarmament and Arms Control measures - Mediterranean situation - DPC to consider measures to safeguard the Mediterranean area - Greek-Turkish relations.

Declaration on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (the "*Reykjavik Signal*".)

14 Aug 1968

MC 118, 'Roles and Tasks of NATO Naval Forces and Their Relationship to Other NATO Forces'.

28 Sept 1968, MC/CS 41

⁹¹⁴ *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XIII, pp.689-91; NARA, RG 59, Central Files: DEF 12 NATO

⁹¹⁵ NARA, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1967-1969 (Subject-Numeric), Political and Defense, Box 1580: Dep. of State Tel. NATO 2910, Cleveland to Clifford, 4 May 1968.

⁹¹⁶ *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol.XIII, pp.712-25; NARA, RG 59, Conference Files: Lot 69 D 182, CF 303.

Military Implications for the Alliance of the Invasion of Czechoslovakia;
Military Equipment Requirements; Status Report on Current Major MC/PS
Studies.

10th-11th October 1968, Bonn

Nuclear Planning Group

Chairman: Mr. M. Brosio.

Tactical use of nuclear weapons studies.

13 Nov 1968, MC/CS 42

Possible Threat to NATO Security and Military Implications in the Event of
Soviet Military Actions Against Certain European Countries; Military
Implications for the Alliance of the Invasion of Czechoslovakia; Status of
Selected Studies Being Conducted by Major NATO Commanders.

15th-16th November 1968, Brussels⁹¹⁷

North Atlantic Council

Chairman: Mr. M. Brosio.

International situation following Warsaw Pact armed intervention in
Czechoslovakia - Bearing on Germany - Berlin - Mediterranean - Warning to the
USSR.

DPC reassesses NATO's integrated defence (14th November) and approves
specific measures.

1969

10th-11th January 1969, Washington

North Atlantic Council

Chairman: Mr. M. Brosio.

Commemoration of XXth Anniversary - Peace-keeping and peace-making - Aims
of Alliance recalled - Disarmament and Arms Control Defence and deterrence -
Berlin - European settlement problems - Challenges to modern society.

15 January 1969, MC/CS 43, Brussels⁹¹⁸

Possible NATO Precautionary and Countermeasures in the Event of Soviet
Military Action Against Certain European Countries; Military Suitability of the
1969-73 Force Plan and the Associated Degree of Risk; On-Call Allied Naval
Force for the Mediterranean; Progress Report on Contingency Planning for the

⁹¹⁷ *FRUS 1964-1968*, vol. XIII, pp.781-92; NARA, RG 59, Central Files: NATO 3 BEL(BR).

⁹¹⁸ BNA, DEFE 5/180, COS 4/69.

External Reinforcement of the Flanks; Status Report on Studies of Major Interest to the Military Committee.

16th January 1969, Brussels

Defence Planning Committee

Chairman: Mr. M. Brosio.

DPC adopt NATO force plan - Approves concept of on-call Allied Naval Force - Infrastructure.

18 Mar 1969

Transmission of **SACLANT 3800/C-16, 'Relative Maritime Strategies and Capabilities of NATO and the Warsaw Pact'**.

6 May 1969, MC/CS 44, Brussels⁹¹⁹

Measures to Implement the Strategic Concept for the Defense of the NATO Area (MC 48/3); Progress Report on the Study of the Relative Force Capabilities of NATO and the Warsaw Pact; SACLANT's study on Relative Maritime Strategies and Capabilities of NATO and the Soviet Bloc; Oral Statement by SACEUR on his Study of the Capabilities of ACE Forces and Implications for Forward Strategy.

28th May 1969, Brussels

Defence Planning Committee

Chairman: Mr. M. Brosio.

Validity of current NATO strategy confirmed - Guidance to the military authorities - Canadian Forces in Europe - Naval On-call Force, Mediterranean - Defence of the flanks.

30th May 1969, London

Nuclear Planning Group

Chairman: Mr. M. Brosio.

Guidelines for the tactical use of nuclear weapons discussed - Consultation arrangements for possible use of nuclear weapons.

July 1969

General Andrew J. Goodpaster became SACEUR. Retired in December 1974.

12th November 1969, Warrington, Virginia

Nuclear Planning Group

Chairman: Mr. M. Brosio.

Political guidelines for possible, tactical use of nuclear weapons approved - review of consultation on possible use of nuclear weapons completed.

⁹¹⁹ BNA, DEFE 5/181, COS 29/69.

MC/CS 45

4th-5th December 1969, Brussels⁹²⁰

North Atlantic Council

Chairman: Mr. M. Brosio.

Declaration on the future development of relations between East and West -
SALT and disarmament questions - The security of the Mediterranean -
Challenges to Modern Society.

4 Dec 1969

DPC in Ministerial Session approval of MC 48/3, issued in final form on 8
December.

1970

12 May 1970, MC/CS 46, Brussels.⁹²¹

26th-27th May, 1970, Rome

North Atlantic Council

Chairman : Mr. M. Brosio.

European Security - Mediterranean - East- West Negotiations SALT- Arms
Control and Disarmament - MBFR - Readiness to enter multilateral talks -
Environmental questions - Declaration on Mutual and Balanced Force
Reductions.

8th-9th June, 1970, Venice

Nuclear Planning Group

Chairman : Mr. M. Brosio.

Policy issues reviewed.

11th June, 1970, Brussels

Defence Planning Committee

Chairman : Mr. M. Brosio.

Continued growth Warsaw Pact forces - Mediterranean - Soviet maritime and
global strategy reviewed - NATO measures.

September 1970

Admiral Charles K. Duncan becomes SACLANT. Retired in October 1972.

⁹²⁰ NARA, RG 59, Conference Files: Lot 70D387, Box 506.

⁹²¹ BNA, DEFE 5/185, COS 32/70.

9 October 1970, MC/CS-Informal, Lisbon.⁹²²

29th-30th October, 1970, Ottawa

Nuclear Planning Group

Chairman : Mr. M. Brosio.

Reviews balance of strategic forces - Agreement on political guidelines covering possible use of atomic demolition munitions.

1 December 1970, MC/CS 47, Brussels.⁹²³

3rd-4th December, 1970, Brussels⁹²⁴

North Atlantic Council

Chairman : Mr. M. Brosio.

President Nixon's statement regarding US forces in Europe - International situation reviewed - Progress on Berlin and other talks affirmed to be condition of multilateral exploration of European security - Principles governing inter-state relations - MBFR - Environment problems Co-operation on defence equipment - DPC meeting (2nd December) Approves Report on defence problems of Alliance in the 1970s - Validity of NATO strategy - NA TO Security Indivisible - European defence improvement program - Mediterranean - Crisis management - Nuclear Affairs.

Report on defence problems of Alliance in the 1970s annexed to Communiqué.

⁹²² BNA, DEFE 5/187, COS 71/70.

⁹²³ BNA, DEFE 5/187, COS 78/70.

⁹²⁴ NARA, RG 59, Conference Files: Lot 71D227, Box 522.

Appendix IV: Contemporary Literature on NATO, 1949-1970

1949

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