

Burden-sharing in NATO: A Continuing Dilemma for the United States

A thesis presented to
the faculty of
the College of Arts and Sciences

In partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Master of Arts

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August 2022

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Abstract

HULL, ETHAN D., M.A., August 2022, History

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This thesis analyzes four case studies that illustrate the challenges of the U.S. government in dealing with burden-sharing in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization from 1966 to 1984. Congress and the president have tried to ameliorate this issue through several initiatives. The case studies discussed in this thesis consist of the Mansfield Amendments of 1966 and 1971, the Jackson-Nunn Amendment of 1973, the 3 Percent Agreement of 1978, and the Nunn Amendment of 1984. Above all, these initiatives illustrate the challenges of burden-sharing in an inherently unequal alliance. American military power has been more substantial than the other alliance members. Consequently, NATO's disparity of power complicates burden-sharing in this alliance. Historical circumstances, such as the relative decline of American power during the early 1970s, have made burden-sharing a more substantial concern for U.S. government officials because of NATO's imbalance of power. Because of these factors, burden-sharing and the diplomatic issues it causes will not vanish anytime soon.

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my Dad, Robert N. Hull. As John F. Kennedy said: “A man may die, a nation may rise and fall, but an idea lives on. Ideas have endurance after death.”

Acknowledgments

There are so many people to thank for helping me complete my thesis. However, the person that deserves the “lion’s share” of the credit is Professor Chester Pach. He has spent a considerable amount of time helping me through this process. Dr. Pach encouraged me to write my thesis about burden-sharing in NATO, and his comments and suggestions with my several drafts have improved my writing and analytical skills significantly. I really appreciate the guidance and advice Dr. Pach has provided throughout my graduate school career.

During my time at Ohio University, I have been fortunate enough to be associated with many great professionals. Those scholars include Professors John Brobst, Paul Milazzo, Kevin Mattson, Jaclyn Maxwell, Ingo Trauschweizer, Ziad Abu-Rish, and Mariana Dantas. All of these professors helped me become a better historian. Additionally, I want to show my gratitude to all of the librarians at Ohio University who “saved me” by kindly voiding late fees with library books and extending their due dates several times.

My history career also owes much to West Virginia Wesleyan College. The professors at West Virginia Wesleyan College have provided me guidance throughout undergraduate and graduate school. Professors Richard Weeks, Katherine Antolini, Debra Dean Murphy, Jordan Kuck, and Robert Rupp have all helped me become a better scholar. A special mention to my academic advisor at Wesleyan, Tamara Denmark Bailey, who has been an avid supporter and role model to me throughout the years. Additionally, I want to thank some of my amazing coworkers at Buckhannon Upshur High School,

specifically Mary Miller and Jessica Snyder, who have provided me with so much support, guidance, and friendship this previous academic year.

I was fortunate enough to have met so many wonderful people in Athens, Ohio. My best friends Tanner Click, Avery Gookin, and Daniel Nolte have provided me with a constant source of friendship and support over the years. Tanner and his family especially made Ohio a special place for me. From the very first day I arrived in Athens, they made me part of their family. Because of the Clicks, I am now an “honorary buckeye.” The other friends that have helped make Athens feel like home are Jordan Zdinak, Kyle Balzer, Michelle Lea, James Bohland, Cameron Dunbar, Harrison Fender, Jordie Sams, Josiah Pannell, Caleb Fouts, and Ryan Christopher. Finally, I want also to thank my Mom, Dad, sister, and the rest of my family.

Table of Contents

	Page
Abstract	3
Dedication	4
Acknowledgments	5
Introduction: NATO's Early Years of Burden-Sharing; The Debate Heats Up	9
Chapter I: The Mansfield Amendment; A Reaction to Burden-Sharing in NATO	24
Mansfield's Rationale Behind Proposing the Mansfield Amendment	25
President Johnson's Reaction to the Mansfield Amendment	33
Issues with the Mansfield Amendment of 1966	39
From Mansfield's Initial Amendment to the Mansfield Amendment of 1971	41
President Nixon, the Mansfield Amendment of 1971, and NATO	47
Chapter II: The Jackson-Nunn Amendment; A Short-Term Solution for Burden-Sharing	52
Senator Jackson's Assessment of NATO during the 1970s	53
Congressional Pressure about Burden-Sharing Increases	55
Nixon, NATO, and the Jackson-Nunn Amendment	62
Western Europe and the Jackson-Nunn Amendment	67
The Legacy of the Jackson-Nunn Amendment	71
Chapter III: The 3 Percent Agreement; Another Short-Term Solution for Burden-Sharing	75
Robert Komer, Harold Brown, and the 3 Percent Agreement's Creation	76
Reactions to the 3 Percent Agreement	86
A Shift Away from the 3 Percent Agreement	88
The 3 Percent Agreement's Outcome	90
Historical Perspectives about the 3 Percent Agreement	95
Chapter IV: The Nunn Amendment; Another Congressional Reaction to Burden-Sharing	102
From Congressional Skepticism to the Nunn Amendment	103
Nunn's Reasoning for Introducing the Nunn Amendment	108
Reagan, NATO, and the Nunn Amendment	115
Senate Opposition to the Nunn Amendment	118
NATO, Western Europe, and the Nunn Amendment	120

The Nunn Amendment's Historical Significance	123
Conclusion: A Reflection on Burden-Sharing in NATO	127
References	137
Primary Sources	137
Digital Collections	137
Government Publications, Memoirs, and Speeches.....	138
News Media and Polling	139
Secondary Sources	140
Books	140
Articles and Book Chapters	144
Websites	146

Introduction: NATO's Early Years of Burden-Sharing; The Debate Heats Up

In July 2018, former President Donald Trump caused an uproar in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) by threatening to withdraw the United States from this alliance during a NATO summit in Brussels, Belgium. After arriving late, Trump disrupted a North Atlantic Council (NAC) meeting by taking the floor and warning that there would be “grave consequences” if other NATO members did not increase their defense spending. The president then suggested that the United States would “go our own way” if NATO members did not comply with his demands.¹ After the NAC meeting, Trump bragged that he obtained a more substantial spending commitment from the other NATO members than ever before. However, Trump’s boast was incorrect; French President Emmanuel Macron and other alliance leaders quickly refuted this assertion.² Then in August, Trump confirmed that he threatened to withdraw the United States from NATO during a campaign rally in Charleston, West Virginia.³ The crowd responded to Trump’s remarks with thunderous applause.

Trump’s complaint echoes the discontent that U.S. political leaders have expressed about burden-sharing in NATO since this alliance’s creation. Since NATO’s formation in 1949, burden-sharing has been a central issue for American political leaders. U.S. officials anticipated that the NATO alliance would have a burden-sharing problem. For example, Secretary of State Dean Acheson remarked to Congress during NATO

¹ David Herszenhorn and Lili Bayer, “Trump’s Whiplash NATO Summit.” *Politico*, July 12, 2018.

² *Ibid.*

³ “Trump Confirms He Threatened to Withdraw from NATO,” *The Atlantic Council* (Washington D.C.), August 28, 2018.

ratification hearings that the alliance must guarantee that “nobody is getting a meal ticket from anybody else so far as their capacity to resist is concerned.”⁴ Additionally, NATO’s creators inserted Article III in the Washington Treaty as a pre-emptive maneuver for the burden-sharing problem.⁵ This article underscored the members’ obligation to invest in their military forces to strengthen this alliance. Article III shows that there was a concern about burden-sharing in NATO from its inception. Furthermore, American military power has been greater than any other NATO member since this alliance’s creation. As a result of this imbalance, historical circumstances have made burden-sharing a more pressing problem for Congress and the executive branch.

Burden-sharing in NATO has several meanings. Broadly speaking, burden-sharing relates to the concern that the United States carries the majority of military obligations toward NATO’s continental defense while other allies do not contribute sufficiently to these requirements. However, there are direct and indirect types of burden-sharing; direct burden-sharing relates to defense commitments and spending. European members of NATO have received the most criticism for not contributing enough to the alliance’s continental defense.⁶ For instance, the U.S. government had criticized its European allies in NATO for not spending more on defense from the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s. Indirect burden-sharing relates to a nation’s commitment to particular policy

⁴ U.S. Senate, *Committee on Foreign Relations, Vandenberg Resolution and the North Atlantic Treaty*, 80th Cong., 2d sess., and 81st Cong., 1st sess., 1948 and 1949, 99.

⁵ NATO Parliamentary Assembly, *Defense and Security Committee, Burden Sharing: New Commitments in a New Era*, (Brussels, 2018). <https://www.nato-pa.int/download-file?filename=sites/default/files/2018-12/2018%20-%20BURDEN%20SHARING%20NEW%20COMMITMENTS%20IN%20A%20NEW%20ERA%20-%20MESTERHAZY%20REPORT%20-%2020170%20DSCTC%2018%20E%20rev1%20fin.pdf>

⁶ Michael Smith, *A History of NATO: The First Fifty Years*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 295.

positions. The U.S. typically expected other NATO members to support its policies concerning the alliance or international affairs. For example, President Lyndon B. Johnson wanted European states to support his Vietnam policies in general, and he hoped that they would send troops under his “many flags” program. Despite the Vietnam War not being within the NATO alliance parameters, this concern increased the burden-sharing controversy for the U.S. government.

An important aspect of the burden-sharing debate relates to NATO’s force requirements for Europe’s defense. NATO established its initial force requirements for Europe’s defense during the early 1950s. The Medium Term Defense Plan was the alliance’s first initiative for Europe’s continental defense. To counter the military threat of the Soviet Union, the North Atlantic Defense Committee approved this plan in April 1950; it provided a target for an alliance build-up of conventional forces in Europe over time.⁷ This initiative had ambitious force goals; it called for a projected force benchmark of seventy-one and one-half infantry divisions and eighteen and two-thirds armored divisions.⁸ However, NATO never came close to reaching these requirements. Enthusiasm for this defensive strategy peaked with the Lisbon force goals. NATO countries established the Lisbon force goals in 1952 in response to the outbreak of the Korean War. The central goal called for creating forty-two divisions and having a reserve

⁷ Andrew Johnston, “The Construction of NATO’s Medium Term Defence Plan and the Diplomacy of Conventional Strategy 1949-50,” *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 12, no 2 (2001): 79-124.

⁸ The planning date for these force goals was July 1, 1954. North Atlantic Defense Committee, *North Atlantic Treaty Organization Medium Term Plan*, (Washington D.C., 1950).
<https://www.nato.int/docu/stratdoc/eng/a500328d.pdf>

force that would mobilize within thirty days.⁹ Despite NATO members failing to achieve this goal, it continued to be an important benchmark for military planners in this alliance.

Some members of Congress criticized American relations with NATO in the early 1950s. Midwestern Republicans and southern Democrats questioned President Harry S. Truman's power to commit American troops to Europe in 1951 without congressional authorization.¹⁰ This concern became known as the Great Debate. Senators Robert Taft (Rep.-OH) and Kenneth Wherry (Rep.-NE) led the opposition against Truman's proposal to commit troops to Europe. Taft criticized Truman's decision because it violated the traditional practices of American diplomacy, namely that Truman was sending troops abroad without obtaining congressional approval. Furthermore, Taft sought to prevent the further militarization of U.S. foreign policy. Ultimately, Truman stationed more military forces in Europe; however, he had to secure congressional approval for any additional deployments.¹¹

President Dwight D. Eisenhower considered reducing American forces in Europe. Eisenhower believed that Europeans would eventually take over responsibility for their continental defense.¹² The Eisenhower administration adopted the New Look policy, which emphasized naval and air power instead of ground troops and favored nuclear retaliation if war happened. Eisenhower appointed Admiral Arthur W. Radford as the

⁹ U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, Volume I., General: Economic and Political Matters, 1952-1954. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v01p1/d162>

¹⁰ Phil Williams, "Isolationism or Discerning Internationalism: Robert Taft, Mike Mansfield and US Troops in Europe." *Review of International Studies* 8, no. 1 (1982): 27.

¹¹ *Ibid*, 27.

¹² Simon Duke, *The Burdensharing Debate: A Reassessment*. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1993), 42.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1953. Radford supported the New Look policy and proposed the Radford Plan to the JCS in 1956, which intended to replace U.S. troops stationed in Europe with a smaller number of forces that had access to atomic weaponry.¹³ However, the JCS abandoned this proposal when the press leaked it, causing substantial opposition from Congress and European NATO members. Ironically, Radford's proposed plan undermined additional alliance contribution to NATO.¹⁴

Adding to the burden-sharing controversy was the U.S. balance-of-payments deficit in the late 1950s from maintaining troops in Europe. The American balance-of-payments deficit increased from nearly \$1 billion in the early 1950s to more than \$3 billion in 1958. This deficit provided Eisenhower with another reason to withdraw American forces from this region. The Eisenhower administration reduced U.S. forces in West Germany from 250,300 in 1956 to 229,700 in 1959.¹⁵

President John F. Kennedy inherited this deficit issue from the Eisenhower administration in 1961. The Kennedy administration concluded that a strong conventional force in Europe made strategic sense. However, Kennedy had misgivings about the payments problem with stationing American troops in Europe.¹⁶ To resolve this complication, the administration negotiated an offset agreement with West Germany in 1961. West Germany agreed to spend \$1.45 billion on American military weapons; this

¹³ "Arthur William Radford." Official Website of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. <https://www.jcs.mil/About/The-Joint-Staff/Chairman/Admiral-Arthur-William-Radford/>.

¹⁴ Hubert Zimmerman, *Money and Security: Troops, Monetary Policy, and West Germany's Relations with the United States and Britain, 1950-1971*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 98.

¹⁵ Hubert Zimmermann, "The Improbable Permanence of a Commitment: Americas Troop Presence in Europe during the Cold War," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 11, no. 1, (2009): 4.

¹⁶ Ibid.

agreement offset the entire foreign exchange cost of stationing U.S. forces in West Germany.¹⁷ When Johnson became president, he reaffirmed the American commitment to maintaining its Western European forces. However, the Vietnam War would soon become a new element in this debate, bringing Congress back into this discussion.

Presidents and congressional members have attempted to ameliorate burden-sharing in NATO through implementing several initiatives. This thesis analyzes four case studies from 1966 to 1984 that reveal the difficulties of the U.S. government handling this issue with its allies. Additionally, these case studies show the problems between the president and Congress in dealing with burden-sharing in NATO. These case studies include the Mansfield Amendments of 1966 and 1971, the Jackson-Nunn Amendment of 1973, the 3 Percent Agreement of 1978, and the Nunn Amendment of 1984. The central purpose of this thesis is to examine these efforts that addressed burden-sharing in NATO and show what they reveal about how the U.S. government and the other alliance members dealt with this concern.

The first chapter of this thesis discusses the Mansfield Amendments of 1966 and 1971; Senator Mike Mansfield (Dem.-MT) introduced these initiatives. Mansfield's initial resolution was the first legislation that proposed to withdraw American troops in Western Europe in response to burden-sharing. It would have withdrawn 130,000 U.S. forces stationed in Europe. After President Johnson decreased the number of U.S. forces in Europe from 260,000 to 225,000, Mansfield dropped this resolution. Mansfield reignited the congressional debate about burden-sharing by proposing this amendment.

¹⁷ Zimmerman, *Money and Security*, 135.

This concern continued when Mansfield introduced another amendment in 1971, which required the United States to remove 120,000 troops from Europe. The Senate voted down this amendment by 61 to 36. Despite Congress not passing the Mansfield Amendment of 1971, it changed the U.S. government's emphasis about burden-sharing more toward the U.S. balance-of-payments deficit. This issue had been a concern for the Eisenhower and Kennedy presidential administrations. However, the balance-of-payments deficit became more of a financial dilemma during the early 1970s than in the 1950s or 1960s.

Chapter One argues that there were two main problems with the Mansfield Amendments of 1966 and 1971. First, this legislation did not acknowledge that European members in NATO contributed to this alliance in other essential ways. Second, it could have destabilized Europe by shifting the balance of power to the Soviet Union. Fundamentally, Mansfield's amendments illustrate how historical circumstances, such as the perceived decline of American power and the Vietnam War, caused some congressional members to view burden-sharing as a more substantial concern.

When Mansfield proposed his initial amendment, NATO's disparity of economic power and the role of nuclear weapons in this alliance were changing. The power imbalance between the United States and other alliance members narrowed during the 1960s. Specifically, the economies of European members in NATO had improved considerably since the 1950s. For example, Western Europe's gross domestic product experienced an annual average percentage growth of 4.8 percent from 1950 to 1960. In comparison, the United States had an annual average percentage growth of 3.5 percent

during the same timeframe.¹⁸ Regarding nuclear weapons in NATO, this alliance abandoned its previous doctrine of massive retaliation and adopted the flexible response strategy in the early 1960s. An essential difference between these two strategies was that flexible response used the concept of counterforce against military targets, while massive retaliation focused on mutual atomic deterrence against the Soviet Union.¹⁹ Flexible response called for a greater emphasis on conventional defense while raising NATO's nuclear threshold. Additionally, the U.S. and NATO's number of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) increased from 120 in 1961 to 1,054 in 1969.²⁰

Chapter Two examines the Jackson-Nunn Amendment of 1973. Senators Henry Jackson (Dem.-WA) and Sam Nunn (Dem.-GA) proposed this legislation. It required the president to obtain payments from other members in NATO to offset the U.S. balance-of-payments deficit caused by stationing American forces in Europe. Additionally, if European members in NATO did not comply by November 1976, the United States would initiate a reduction of American troops sufficient to eliminate its balance-of-payments deficit. The Senate and the House overwhelmingly approved the Jackson-Nunn Amendment. This chapter argues that Jackson and Nunn's amendment ameliorated some of the American burden-sharing problems. For instance, West Germany ensured that the United States would not initiate the Jackson-Nunn Amendment's penalty provisions

¹⁸ Richard Cooper, "Economic Aspects of the Cold War, 1962-1975," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume II Crises and Détente*, ed by Melvyn Leffler, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 49.

¹⁹ Lawrence Kaplan, *The Long Entanglement: NATO's First Fifty Years*, (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1999), 108.

²⁰ Richard Kugler, *The Great Strategy Debate: NATO's Evolution in the 1960s*, RAND, N-3252-FF/RC. (Santa Monica, CA: 1991), vii. <https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/notes/2009/N3252.pdf>.

when their government officials negotiated a \$2.218 billion offset agreement with the United States in April 1974. However, this initiative did not completely resolve burden-sharing because it did not convince every alliance member to contribute more resources to NATO's continental defense.

NATO experienced fundamental changes to its imbalance of economic power and the role of nuclear weapons in the alliance when Jackson and Nunn introduced their amendment. In particular, the disparity of power between the United States and its allies had narrowed even more since the mid-1960s. Responding to an increasing balance-of-payments deficit and inflation, the Nixon administration axed the Bretton Woods System.²¹ Nixon's decision became a symbol of the decline of U.S. power during the early 1970s. At the same time, NATO increased its nuclear capabilities. The number of U.S. nuclear warheads in Europe peaked at around 7,300 during the early 1970s.²² Détente helped change the role of nuclear weapons in NATO. On May 26, 1972, the United States and the Soviet Union signed the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT). This treaty froze the number of missiles the U.S. and Soviet Union had on the date of the agreement's signing. The United States had 1,054 ICBMs, while the Soviet Union had 1,618 ICBM.²³

²¹ Nixon took the United States off the gold standard, thus annulling a critical part of the Bretton Woods system.

²² Kugler, *The Great Strategy Debate*, vii.

²³ Robert Schulzinger, "Détente in the Nixon-Ford years, 1969-1976," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume II Crises and Détente*, ed by Melvyn Leffler, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 49.

Chapter Three explains how the 3 Percent Agreement influenced the U.S. debate about burden-sharing during the late 1970s and 1980s. Instead of Congress dealing with this issue, President Jimmy Carter and his administration sought to convince NATO members to contribute more resources to Europe's continental defense. In May 1978, NATO allies pledged to increase their defense spending in real terms by 3 percent each year from 1980 to 1984. A year later, NATO members extended this pledge to 1985. Despite some nations increasing their defense spending, most allies failed to achieve the 3 Percent Agreement's objective. The United States, the United Kingdom, and Turkey were the only NATO allies that increased their defense spending by 3 percent from 1980 to 1985. However, this initiative proved crucial for the United States and NATO. For instance, there were no serious congressional efforts to obtain more allied contribution to NATO's continental defense because Congress had to wait a couple of years to see if European members would reach the 3 Percent Agreement's benchmark.

After NATO allies agreed to implement the 3 Percent Agreement, the role of nuclear weapons in this alliance continued, in some regards, in the direction that members established in the early 1970s. Carter and Brezhnev signed the SALT II Treaty in June 1979. This agreement limited the total of each country's nuclear forces to 2,250 delivery vehicles.²⁴ However, Carter altered NATO's nuclear strategy by implementing the dual-track decision in this alliance. The dual-track initiative involved two complementary strategies. First, NATO planned to enter nuclear arms negotiations with the Soviet Union, specifically to decrease intermediate and medium-range missiles.

²⁴ Kaplan, *The Long Entanglement*, 160.

Second, the United States would deploy both cruise and Pershing II missiles in Western Europe to counter the Soviet's SS-20s if the negotiations did not produce an agreement.²⁵ Carter's signing of the SALT II Treaty and implementing the dual-track initiative shifted the administration's attention away from convincing its NATO allies to increase their defense spending by 3 percent.

The final chapter focuses on the Nunn Amendment of 1984. Senator Nunn introduced this legislation in July 1984; it intended to remove 30,000 forces in Western Europe each year from 1987 to 1989 if NATO members did not increase their defense spending by 3 percent. After a fervid congressional debate about burden-sharing, the Senate voted down Nunn's legislation by 55 to 41.²⁶ Chapter Four argues that the Nunn Amendment, despite Congress not passing it, incentivized an alliance effort to improve NATO's conventional forces. Additionally, this legislation shows the U.S. government's emphasis concerning burden-sharing during the 1980s, namely member states improving their defense spending.

When Nunn proposed his amendment, the role of nuclear weapons and the disparity of power between members in NATO had altered since the 1970s. Following the dual-track decision, NATO increased its nuclear capabilities when the United States placed Pershing II missiles in West Germany and cruise missiles in Belgium and the United Kingdom in 1983.²⁷ Additionally, NATO countries faced severe public backlash

²⁵ However, President Carter declined to place Pershing II missiles in Western Europe during the late 1970s because they were not yet ready for deployment.

²⁶ The House did not vote on the Nunn Amendment because the Senate voted down this legislation.

²⁷ Timothy Sayle, *Enduring Alliance: A History of NATO and the Postwar Global Order*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2019), 205.

for this decision. In Brussels, 400,000 people mobilized to protest against President Ronald Reagan's nuclear policies in October 1983.²⁸ West German protest organizers said that around one million people participated in demonstrations in West Berlin, Bonn, Hamburg, and Stuttgart.²⁹ NATO's nuclear policy influenced the Nunn Amendment. In particular, Nunn's amendment intended to change NATO's reliance on nuclear weapons by strengthening this alliance's conventional forces. Regarding NATO's imbalance of power, the economies of Western Europe had progressed considerably since the late 1970s and early 1980s. For instance, West Germany's economic growth rate increased from -1.1 percent in 1982 to 2.4 percent in 1984, while the United Kingdom's growth rate increased from 0.4 percent in 1982 to 2.4 percent in 1984.³⁰ Western Europe's economic improvement caused more senators to support the Nunn Amendment because some congressional members considered that these alliance members had the financial capabilities to increase their defense spending by 3 percent.

This thesis argues that the Mansfield Amendments, the Jackson-Nunn Amendment, the 3 Percent Agreement, and the Nunn Amendment show burden-sharing's transformation during the Cold War from 1966 to 1984. Senator Mansfield sparked the congressional concern that European members in NATO needed to contribute more resources to NATO's continental defense by introducing the Mansfield Amendment of

²⁸ Lawrence Wittner, *Confronting the Bomb: A Short History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement*, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), 146.

²⁹ The Reagan administration did pursue nuclear arms reduction negotiations with the Soviet Union. However, negotiations proved fruitless until Mikhail Gorbachev became leader of the Soviet Union. James Markham, "Vast Crowds Hold Rallies in Europe Against U.S. Arms." *New York Times*, October 23, 1983.

³⁰ John Young, "Western Europe and the end of the Cold War," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War Volume III*, ed Melvyn Leffler and Odd Westad, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 300.

1966. Then Mansfield contributed to changing this concern about burden-sharing toward the U.S. balance-of-payments deficit in 1971. The Carter administration altered the U.S. government's emphasis on burden-sharing throughout the late 1970s to increasing a member's defense spending by NATO implementing the 3 Percent Agreement. The Nunn Amendment was a response to the 3 Percent Agreement's outcome, underscoring the congressional concern about NATO countries not increasing their defense spending sufficiently.

These case studies indicate that NATO members have different conceptions of how to contribute toward this alliance's continental defense. This circumstance made it more difficult to resolve burden-sharing in NATO. In particular, a West German government official opposed the Nunn Amendment by arguing that their country had contributed to NATO's continental defense in other ways. The West German official cited that West Germany allowed the Reagan administration to place Pershing II missiles on their soil.³¹ Additionally, West Germany assisted Spain in becoming a member of the NATO alliance.

The Mansfield Amendments, the Jackson-Nunn Amendment, the 3 Percent Agreement, and the Nunn Amendment demonstrate the difficulties of resolving burden-sharing in NATO. Several factors cause this problem. For instance, senators had trouble passing legislation related to burden-sharing from 1966 to 1984. In fact, the Senate never passed Mansfield's amendments throughout the mid-1960s and early 1970s. Even when

³¹ "IFPA Conference on German-American Relations," CIA Archives, General CIA Records Virtual Reading Room. <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP87R00529R000200170020-3.pdf>

the U.S. government initiated the Jackson-Nunn Amendment and the 3 Percent Agreement, both had limited results in resolving burden-sharing. In essence, these case studies indicate that the United States or NATO implementing a policy related to burden-sharing will not entirely resolve this problem.

Above all, these case studies illustrate the difficulties of burden-sharing in an alliance that has been and continues to be inherently unequal. Since NATO's creation, U.S. military power has been considerably greater than any other alliance member. NATO's disparity of power embeds burden-sharing in this alliance. From this imbalance, historical circumstances have made burden-sharing a more significant concern for Americans, especially members of Congress. This problem mattered less to the U.S. when European nations appeared economically vulnerable, such as in the 1950s. Neither the Eisenhower administration nor Congress pursued legislation that forced alliance members to contribute more to NATO's continental defense. Burden-sharing became a more pressing issue when the relative power of the United States declined and while the European members' economies became more vibrant during the mid-1960s. Mansfield's amendments reflect this scenario and concern. These case studies indicate that different burden-sharing problems became more important for the United States, and NATO countries have different ideas of how to contribute toward defense efforts. Additionally, they illustrate that even the U.S. or NATO implementing a policy related to burden-sharing will not entirely resolve this issue. For these reasons, burden-sharing and the diplomatic problems it causes will not subside soon. The U.S. continues to have problems getting its NATO allies to improve their direct and indirect spending; Trump's fractious

remarks underscore this issue and signify the possible ramifications of not resolving burden-sharing -- an American withdrawal from this alliance. Considering that Russia has invaded Ukraine, this alliance needs as much cohesion as possible to deter this aggression.³²

³² "Putin's Forces Attack Ukraine," *New York Times*, February 23, 2022.

Chapter I: The Mansfield Amendment; A Reaction to Burden-Sharing in NATO

Senator Mike Mansfield raised questions about burden-sharing in NATO by introducing the Mansfield Amendment in 1966. Mansfield proposed to amend Senate Resolution 99 to contain this amendment's provisions.³³ This proposal intended to reduce U.S. military forces in Europe by 50 percent. Mansfield introduced this amendment because he thought that the United States financially overextended itself in its foreign policy, especially its growing involvement in Vietnam. Additionally, Mansfield proposed this amendment because he believed that American troops stationed in Western Europe were unnecessary due to the decline of Soviet military aggression. President Lyndon Johnson disapproved of the Mansfield Amendment because he argued that this proposal could weaken NATO even further after President Charles de Gaulle removed French forces from the alliance in 1966. Furthermore, the Mansfield Amendment did not acknowledge that European countries contributed to this international organization in other vital ways, and it might have destabilized Europe by shifting the balance of power toward the Soviet Union. In theory, NATO stationing a considerable number of troops in Central Europe deterred Soviet military and political aggression. Mansfield's proposal reignited the congressional burden-sharing debate during the mid-1960s, although it failed to consider other diplomatic measures, such as negotiating with NATO allies to increase their troop contribution.

³³ The Senate adopted Senate Resolution 99 in April 1951. This resolution authorized President Truman to cooperate in NATO's defense efforts. In particular, this resolution endorsed NATO's appointment of General Eisenhower as Supreme Allied Commander of this alliance and allowed the president to place U.S. forces under Eisenhower's command. Kaplan, *The Long Entanglement*, 62.

Mansfield's Rationale Behind Proposing the Mansfield Amendment

When Mansfield proposed the Mansfield Amendment, he was an experienced congressional member. Mansfield defeated Republican Zales Ecton to become a member of the United States Senate for Montana in 1953. From 1957 to 1960, he served as Democratic whip under Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson. President John Kennedy asked Mansfield to be the Senate Majority Leader on November 11, 1960.³⁴ Initially, Mansfield hesitated to take this position. However, he agreed to become Senate Majority Leader after Kennedy and Vice President Johnson strongly urged him to reconsider; both had been Mansfield's colleagues in the Senate during the 1950s. The Senate Democrats elected Mansfield as the Senate Majority Leader on January 3, 1961.³⁵

Mansfield believed that the United States had an essential and inescapable military and economic role to play in global politics during the late 1940s and early 1950s. He argued that the United States needed to be a global leader during this period. Mansfield wanted to ensure that another world conflict would not happen and believed that the United States was a key player in securing this outcome. However, Mansfield's analysis depended on the United States not overreaching itself in foreign affairs. Mansfield explicitly cautioned about the U.S. overextending its foreign policy during a speech in June 1951 when discussing the fiscal demands of the Korean War: "The resources which we have available for this international purpose are not unlimited," he

³⁴ Don Oberdorfer, *Senator Mansfield: The Extraordinary Life of a Great American Statesman and Diplomat*. (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 2003), 154.

³⁵ *Ibid*, 157.

warned. “We can afford to use them only when there is reasonable expectation that they will accomplish the objectives for which they are intended.”³⁶

From the late 1940s to the early 1970s, Mansfield’s views about military forces overseas did not change substantially. During a speech on the Senate floor in 1957, he advocated reducing the size of military and civilian establishments overseas: “Not only are these establishments costly in monetary sense, but they can and are building an undercurrent of resentment towards this country in many countries.”³⁷ This statement did not directly mention a specific place to reduce American forces overseas. Mansfield did not propose reducing forces in Europe despite his opposition to maintaining troops abroad during the late 1950s. However, Mansfield began to focus specifically on NATO in the early 1960s. For example, Mansfield suggested that the United States and the Soviet Union should decrease their forces in Central Europe in 1961 to reduce the likelihood of conflict. Additionally, Mansfield advocated that the United States revise its military policies in Western Europe in 1962.³⁸ Specifically, the senator wanted more troop responsibilities shifted from the United States to its European allies.

Mansfield developed the Mansfield Amendment through the Democratic Policy Committee (DPC); he was chairman of the DPC from 1961 to 1977. The DPC was the policy-making organization for the Senate Democrats during this period.³⁹ Mansfield, with the DPC and forty-three cosponsors, endorsed the Mansfield Amendment on July

³⁶ Williams, “Isolationism or Discerning Internationalism,” 31.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid, 33.

³⁹ “Democratic Policy and Communications Committee: Senate Democratic Leadership,” Senate Democratic Leadership, Accessed April 20, 2020. www.democrats.senate.gov/dpcc

13, 1966.⁴⁰ The Mansfield Amendment intended to reduce American forces stationed in Europe by 50 percent. In 1966, the United States had 260,000 troops stationed in Europe.

Mansfield argued that European states in NATO were not providing enough financial resources to this alliance's continental defense compared to U.S. contributions. During the 1960s, U.S. political officials evaluated contributions to NATO through a country's defense expenditure as a percentage of its gross domestic product (GDP). However, NATO members made no agreement that explicitly determined how much each member should contribute to defense spending until 2006 with a commitment to spend at least 2 percent of their GDP on defense.⁴¹ The United States spent 7.8 percent of its GDP on defense in 1966. This expenditure was the largest for all NATO members during the 1960s. By comparison, France spent 4.9 percent, the Netherlands provided 3.52, and the United Kingdom expended 5.58. The lowest U.S. expenditure during the 1960s was more than the highest spending for a European state in that decade. For instance, the United States spent 6.97 percent in 1965, while Europe's highest was the United Kingdom's 6.34 in 1960.⁴² However, this assessment has a defect because it does not reveal how much of the defense spending went to troops, weapons, or equipment that supported NATO.

Mansfield emphasized that European states experienced considerable economic growth since NATO's formation. Keith Lowe's *Savage Continent* shows how World War II turned Europe into a decimated wasteland:

⁴⁰ Oberdorfer, *Senator Mansfield*, 311.

⁴¹ NATO, "Funding NATO," Accessed April 20, 2020. www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_67655.htm

⁴² "SIPRI Military Expenditure Database."

Those who traveled across this ruined landscape in the aftermath of the war saw city after city destroyed. Very few people ever attempted to describe the totality of what they have seen – instead they struggled to come to terms with one more localized change in each single city as they came across it.⁴³

In the recovery period after World War II through the 1960s, Western Europe experienced substantial economic growth.⁴⁴ Western Europe averaged a 4.8 percent annual growth in its gross domestic product from 1950 to 1960.⁴⁵ Furthermore, Western European countries' infrastructure, which had been destroyed by bombings, scorched earth techniques, and constant warfare during World War II, improved appreciably during this time. Mansfield recognized this factor and concluded that European states could justifiably contribute more to NATO.⁴⁶

Mansfield's opinion about U.S. overspending on foreign affairs impacted the initial Mansfield amendment. He believed that the U.S. should not overspend on international issues and American foreign policy had to be compatible with domestic requirements.⁴⁷ When proposing the Mansfield Amendment, Mansfield argued that the U.S. was spending unnecessary money stationing American forces in Western Europe.⁴⁸ Additionally, the heavy U.S. spending in Vietnam and Europe hindered progress in building "the Great Society," LBJ's program of domestic reform. Johnson and Mansfield

⁴³ Keith Lowe, *Savage Continent: Europe in the Aftermath of World War II*. (London: Penguin, 2013), 6.

⁴⁴ Barry Eichengreen, "The European Economy since 1946." *New York Times*, March 25, 2007.

⁴⁵ Cooper, "Economic Aspects of the Cold War, 1962-1975," 49.

⁴⁶ M. Mansfield, *Address on Changing Europe and United States Policies* to The Springfield Adult Education Council, Springfield, Mass. 10 October 1962, 5.

⁴⁷ Williams, "Isolationism or Discerning Internationalism," 6.

⁴⁸ Senator Mansfield, speaking on the Mansfield Amendment, 89th Cong., *Congressional Record* (August 31, 1966): S21443.

wanted an expansive governmental system that had numerous social welfare programs that helped the American people.

The perceived decline of Soviet aggression in the 1960s greatly influenced the Mansfield Amendment. Mansfield considered that stationing American forces in Europe was unnecessary because it was doubtful that the Soviet Union would pursue military aggression toward Western Europe. The senator viewed the military stalemate between the United States and the Soviet Union as an opportunity to reduce American forces in this region. According to Mansfield, Europe could provide forces to deter any potential Soviet aggression. Mansfield's first statement in the 1966 amendment called for a 50 percent reduction in American forces in Europe without a formal agreement with the Soviet Union that involved reciprocal reductions.⁴⁹

The Vietnam War was a primary factor that led Mansfield to advocate reducing American military troops in Europe. This conflict had already cost the United States a substantial amount of military and financial resources. The Vietnam War resulted in governmental budgetary pressures that affected the domestic economy. Before the congressional election of 1966, Mansfield felt it was necessary to reassess American spending. Mansfield advocated a reevaluation of government spending during the first meeting of Senate Democrats in 1967. He asked the chairs of Senate committees "to undertake a 'top-to-bottom' evaluation of major financial programs."⁵⁰ Mansfield

⁴⁹ Williams, "Isolationism or Discerning Internationalis," 6.

⁵⁰ Oberdorfer, *Senator Mansfield*, 310.

believed that this evaluation would also provide a check on the fairness and efficacy of the administration's practices.

Contrary to National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger's assertion that Mansfield was an isolationist, the Senate Majority Leader opposed this strategy. According to Kissinger: "At heart Mansfield was an isolationist, eager to reduce all American overseas commitments, reflecting the historical nostalgia that sought to maintain America's moral values uncontaminated by exposure to calculations of power and the petty quarrels of shortsighted foreigners."⁵¹ Despite Kissinger's idea about Mansfield, the senator supported U.S. involvement with international organizations. For example, Mansfield favored using the United Nations Security Council to help mediate negotiations to resolve the Vietnam War:

He spoke with fervor in the Senate on May 15 of the 'vacuum' at the United Nations in dealing with Vietnam at a time when the 'tendencies toward open-ended conflict are becoming more and more recognizable, whereas the alternatives toward a reasonable negotiation in seeking to bring about an honorable conclusion are becoming fewer and fewer all time.'⁵²

At Johns Hopkins University, Mansfield pushed for the Security Council to mediate the conflict in Vietnam on November 10, 1966. Mansfield also called for United Nations involvement at Haverford University in Pennsylvania during a speech.⁵³

⁵¹ Henry Kissinger, *White House Years*. (New York City: Simon and Schuster; Reprint edition, 2011), 939.

⁵² Oberdorfer, *Senator Mansfield*, 319.

⁵³ However, President Johnson rejected the Security Council initiative proposed by the senator. Ibid.

Mansfield concluded that the United States supplying troops to Europe created an incentive for these countries not to produce a sufficient military force to improve NATO's collective security. The American military presence in Western Europe encouraged them to depend on the United States for security even though their economy and infrastructure had improved. Mansfield argued that the European NATO allies had the economic, political, and military capability to provide more security for their own countries. He also criticized the United States for not adequately compelling its NATO allies to produce more military forces in a speech on October 10, 1962.⁵⁴ By proposing the removal of half of the American forces in this region, the Mansfield Amendment intended to pressure the Europeans to increase their defense efforts.

Some senators supported the Mansfield Amendment because NATO allies were not contributing sufficiently to U.S. efforts in Vietnam. For example, Senator Stuart Symington (Dem.-MO) expressed this grievance. During a congressional hearing with Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Senator Symington concluded that a small portion of U.S. allies supported the American effort in Vietnam: "In fact, of 40 allies, only 3 – Australia, New Zealand, and South Korea – had combat troops in South Vietnam."⁵⁵ Symington advocated for the Mansfield Amendment. European allies not supporting American international affairs provided congress members with another justification for removing United States forces in Europe. Despite Mansfield not supporting American military

⁵⁴ Williams, "Isolationism or Discerning Internationalism," 33.

⁵⁵ Linda MacFarland, *Cold War Strategist: Stuart Symington and the Search for National Security*, (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2001), 129.

involvement in Vietnam, he utilized this argument to obtain more senate support for this amendment.

President de Gaulle's decision to withdraw French military forces from NATO on June 21, 1966, also influenced the Mansfield Amendment. De Gaulle argued that the United States exceeded its influence in Europe and that French military involvement in NATO was not necessary because Soviet aggression had declined during the 1960s. He also concluded that the United States used NATO to enforce its foreign policy in Europe and that it did not take into consideration French or European needs.⁵⁶ This decision validated Mansfield's opinion about NATO members not providing a sufficient number of resources to NATO's continental defense.

Mansfield interpreted de Gaulle's decision to remove NATO forces from France as evidence that American troops in this alliance had overstayed their welcome in Europe.⁵⁷ He highlighted the necessity of removing American troops from Europe because it hampered relations with European allies. For example, the senator argued that American forces in Europe frustrated the European people, who began to resent U.S. troops stationed in their respective countries. Despite clear evidence of European discontent, Mansfield argued this point during a conversation with Secretary of State for Political Affairs Eugene Rostow, insisting that "the continued presence of so many American troops in Europe was beginning to grate on the nerves of Germans and

⁵⁶ Kaplan, *The Long Entanglement*, 128.

⁵⁷ Zimmerman, "The Improbable Permanence of a Commitment," 16.

Europeans outside of government.”⁵⁸ Consequently, Mansfield concluded that the United States needed to reduce its forces stationed in Western Europe to alleviate a source of strain within NATO.⁵⁹ However, except for de Gaulle forcing the U.S. to remove its forces stationed in France, Mansfield did not provide clear evidence that Western European countries agreed with this opinion when introducing the Mansfield Amendment.

President Johnson’s Reaction to the Mansfield Amendment

President Johnson responded with dismay and was appalled that Mansfield did not warn him before introducing the amendment. After Johnson talked with Mansfield about his amendment, the president unsuccessfully tried to persuade Senator Russell Long (Dem.-LA) to abandon his support for the Mansfield Amendment. Johnson talked with Long because he was the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee and the Democratic whip in the Senate. These positions were some of the most influential positions in Congress, and Long not supporting the Mansfield Amendment would result in less congressional support.

The Mansfield Amendment worried Johnson because he believed that it could have destabilized NATO. Johnson remarked to Senator Long when Mansfield proposed his amendment that:

This thing y’all did yesterday really murdered us on NATO. I want to give you the views. I don’t want to change your views because I know how you felt since

⁵⁸ *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Volume XIII, Western Europe Region.*
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v13/d224>

⁵⁹ Ibid.

you were born about this thing, but this playing President up there with these statements without my knowing it really gets me in a hell of a shape.⁶⁰

Mansfield proposing this resolution came at the worst possible time for Johnson because de Gaulle had recently declared that France would withdraw its troops from NATO and his administration previously had a disagreement with Britain about troop reduction. Responding to a sterling crisis, the British government claimed it would only maintain its forces in Germany if the United States established new bilateral offset agreements. Additionally, Johnson had to ameliorate West Germany's economic difficulties to maintain the financial offset agreements established in 1964. West Germany experienced an economic recession and a budget deficit, partly from this country's purchase of American military equipment from offset deals.⁶¹ Mansfield introducing this amendment made diplomatic efforts with European allies in NATO more complicated for Johnson.

Further antagonizing Johnson, Mansfield did not warn the president about this proposal. President Johnson responded to this amendment by remarking to Senator Long, in the same conversation, that: "You've got to call me and let me know sometime that they are getting ready to be commander in chief for an hour or so."⁶² In this quotation, Johnson emphasized to Senator Long that he needed to provide advance warning about the Mansfield Amendment. Mansfield decided not to tell Johnson in advance because he knew about the president's opposition to reducing forces in Europe.

⁶⁰ *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Volume XV, Germany and Berlin.*
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v15/d165>

⁶¹ Sayle, *Enduring Alliance*, 139.

⁶² U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Volume XV, Germany and Berlin.* <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v15/d165>

The Johnson administration's perception of the Soviet Union influenced its analysis of the Mansfield Amendment. Johnson's administration considered the Soviet Union a substantial menace to Europe's stability during the 1960s. The administration argued that the United States needed to station forces in Europe to ensure that Soviet expansion would not occur. Secretary of State Dean Rusk argued this point in a letter to Senator Mansfield on April 21, 1967:

The national interests of the United States continue to require a strong Atlantic Alliance, and a strong and balanced NATO force under integrated command in Europe. It would be unthinkable for us to risk the loss of Western Europe, or the loss of its independence. While the deterrent strength of NATO, and the pressure of events in the Far East, have led the Soviet Union to pursue a relatively mild course in Europe since 1962, the military strength of the Warsaw Pact Powers deployed in Eastern Europe is formidable, and rising.⁶³

Johnson and his administration considered the Mansfield Amendment to be a threat to national security because it encouraged the Soviet Union to expand into Western Europe.

Johnson also argued that the Mansfield Amendment could negatively affect U.S. negotiations with the Soviet Union. Despite Johnson's perception of the Soviets, he desired to decrease Cold War tensions with the Soviet Union during his presidency. In particular, he wanted to improve the prospects of détente by seeking a non-proliferation

⁶³ Ibid, Volume XIII, *Western Europe Region*. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v13/d248>

agreement with the Soviet Union.⁶⁴ Deputy National Security Advisor Francis Bator argued in a memorandum to President Johnson that a non-proliferation agreement with the Soviets would be an essential step toward eventually reunifying Germany because it would decrease the Soviet Union's fear of Germany.⁶⁵ When Mansfield proposed this amendment, the United States and Soviet Union were negotiating on a non-proliferation agreement. Consequently, the president worried that this proposal would make it more difficult to persuade the Soviets to come to terms with the United States.⁶⁶ The Soviet Union potentially would not agree to a nuclear non-proliferation treaty if the United States hastily implemented the Mansfield Amendment.

Despite Johnson's desire to maintain American forces in Europe, certain high-ranking officials in his administration considered pursuing an alternative policy. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara considered reducing U.S. forces in Europe; he concluded that European members of NATO refused to muster sufficient military strength for prolonged resistance against a potential attack by the Soviet Union.⁶⁷ McNamara asked the Joint Chiefs of Staff to research the implications of significant American military withdrawals in Western Europe on August 23, 1966. Specifically, McNamara wanted the JCS to study "the implications of (1) withdrawing two divisions and 184 tactical fighters, (2) removing four divisions and 368 aircraft, and (3) thinning

⁶⁴ Stephan Kieninger, *Dynamic Détente: The United States and Europe, 1964-1975*. (Washington D.C.: Lexington Books, 2016), 38.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Volume XV, Germany and Berlin*.

<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v15/d165>

⁶⁷ Walter Poole, *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy*, Vol IX, 1965-1968. (Washington, DC: Office of Joint History, 2013), 101.

out US units plus redeploying 108 aircraft.”⁶⁸ However, the JCS opposed these cutbacks on American forces in Europe after they carried out this study. In fact, the JCS advised against implementing all three of McNamara’s reductions.

In addition, Johnson believed that the Mansfield Amendment subverted his negotiations with European countries in NATO. Despite the idea of using congressional pressure as leverage against European NATO members, the president argued that Mansfield’s action undercut the U.S. goal of Western Europe increasing its military contribution to continental defense. Johnson acknowledged that these European states did not contribute sufficient military aid to NATO. When Mansfield introduced this amendment, Johnson was negotiating with Britain and West Germany to increase the forces they contributed to their own defense. Johnson argued that the Mansfield Amendment made negotiating with Britain and West Germany more complicated during a telephone conversation with Senator Long:

Now, I’m just an old Johnson City boy, but when I’m playing bridge and I show the other fellow my whole hand, I can’t make a very good deal with him. And I wish that on these international things that have such terrible consequences, where you are committing me to meet with de Gaulle it puts me in a hell of an embarrassing position—I know you can’t do anything about it.⁶⁹

Johnson recognized that the central “bargaining chip” for the United States in NATO was that this country contributed a substantial number of military resources to this

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Volume XV, Germany and Berlin.*
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v15/d165>

organization's continental defense.⁷⁰ Furthermore, Johnson perceived that the Mansfield Amendment established a dangerous precedent for American involvement in NATO because it went against multilateral cooperation. The president acknowledged his support for multilateral action during the same telephone conversation with Senator Long:

The second thing is that whatever we do, we've got to do collectively. We want to talk to these other people. And we've got to let them know if they pull out, we're going to pull out. And we've also got to let the enemy know that if we pull down, he ought to pull down. So let them know that, number two.⁷¹

Essentially, Johnson argued that the Mansfield Amendment failed to involve discussions about withdrawing American forces in Europe with its NATO allies.

Johnson also objected to Mansfield's proposal because he argued that it made the Democratic Party appear disorganized. The president highlighted this factor during the same phone conversation with Senator Long:

And a goddamned sense of Congress resolution ain't worth a shit unless this President has some respect for the sense of it. And all it can do is notify every enemy that we're just a bunch of un-unified folks running off like Bert Wheeler, and Jeanette Rankin, in every goddamned direction!⁷²

⁷⁰ A congressional threat, such as the Mansfield Amendment, could have provided Johnson and his administration leverage in these negotiations. However, during these discussions, Johnson did not use Mansfield's amendment as a bargaining chip.

⁷¹ *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Volume XV, Germany and Berlin.*
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v15/d165>

⁷² Ibid.

According to Johnson, this amendment paralleled Senator Wheeler (Dem.-MT) and Representative Rankin's (Rep.-MT) independent tendencies to go against their respective political parties about foreign policy.⁷³ This amendment demonstrated to foreign powers that there were internal disputes within the United States government. Indeed, Johnson believed that Mike Mansfield was undercutting the unity between the president and Congress. He feared that the resulting discord created by Mansfield's amendment made him look like an ineffective leader.

Issues with the Mansfield Amendment of 1966

Mansfield's amendment failed to consider that American allies in NATO contributed to this organization through other means besides providing substantial military forces. For instance, European NATO members indirectly paid the United States to station American troops through other means. The United States demanded these states pay for their troops in their country by purchasing American weapons or bonds. From 1961 to 1964, the United States and West Germany negotiated bilateral offset agreements. These agreements mandated European purchases of American military equipment to offset the costs of their military presence. In the middle of 1966, the United States and Great Britain claimed that they would keep their forces intact in Germany only

⁷³ Jeanette Rankin was a member of the House of Representatives from Montana from 1917 to 1919 and 1941 and 1943; she was the first woman to hold a federal office in the United States. Rep. Rankin's most prominent independent political belief was opposing American involvement in both world wars. Burton Wheeler was a Senator from 1923 to 1947. During the 1940s, Wheeler opposed American military intervention in World War II and had concerns that the United States would become a global policeman. Marc Johnson, "The Man Behind Montana's Contradictory, Confusing, and Occasionally Crazy Political Culture," *What It Means to Be American*, September 12, 2019.

<https://www.whatitmeanstobeamerican.org/identities/the-man-behind-montanas-contradictory-confusing-and-occasionally-crazy-political-culture/>

if they made new arrangements. John McCloy was the chief representative during these negotiations; the discussions became known as the Trilateral Negotiations. The Trilateral Negotiations concluded with West Germany offering to have the Bundesbank purchase \$500 million in medium-term United States government bonds during the fiscal year of 1968.⁷⁴ West Germany also promised not to convert its dollar holdings into gold. The United States purchased \$40 million worth of British military equipment. West Germany, the United States, and Britain signed the “Final Report on the Trilateral Talks” on April 28, 1967.⁷⁵ This agreement was different than its predecessor because Britain and United States combined their offset agreements with West Germany. Additionally, this offset agreement was more expensive than the previous one; the payment totaled \$267 million for 1966.⁷⁶

The Mansfield Amendment failed to utilize NATO’s power structure. For instance, the United States had more control in NATO’s policy-making process than the other members during the twentieth century. Throughout the history of NATO, the United States had implemented its desired foreign policies and occasionally contradicted what European member states wanted. For example, NATO did not intervene during the Suez Crisis in 1956. European NATO members, primarily Britain and France, wanted this alliance to get involved with this conflict. However, the United States ardently opposed NATO intervention in the Suez Crisis. Ultimately, Britain and France dealt with

⁷⁴ Kaplan, *The Long Entanglement*, 140.

⁷⁵ Thomas Schwartz, *Lyndon Johnson and Europe: In the Shadow of Vietnam*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 146.

⁷⁶ Zimmerman, *Money and Security*, 98.

this conflict without NATO. The Suez Crisis underscores NATO's power structure, which Mansfield did not make use of when proposing the Mansfield Amendment.

The United States strong-arming Germany and other European countries not to produce nuclear weapons is another example showing that Mansfield failed to make effective use of NATO's power structure. During the 1960s, the United States did not allow West Germany to develop nuclear technology. West Germany wanted nuclear technology and weaponry as a deterrent against the Soviet Union. West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer believed that the threat of nuclear retaliation deterred the Soviet Union from invading West Germany and Europe. At the time, the United States opposed West Germany acquiring an independent nuclear force. Special Assistant for National Security Affairs Walt Rostow aggressively warned West German government officials that their country "'might well be destroyed' if they tried to develop an independent nuclear capability."⁷⁷ The Federal Republic did not develop independent nuclear technology or weaponry in the 1960s. This case study demonstrates that the United States in NATO regulated its European allies regarding nuclear capabilities.

From Mansfield's Initial Amendment to the Mansfield Amendment of 1971

Mansfield did not call up the Mansfield Amendment for a vote in 1966 out of deference to President Johnson; however, he reintroduced it in the 1967 session. In the meantime, the Johnson administration attempted to placate Mansfield about American forces stationed in Europe. Johnson wanted to appease Mansfield so that the senator

⁷⁷ Marc Trachtenberg, *The Cold War and After: History, Theory, and the Logic of International Politics*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 161.

would not propose another amendment that reduced American forces in Europe. The Johnson administration declared that the United States would return 35,000 of the 260,000 American soldiers and airmen deployed in West Germany to American domestic bases.⁷⁸ However, the United States military could rotate these forces back to Europe for operational reasons. Mansfield concluded that this administrative policy was “a good enough start.”⁷⁹ The United States sent back these troops to Europe when the Soviet Union invaded Czechoslovakia in 1968.

In the spring of 1968, Senator Stuart Symington increased congressional pressure on reducing American forces in Europe. Symington introduced an amendment to a defense procurement bill, which prohibited the use of funds after December 1968 to support more than 50,000 U.S. armed forces in Europe.⁸⁰ Compared to the Mansfield Amendment of 1966, the Symington Amendment was more far-reaching. Mansfield’s amendment was advisory, while Symington’s resolution was mandatory. However, the Senate voted down the Symington Amendment in April 1968.

In November 1968, Johnson and his administration attempted to convince European members in NATO to improve their contributions to this alliance’s continental defense. Johnson supported American involvement in NATO, yet he had concerns about this organization. Like Mansfield, Johnson acknowledged that European NATO members did not provide enough military forces compared to the United States.⁸¹ However,

⁷⁸ Oberdorfer, *Senator Mansfield*, 312.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Phil Williams, *The Senate and U.S. Troops in Europe*, (New York City, St. Martin’s Press), 158.

⁸¹ Sayle, *Enduring Alliance*, 165.

Johnson advocated using other means than the Mansfield Amendment to get European states to contribute more of their national forces to NATO. For example, President Johnson used the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia as an opportunity to press European states to contribute more forces to the alliance. For instance, U.S. ambassadors in NATO countries relayed Johnson's message that the United States would agree to an early meeting about the Soviet Union's invasion of Czechoslovakia if they increased their contribution to NATO's continental defense.⁸² In response, European countries in NATO, except for France, Iceland, and Portugal, established the Eurogroup. This informal group had two objectives. First, these countries wanted to coordinate efforts to maximize their defense spending effectiveness. Second, they desired to demonstrate to the U.S. government that they took their defense efforts in NATO seriously.⁸³ However, the Eurogroup did not placate congressional concerns about burden-sharing in NATO.

Mansfield proposed another senate resolution in 1969, which, like its predecessor, called for the reduction of half of the U.S. forces stationed in Europe. For this resolution, Mansfield cited that the United States stationing military forces in Western Europe worsened the American foreign exchange gap.⁸⁴ In particular, the U.S. net foreign exchange gap with West Germany increased from \$700 million in 1963 to \$965 million in 1969.⁸⁵ According to Mansfield, this resolution intended to compel its NATO allies to

⁸² Ibid, 164.

⁸³ The Eurogroup did not specify how much they promised to increase their defense spending. Williams, *The Senate and U.S. Troops in Europe*, 159.

⁸⁴ Kaplan, *The Long Entanglement*, 152.

⁸⁵ *Congressional Record*, Vol. 115, 91st Cong., 1st Session, December 1, 1969, pp. 36147.

make a fairer contribution to this alliance.⁸⁶ Ultimately, Mansfield decided to wait to see what course of action the Nixon administration would follow and put this resolution on hold.⁸⁷

Mansfield proposed to reduce American forces in Europe again during the Nixon Administration. In May 1971, Mansfield advocated that the United States needed to cut half of its military forces stationed in Europe to cease the dollar outflow abroad and economize domestically. According to the *New York Times*, the Mansfield Amendment of 1971 proposed to remove about 150,000 American troops from Europe.⁸⁸ Unlike his earlier amendment, this one required the president to withdraw U.S. troops.

Mansfield had similar reasons for introducing this new resolution compared to the 1966 amendment. However, certain events in the early 1970s increased Mansfield's desire to reduce American forces in Europe. For instance, the continuing costs of the Vietnam War encourage Mansfield to reintroduce this proposal. Senator Symington argued that American involvement in Vietnam substantially worsened the economy because it cost about \$70 million a day.⁸⁹ In addition, the net liquidity balance-of-payments deficit worsened substantially in the late 1960s from \$1.6 billion in 1968 to \$6.1 billion in 1969. American monetary gold reserves also declined from \$17.8 billion at the end of 1960 to \$10.8 billion at the end of 1968.⁹⁰ According to Mansfield, having

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Williams, *The Senate and U.S. Troops in Europe*, 164.

⁸⁸ John Finney, "The World," *New York Times*, May 16, 1971.

⁸⁹ MacFarland, *Cold War Strategist*, 132.

⁹⁰ *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976*, Volume III, Foreign Economic Policy; International Monetary Policy, 1969-1972, Document 2. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v03/d2>

over 200,000 American troops stationed in Europe cost the United States a large amount of money; this factor strained the U.S. budget.⁹¹ Mansfield blamed U.S. economic problems and especially the deficit of payments directly to Europe.

Mansfield's emphasis on the growing American financial problems abroad changed the burden-sharing debate. In the mid-1960s, the controversy about burden-sharing in NATO primarily involved two grievances. First, some U.S. government officials criticized European NATO members' lack of support for the Vietnam War. Second, others, such as Senator Henry Jackson found fault with European NATO members' limited contribution for this alliance's continental defense. Mansfield argued that the growing U.S. balance-of-payments deficit warranted American troops withdrawals in Europe when he proposed his amendment. Consequently, American government officials began acknowledging the balance-of-payments deficit as a central issue with burden-sharing in NATO.

The Mansfield Amendment of 1971 demonstrates the growing executive-congressional struggle over control of foreign policy during the Vietnam era. Many members of Congress considered that they needed to regain the influence they had lost over foreign policy to the "Imperial Presidency."⁹² As a result, Congress became gradually more assertive in attempting to reclaim control. For instance, Mansfield changing the form of his proposal from a nonbinding resolution in 1966 to a requirement

⁹¹ Steven Brady, "The U.S. Congress and German-American Relations," in *The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War, 1968-1990: A Handbook, Vol. 2.* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 83.

⁹² Williams, *Senate and U.S. Troops in Europe*, 142.

to reduce forces stationed in Europe in 1971 shows the senator's desire to challenge Nixon's role in foreign policy. Indeed, Mansfield's amendment was an attempt to rein in the president's powers.

The burden-sharing debate was not only a U.S. government issue; some American journalists, such as *New York Times* writer David Called, voiced their opinion about this problem in NATO. Called argued that Britain, France, and West Germany had roughly 1,400,000 military forces and could take primary responsibility for their defenses. However, Called did not discuss nuclear deterrence in this article. Called also advocated for fundamental reform to NATO.⁹³ He believed that the pervasive U.S. control of NATO made European members reliant on the United States and that this dependence would become economically and militarily detrimental to these countries. "Indeed, our dollar deficit, caused in considerable degree by NATO's costs over the years," he argued, "now threatens the whole structure of that economic community which is Europe's best hope for the future."⁹⁴ *Smithfield Times* writer Delk Simpson also asserted that European countries in NATO should pay their fair share of costs in this alliance's continental defense. However, Simpson opposed Mansfield's amendment. He argued that the Nixon administration should legislate convincing European members in NATO to contribute more resources to Europe's defense efforts.⁹⁵

⁹³ David Called, "The Mansfield Amendment: Yes." *New York Times*, May 19, 1971.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Delk Simpson, "Senator Mansfield Should Quit!" *The Smithfield Times*, May 26, 1971.

President Nixon, the Mansfield Amendment of 1971, and NATO

President Nixon was against the Mansfield Amendment. Nixon's meeting with former high government administrators and military officials about the proposal on May 13, 1971, reveals the underlying rationale for his opposition. Nixon had reasons similar to Johnson's for disagreeing with the reduction of American forces in Europe. Like Johnson, Nixon supported NATO:

The President asked whether the reasons for supporting NATO were no longer relevant, commenting that he himself had very strong feelings on the subject. One could talk about the importance of Asia, of Latin America and the Middle East, which indeed had a very high level of importance, but NATO was the blue chip.⁹⁶

Nixon also argued that reducing American forces in Europe, specifically in Germany, negatively affected American foreign policy with the Soviet Union. He believed that having a strong NATO alliance improved diplomacy with the Soviets; therefore, the United States needed a unified NATO to strengthen Europe. This factor would compel the Soviet Union to participate in détente. Nixon thought that the Mansfield Amendment potentially weakened NATO and threatened détente.

Nixon and his administration supported NATO, yet he had fundamental concerns with this organization. According to Nixon, NATO's central problem was that European member states did not contribute sufficient military forces. Despite his opposition to Mansfield's proposal, Nixon ultimately wanted to reduce American forces in Europe, as

⁹⁶ *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969–1976, Volume XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969–1972.*
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v41/d63>

he revealed when discussing the Mansfield Amendment in May: “The objective of all of us was to reduce forces, to achieve better relations with the Russians, and get the Europeans to do more.”⁹⁷ Thus, the president had similar viewpoints concerning European contributions to NATO as Mansfield. However, Nixon perceived that Mansfield’s proposal was too radical and did not involve negotiating with NATO allies.

Nixon had other concerns about troop reductions in Western Europe when Mansfield introduced his Amendment in 1971. West Germany made another effort to start the Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) negotiations with the Soviet Union in the spring of 1971. MBFR involved NATO members negotiating with Warsaw Pact countries to reduce their conventional forces, so their troop levels became equal. West German Chancellor Willy Brandt and his administration put forward a phased approach of troop reductions between West Germany and the Soviet Union while emphasizing the relevance of NATO’s consultation process. In particular, Brandt’s phased approach involved multiple interdependent agreements on specific aspects of troop reductions.⁹⁸ Nixon was skeptical about Brandt’s MBFR negotiations with the Soviet Union.⁹⁹ Making matters more complicated for Nixon, Mansfield proposed the Mansfield Amendment of 1971 in May when Nixon was dealing with Brandt’s desire to start MBFR negotiations with the Soviets. Mansfield’s legislation and the American debate about U.S. forces in Europe made it more difficult for the Nixon administration to

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Kieninger, *Dynamic Détente*, 142.

⁹⁹ President Nixon’s fear that American allies in Eastern Asia and Western Europe could perceive U.S. troop reductions as the beginning of the decline of U.S. power influenced his opinion about the MBFR negotiations. Ibid, 143.

stall on MBFR negotiations because this amendment proposed cutting troops unilaterally. In June 1971, MBFR explorations became fruitless when alliance ministers sent NATO Secretary General Manlio Brosio to Moscow to initiate negotiations with the Soviet Union; the Soviets declined to discuss terms with Brosio.¹⁰⁰

Nixon's grievances about NATO intensified after the Senate defeated the Mansfield Amendment of 1971 by a vote of 61-36.¹⁰¹ Nixon became outraged with the NATO allies during the winter of 1972-73. West Germany and Canada publicly criticized the Vietnam conflict.¹⁰² National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger and Nixon concluded that the European members in NATO were taking a "free-ride" on security. The tension between the Nixon administration and European members in NATO increased so much that Nixon privately hinted to Kissinger that he might adopt Mansfield's proposal.¹⁰³

Nixon and Kissinger aggressively negotiated with European states to contribute more and advance American foreign policy goals in NATO. The United States shifted to engaging in "hardball" diplomacy with its European allies, and a vital tactic in this overall strategy involved nuclear politics. For instance, Kissinger suggested to the French that the United States would increase its assistance to France's nuclear program. This maneuver encouraged France to maintain its independence from NATO. Kissinger wanted to threaten Anglo-American nuclear cooperation, increase Anglo-French friction, and simultaneously remove Anglo-French nuclear cooperation.¹⁰⁴ Kissinger's political

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Finney, "The World."

¹⁰² Sayle, *Enduring Alliance*, 187.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 83.

ploy worked; it encouraged the French to diminish their nuclear cooperation with Britain.¹⁰⁵ There was a fundamental difference between Nixon and Kissinger's political tactics compared to the Mansfield Amendment in that Nixon and Kissinger incorporated their European allies into the diplomatic efforts to resolve some of NATO's problems.

The Mansfield Amendment did not involve negotiating with European allies in NATO about reducing American forces. Mansfield blatantly disregarded American diplomacy with its European allies. If the United States had implemented this proposal, European allies would have perceived it as a threat to multilateral cooperation in NATO. For instance, the Supreme Commander of NATO General, Andrew Goodpaster, speculated about the psychological impact that minor troops reductions would have on European countries during a House subcommittee hearing on Europe in 1970.¹⁰⁶ Additionally, in response to Mansfield proposing the Mansfield Amendment of 1971, the West German government published a statement that opposed any substantial U.S. force reductions in NATO Europe.¹⁰⁷ The United States would have appeared as unreliable as a NATO ally if the adoption of the Mansfield Amendment of 1971 had reduced American forces in Europe by 50 percent. Indeed, the implementation of this amendment would have disrupted NATO, potentially to the detriment of national and global security.

Mansfield's reasoning behind proposing the Mansfield Amendment in 1966 hinged on three primary arguments: 1) the United States needed to reallocate its foreign

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Brady, "The U.S. Congress and German-American Relations," 84

¹⁰⁷ Conrad Ahlers, the government spokesman, issued this statement on May 14, 1971. Lawrence Fellows, "Bonn Warns U.S. on Troop Cutback," *New York Times*, May 15, 1971.

policy budget due to the Vietnam War, 2) European countries had economically improved enough to start contributing more to NATO, and 3) Europe did not need American forces in this region because of the decline of Soviet aggression. President Johnson opposed this resolution because his administration supported stationing forces in Europe due to the threat of the Soviet Union and because he perceived it as undercutting American policy goals in NATO. Furthermore, he believed that it made him appear incompetent because he could not control Congress. Mansfield ultimately decided to drop his resolution out of respect for Johnson, yet he did not stop trying to reduce American forces in Europe. In 1971, Mansfield proposed another amendment due to the increasing costs of the Vietnam War and the growing American balance-of-payments deficit. This amendment had a fundamental problem; the Mansfield Amendment did not incorporate diplomatic measures with European states. The United States Senate voted against his proposal 61 to 36. However, other amendments that reduced American forces stationed in Europe would emerge in the Senate after 1971.

Chapter II: The Jackson-Nunn Amendment; A Short-Term Solution for Burden-Sharing

The burden-sharing debate in the United States escalated after the Senate voted against the Mansfield Amendment of 1971. Congressional concerns about the cost of stationing U.S. troops in Europe and burden-sharing peaked in 1973. Several members of Congress, including Representative Thomas P. O'Neill (Dem.-MA), Senators Hubert Humphrey (Dem.-MN), and Mike Mansfield, introduced legislation to reduce U.S. forces in Europe. However, Senators Henry Jackson and Sam Nunn put forward the only legislation that passed, the Jackson-Nunn Amendment. Nunn and Jackson proposed this amendment to reduce Senate support of Mansfield's far-reaching proposals, decrease the dollar flow abroad, and get American allies in NATO to contribute more to continental defense. The Jackson-Nunn Amendment directed President Nixon to compel its allies in NATO to resolve the balance-of-payments deficit incurred by stationing American forces in Europe. Despite having issues with Jackson and Nunn's amendment, Nixon approved it to ensure that Congress would not pass more radical legislation related to burden-sharing. Afterward, West Germany negotiated with Nixon's administration to offset the American balance-of-payments deficit; they signed an agreement in April 1974. The Jackson-Nunn Amendment ameliorated some U.S. burden-sharing problems; however, this legislation did not end this debate during the 1970s because it did not compel all alliance members to contribute more to NATO.

Senator Jackson's Assessment of NATO during the 1970s

Senator Jackson had more congressional experience than Nunn when they proposed the Jackson-Nunn Amendment. Nunn developed a close relationship with Jackson shortly after becoming a senator in 1971. In fact, Carl Vinson (Dem.-GA), a retired Congressman, introduced Nunn to Jackson.¹⁰⁸ Vinson helped Nunn partly because these two politicians were related; Vinson was Nunn's uncle. Jackson became Nunn's mentor in the Senate after they met.¹⁰⁹

Jackson avidly supported NATO throughout his Senate tenure. Senator Jackson had considerable knowledge about this alliance partly from being chair of the Senate Government Operations Subcommittee on National Security and International Operations.¹¹⁰ The Senate authorized Jackson's subcommittee to pursue a study of NATO in 1965. Jackson's study lasted two years and was the first Senate review since NATO's founders ratified the North Atlantic Treaty. The study concluded that a militarily strong NATO alliance was still necessary for the United States and Western Europe. Furthermore, NATO needed to enhance its continental defense through an alliance-wide collective effort; this improvement could eventually cause the Soviet Union to accept a genuine European settlement. Jackson's research on this alliance contributed to his greater understanding of NATO's importance to American national security.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ Phil Gailey, "Sam Nunn's Rising Star," *New York Times*, January 4, 1987.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ This subcommittee researches specific matters and reports back to the Senate Government Operations Committee on National Security and International Operations.

¹¹¹ Dorothy Fosdick. *Henry M. Jackson and World Affairs: Selected Speeches, 1953-1983*. (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1990), 110.

Senator Jackson supported stationing American forces in Europe. When opposing the Mansfield Amendment of 1971 during a Senate hearing, Jackson asserted that:

The chief purpose of the American troop commitment is political: to leave no doubt in the Kremlin that the United States would be involved, from the outset of a Soviet inspired crisis or a Soviet move against the NATO area. It needs to be perfectly clear to the Russians that their forces would meet enough American forces to make the crisis a Soviet-American crisis, not just a European one.¹¹²

Jackson argued that any U.S. troop reduction in Europe would jeopardize NATO's bargaining position with the Soviet Union. The senator considered that a substantial number of U.S. forces in Europe made negotiating troop reductions with the Soviet Union less difficult.¹¹³ Additionally, Jackson did not believe that the decreasing tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union made stationing troops in Europe unnecessary. In fact, NATO forces caused the Soviets to be more inclined to decrease Cold War tensions with the West than in previous decades.

Jackson also warned that West Germany would have to bolster its forces if the United States reduced its soldiers in this region. The senator believed that this circumstance could increase tensions in Central Europe. As he explained during a Senate speech in 1971, "I would have thought they [supporters of the Mansfield Amendment] understood that a disproportionally large West German contribution can revive old fears

¹¹² S. Jackson, *U.S. Forces in Europe and the Mansfield Amendment* to the United States Senate, Washington D.C., 1971, 114.

¹¹³ Ibid.

and animosities among smaller West European countries.”¹¹⁴ According to Jackson, West Germany increasing its forces could result in Warsaw Pact countries not being inclined to decrease Cold War hostilities.

Jackson emphasized the unequal burden-sharing in NATO. During the same Senate speech, he asserted that “overall, Western Europe is still not making a reasonably proportionate contribution to the common defense effort.”¹¹⁵ In this statement, Jackson talked about how some European allies in NATO could improve their conventional force levels and make more progress with offsetting payments on U.S. military accounts. Additionally, Jackson remarked to the North Atlantic Assembly in the Netherlands in November 1971 that American allies in NATO needed to make more concrete progress with burden-sharing. Jackson advocated that the United States push its European allies to make more significant efforts to offset the payments on military accounts during this assembly.

Congressional Pressure about Burden-Sharing Increases

In July 1973, O’Neill proposed a resolution to decrease air force and army personnel overseas from anywhere by 100,000. The House defeated this motion by a 242 to 163 margin.¹¹⁶ However, the House approved a substitute resolution that called upon the House Armed Services Committee to conduct a study on the financial viability of maintaining 300,000 soldiers in Europe. The House Armed Services Committee study advocated against reducing U.S. forces in Europe by citing the Soviet Union’s vastly

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 112.

¹¹⁶ John Finney, “House Beats Move to Cut American Troops Abroad,” *New York Times*, August 1, 1973.

superior reinforcement capability.¹¹⁷ In 1973, the United States stationed 256,969 army and air force troops in Europe. Continuing this trend in legislation, Representative Otis Pike (Dem.-NY) proposed another amendment that prohibited the United States from stationing troops in any foreign allied country that spent a smaller percentage of its gross national product on defense spending than the United States. The House voted against Pike's amendment by 282 votes to 130.¹¹⁸

There are several reasons why congressional efforts to reduce U.S. forces abroad increased in the early 1970s. The Nixon administration pursuit of détente intensified the congressional burden-sharing debate. Détente had three primary strategic components. The United States wanted to negotiate with the Soviet Union and China on arms reduction agreements, increase trade with these countries, and improve its defense capabilities to demonstrate its willingness to utilize force.¹¹⁹ Nixon and administration considered that an increase in U.S. military capabilities would deter Soviet adventurism in foreign affairs. Some senators began questioning if the United States needed a large military force in Western Europe because of détente's first two objectives. For example, National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger pointed out détente's effect on congressional efforts to reduce American forces in Europe:

Every easing of tensions led to pressure for cuts in the forces that made easing possible. Some favored a reduction of the American military presence in Europe

¹¹⁷ Williams, *The Senate and U.S. Troops in Europe*, 215.

¹¹⁸ John Finney, "House Beats Move to Cut American Troops Abroad," *New York Times*, August 1, 1973.

¹¹⁹ Kieninger, *Dynamic Détente*, 79.

because they thought it was no longer necessary, others considered our overseas deployment economically unbearable.¹²⁰

There are two other reasons that explain why the congressional burden-sharing debate peaked in 1973. First, the American withdrawal from Vietnam made burden-sharing a more significant concern for Congress. U.S. representatives, North and South Vietnam, and the Vietcong signed the Paris Peace Accords. This agreement required the United States to remove its troops, a ceasefire to occur, and North and South Vietnam to reunify.¹²¹ However, the Paris Peace Accords had nothing to do with Vietnam's reunification. The North's conquest of South Vietnam brought about Vietnamese unification in April 1975. Congressional members recognized that the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam could be a potential watershed moment for American foreign policy.¹²² In theory, the U.S. could start reducing its forces in Western Europe once they left Vietnam. Second, the growing balance-of-payments deficit created another reason for Congress to decrease American forces from Europe.¹²³ The U.S. balance-of-payments deficit increased from \$1.5 billion in 1972 to about \$2.5 billion in 1973.¹²⁴ Congressional members recognized this trend and blamed American troops abroad for this financial

¹²⁰ Edward A. Kolodziej, "Congress and Foreign Policy: The Nixon Years." *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science* 32, no. 1 (1975): 167.

¹²¹ "The Vietnam Agreement and Protocols," *New York Times*, January 25, 1973.

¹²² John Duffield. *Power Rules: The Evolution of NATO's Conventional Force Posture*. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), 202.

¹²³ However, politicians could cite that the United States ending its engagement in Vietnam meant this country could commit more resources elsewhere. Critics of American intervention in Vietnam often argued that this conflict in Southeast Asia siphoned away resources better committed to more important strategic areas, namely Western Europe.

¹²⁴ Walter Poole, *The JCS and National Policy*. Vol. XI. 1973-1976. (Washington, D.C.: Office of Joint History, 2015), 107.

issue. Kissinger acknowledged that the balance-of-payments deficit provided the Senate a justifiable reason to pass legislation that reduced American forces abroad when discussing the Mansfield Amendment.¹²⁵

The U.S. burden-sharing problem connects to a broader diplomatic struggle between Congress and Nixon. President Nixon struggled to carry out his foreign policy against an increasingly assertive Congress. The War Powers Act and the Mansfield Amendment both played a role in Congress reasserting its influence on foreign policy. Congress passed the War Powers Act in 1973. This act reasserted the legislative branch's influence concerning war by forcing the president to consult Congress after deploying armed forces.¹²⁶ American forces in Europe became an essential element in this debate throughout Nixon's presidency. Kissinger recognized the struggle between the Nixon administration and the Senate. For instance, Kissinger criticized the Senate's attempts to gain more influence over American foreign policy by emphasizing that foreign policy needed to be coherent and that the Senate attempting to gain more control jeopardized the policy's effectiveness.¹²⁷

The lack of progress with European NATO members' improvements in their defense spending increased congressional concern about burden-sharing. From the late 1960s to 1973, European countries failed to increase their defense spending record. For example, West Germany's defense spending slightly increased from 3.1 percent of its

¹²⁵ Kolodziej, "Congress and Foreign Policy: The Nixon Years," 167.

¹²⁶ Richard Madden, "House and Senate Override Veto by Nixon on Curb of War Powers; Backers of Bill Win 3 Year Fight," *New York Times*, November 8, 1973.

¹²⁷ Kolodziej, "Congress and Foreign Policy: The Nixon Years," 167.

gross domestic product in 1970 to 3.2 in 1973. The United Kingdom's defense spending decreased from 4.9 percent in 1969 to 4.4 in 1973, And Italy's fell during the same period from 2.4 percent to 2.2.¹²⁸ However, this ratio has a defect because it does not reveal how many resources went into supplying troops and military technology for NATO. Despite this flaw, European NATO members did not substantially improve their defense spending.

Senators Jackson and Nunn proposed the Jackson-Nunn Amendment on September 25, 1973; this legislation directed the president to obtain payments from its NATO allies to offset any balance-of-payments deficit incurred from American forces stationed in Europe. The American balance-of-payments deficit totaled around \$3 billion in 1973.¹²⁹ Notably, the Jackson-Nunn Amendment stipulated that the United States would reduce its forces in Europe enough to eliminate the balance-of-payments deficit if European NATO members did not comply by November 1976. A *New Republic* article demonstrates how this penalty provision could result in substantial troop withdrawals: "If the gap is in the predicted range of \$600 million to \$1.4 billion, the withdrawals would be substantial: 24 to 56 percent of our European garrison."¹³⁰ The Senate attached the Jackson-Nunn Amendment to the Department of Defense Authorization Act of 1974 by an overwhelming margin of 84-5.¹³¹ The House of Representatives agreed in a similar one-sided vote.

¹²⁸ "SIPRI Military Expenditure Database."

¹²⁹ Daniel Sargent, *A Superpower Transformed: The Remaking of American Foreign Relations in the 1970s*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 103.

¹³⁰ "The Year That Was." *The New Republic*. (1973): 7.

¹³¹ Williams, *The Senate and US Troops in Europe*, 220.

The Jackson-Nunn Amendment had one other recommendation and requirement for NATO members. First, Section 812 of the Act stated that European NATO members should increase their financial contributions to this alliance so that the United States could decrease its commitments.¹³² However, the Jackson-Nunn Amendment did not provide an exact benchmark for European allies to meet. This section recommended more allied contributions to help the United States meet the added budgetary expenses of deploying forces in Europe. Congress included this stipulation to convince its NATO allies to contribute more to its continental defense. Second, a section in paragraph D required presidential reports about allies contributing more financial resources to Congress every three months.¹³³

After the House and Senate approved Jackson and Nunn's legislation, Humphrey and Allan Cranston (Dem.-CA) proposed an amendment that required a 110,000 reduction in all overseas forces by December 31, 1975. The Senate approved Cranston and Humphrey's amendment by 48-36 on September 26, 1973.¹³⁴ Senators Cranston and Humphrey originally wanted to reduce American forces stationed abroad by 125,000 troops. However, Senator Robert C. Byrd (Dem.-WV) convinced Humphrey to decrease the number to 110,000 troops to increase support for this amendment.¹³⁵ Eventually, the

¹³² Memorandum for the Record, 11 June 1974, "Jackson/Nunn Amendment." CIA Archives, General CIA Records Virtual Reading Room, <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP75B00380R000600160006-7.pdf>

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ John Finney, "Senate Vote Cut 110,000 Troops Overseas by 1976," *New York Times*, September 28, 1973.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

Senate and House conferees dropped this provision due to the Jackson-Nunn Amendment.

Mansfield introduced another amendment to reduce American forces stationed in Western Europe on September 26. The Mansfield Amendment of 1973 proposed a decrease in U.S. forces in Europe by 50 percent over three years. However, Mansfield lowered the percentage from 50 percent to 40 percent immediately before the Senate voted on this amendment. Additionally, Cranston proposed a substitute amendment before the vote that was the same as Mansfield's proposal. With these changes, the Mansfield Amendment became the Cranston Amendment of 1973, passing with 49 votes to 46.¹³⁶ However, due to parliamentary procedures, this amendment required a second vote because senators approved the initial Cranston Amendment.

The Jackson-Nunn Amendment eroded support for Cranston and Mansfield's far-reaching proposal. Jackson and Nunn opposed the Cranston Amendment of 1973. These senators considered that a binding resolution was too radical because it directly decreased American troops in Europe over time. During a Senate speech, Jackson argued that reducing U.S. troops in Europe significantly disrupted American-European relations:

In the case of NATO, we and our European allies have over the years developed agreed-upon consultative machinery for the formulation of common policies. It is difficult to imagine a more disruptive monkey wrench in that machinery we are discussing here.¹³⁷

¹³⁶ Williams, *The Senate and U.S. Troops in Europe*, 221.

¹³⁷ S. Jackson, *U.S. Forces in Europe and the Mansfield Amendment*, 116.

Other senators besides Jackson and Nunn helped increase the opposition to the Cranston Amendment. The Minority Whip, Senator Robert Griffin (Rep.-MI) objected to this amendment before the Senate voted on it again, thereby preventing its immediate consideration. Several congressional members, military, and government officials also lobbied to overturn the Cranston Amendment. The key figures included General Andrew Goodpaster, who telephoned several U.S. senators from Belgium, Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger, and Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations Marshall Wright.¹³⁸ Because of these efforts and the Jackson-Nunn Amendment, the Senate rejected Mansfield and Cranston's modified amendment by 55 votes to 44.¹³⁹ With the Senate voting down yet another Mansfield proposal to reduce American forces abroad, the Jackson-Nunn Amendment was the only legislation that the Senate passed involving burden-sharing. Consequently, the Nixon administration would have to deal with this amendment.

Nixon, NATO, and the Jackson-Nunn Amendment

Before Nixon dealt with the Jackson-Nunn Amendment, his administration attempted to resolve an acute balance-of-payments deficit. This deficit was around \$2 billion in 1971.¹⁴⁰ President Nixon's economic reforms exacerbated this financial issue. For instance, the Nixon administration removed the Johnson era controls on foreign direct investment by American corporations. This relaxation of capital controls worsened the deficit because there was no substantial realignment of exchange rates. On August 15,

¹³⁸ Williams, *The Senate and U.S. Troops in Europe*, 221.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Sargent, *A Superpower Transformed*, 103.

1971, Nixon established several emergency policies to resolve the balance-of-payments crisis. These stipulations are known as the New Economic Policy. Nixon's New Economic Policy initiated a 10 percent surcharge on imports coming into the United States and established a system of formal wage-price controls to limit increases in consumer prices and workers' wages. The Nixon administration ended an important part of the Bretton Woods System; the United States would no longer permit foreign central banks to exchange dollars for the U.S. Treasury's gold.¹⁴¹ Nixon's New Economic Policy did not eliminate the American balance-of-payments deficit, which amounted to \$1.5 billion in 1972. As a result, President Nixon ordered investigations into finding methods of reducing it while preserving U.S. troops in Europe. Nixon attempted multilateral efforts to cover costs and renew an offset agreement between the United States and West Germany in 1973. However, Congress passed Jackson and Nunn's legislation before West Germany and the Nixon administration could agree upon these fiscal corrections.

Nixon had supported NATO throughout his presidency when Congress approved the Jackson-Nunn Amendment. For example, he said that the United States would not reduce its force commitment to NATO at a speech in County Clare, Ireland on October 4, 1970:

The United States will, under no circumstances, reduce, unilaterally, its commitment to NATO. Any reduction in NATO forces, if it occurs, will only take place on a multilateral basis and on the basis of what those who are lined up

¹⁴¹ Cooper, "Economic Aspects of the Cold War, 1962-1975," 60.

against the NATO forces -- what they might do. In other words, it would have to be on a mutual basis.¹⁴²

However, Nixon and his administration recognized that maintaining American forces in Western Europe caused financial issues for the United States. For instance, Kissinger argued that the costs of U.S. troops in Europe warranted corrective action, such as the United States negotiating an economic offset agreement with West Germany. Kissinger was mainly remarking about the American balance-of-payments budget deficit from stationing its forces in Europe, totaling \$1.5 billion in 1972.¹⁴³

Conflict in the Middle East provided a reason for Nixon to keep American forces in Europe. Egypt and Syria attacked Israel on October 6, 1973, thereby starting the Yom Kippur War. Israel defeated Egypt and Syria handily with the backing of the Nixon administration. This conflict lasted eighteen days, ending on October 24.¹⁴⁴ Despite the United States not involving its European forces in the Yom Kippur War, the Nixon administration considered that the United States needed troops stationed in Europe to ensure a quicker military intervention in the Middle East if another conflict arose.¹⁴⁵

Nixon also argued that stationing American troops in Europe proved to be economically valuable. Having troops in this region gave leverage for the United States when making financial agreements with Western Europe, specifically with West

¹⁴² Zimmermann, "The Improbable Permanence of a Commitment," 20.

¹⁴³ Poole, *JCS and National Policy. Vol. XI. 1973-1976*, 107.

¹⁴⁴ Hubert Zimmerman details that the Nixon administration cited Europe's geostrategic importance as justification for maintaining troops in Western Europe in his article "The Improbable Permanence of a Commitment."

¹⁴⁵ Zimmermann, "The Improbable Permanence of a Commitment," 21.

Germany. The United States had 216,900 army troops stationed in West Germany in 1973. Nixon considered that these forces could be an essential bargaining chip for the United States in future economic negotiations with West Germany or other NATO-allied countries.¹⁴⁶ Kissinger used this argument during a conversation with West German politician Franz-Josef Strauss, Chairman of the Christian Social Union, on September 10, 1972.¹⁴⁷ Indeed, hasty troop withdrawals would have weakened the U.S. negotiating position on vital financial issues with Western Europe, such as European countries supporting an American trade agreement with the Soviets.

Although Nixon supported NATO, he had complaints about this alliance. Nixon considered that every member in NATO should contribute their full share to maintaining an effective deterrent against the Soviet Union. However, Nixon did not provide an exact figure of how much more European allies needed to contribute to NATO in this source.¹⁴⁸ Nixon acknowledged that the American share of burden in NATO was disproportionately large. He concluded during a NSC meeting on October 14, 1970, that “[o]ur primary interest should not be directed simply to covering the costs of our own forces but rather to ensuring that there is a mutual sharing of responsibility for the defense of Europe.”¹⁴⁹ Nixon and his administration wanted its European allies to contribute more to NATO’s continental defense. Concerns about this alliance for Nixon peaked in 1973. Nixon

¹⁴⁶ National Security Decision Memorandum 88, 15 October 1970, “US Force Levels in Europe and ‘Burden-sharing’.” Richard M. Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Virtual Library, https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/virtuallibrary/documents/nsdm/nsdm_088.pdf

¹⁴⁷ Zimmermann, “The Improbable Permanence of a Commitment,” 21.

¹⁴⁸ Richard M. Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Virtual Library, https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/virtuallibrary/documents/nsdm/nsdm_088.pdf

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

became outraged when West Germany and Canada publicly criticized U.S. involvement in Vietnam.¹⁵⁰ Further escalating alliance conflict, Kissinger and Nixon concluded that the European members in NATO were taking a “free-ride” on security. The tension between the Nixon administration and European members in NATO increased so much that Nixon hinted at his desire to follow Mansfield’s proposal during a meeting with Kissinger in October 1973.¹⁵¹

Nixon considered several options for ameliorating the American burden-sharing problem. A National Security Council memorandum to Secretary of State William Rogers details the president’s preferred method of allied contribution:

Taking a long view, rather than having members of the NATO Alliance in effect subsidize US forces in Europe, the President would welcome having the funds used to shore up and build up the local strength of the member countries’ armed forces.¹⁵²

Nixon believed that European members contributing more to NATO through this method resulted in reaffirming American support for this alliance. Furthermore, Nixon was wary about an amendment that compelled European members in NATO to contribute more to direct spending by threatening to reduce American forces stationed in Europe.¹⁵³ The president acknowledged that this tactic meant that the United States accepted their viewpoint about burden-sharing.

¹⁵⁰ Sayle, *Enduring Alliance*, 184.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Richard M. Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Virtual Library, https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/virtuallibrary/documents/nsdm/nsdm_088.pdf.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

When Congress passed the Jackson-Nunn Amendment, Nixon initially had misgivings about this legislation. Nixon had concerns over the amendment's potential for making negotiations with other NATO members more difficult.¹⁵⁴ For example, European members in this alliance might not want to contribute more to NATO's continental defense if the United States strong-armed them to offset the balance-of-payments deficit. Additionally, the president considered that this amendment could strain the U.S. diplomatic relationship with its NATO allies.

Despite President Nixon's concerns about the Jackson-Nunn Amendment, he approved this legislation, fearing a presidential veto would result in more drastic legislation.¹⁵⁵ Possibly, Nixon accepted this amendment because he recognized its potential to convince its European allies to contribute more to NATO's continental defense. Considering that Nixon had grievances about burden-sharing in NATO, this legislation allowed the president to persuade the European allies to resolve the budget deficit while retaining a belief of being against unilateral troop withdrawals. Consequently, the Nixon administration started negotiating with its NATO allies to offset the balance-of-payments deficit from stationing American forces in Europe.

Western Europe and the Jackson-Nunn Amendment

European nations, such as France and Great Britain, doubted there was any urgency to respond to the Jackson-Nunn Amendment. Foreign ministers of European countries did not take up this issue during a NATO meeting in December 1973 due to

¹⁵⁴ Kaplan, *The Long Entanglement*, 157.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

improvement in the U.S. balance-of-payments.¹⁵⁶ Additionally, Craig Whitney, a *New York Times* writer, concluded that the European members of NATO were not keen on quickly resolving this deficit because they expected that the United States would not have a balance-of-payments problem in 1974.¹⁵⁷ Regardless of these circumstances, in late December, European countries agreed to develop proposals by the middle of February so the president could report these results to Congress.

Nevertheless, some European members of NATO were unwilling to follow the Jackson-Nunn Amendment. Specifically, Turkey was reluctant to offset the U.S. balance-of-payments deficit. Turkish government officials concluded that their recent American military equipment purchases would make their commitment to the Jackson-Nunn Amendment's stipulations unnecessary.¹⁵⁸ Great Britain also concluded that it would not participate in any multilateral budget relief system for the United States. British government officials explained that their country was having problems with its balance-of-payments deficit. Furthermore, France, Greece, Ireland, and Portugal made no commitments to offsetting the American balance-of-payments deficit.¹⁵⁹

Increasing oil prices also accounted for the unwillingness of NATO nations to alleviate U.S. balance-of-payments problems. In response to Western involvement in the Yom Kippur War, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) imposed a

¹⁵⁶ General CIA Records, 22 January 1974, "The US and Europe: Aftermath of the December Meetings." CIA Archives Virtual Reading Room, <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP85T00353R000100010006-9.pdf>.

¹⁵⁷ Craig Whitney, "Troop-Cost Talks with Bonn Stall," *New York Times*, January 26, 1974.

¹⁵⁸ General CIA Records, 5 December 1973, "Central Intelligence Bulletin." CIA Archives Virtual Reading Room, <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP85T00353R000100010006-9.pdf>.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

total embargo on the United States, Denmark, and the Netherlands. Additionally, OPEC increased the price of Arabian Light Oil from \$3.01 per barrel in October to \$11.65 in December.¹⁶⁰ *New York Times* writer Whitney explained that some American allies in NATO dragged their feet on negotiating compliance with the Jackson-Nunn Amendment because they experienced an economic crisis early 1974.¹⁶¹ Inflation rates rose, reaching 16 percent in the United Kingdom and 15 percent in Denmark.¹⁶² Unemployment increased as well. European members of NATO gave priority to their own economic difficulties rather than U.S. balance-of-payments problems.¹⁶³

Those NATO countries that agreed to consider alleviating the American deficit had different ideas about how to settle this financial problem. For instance, Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands, and Norway supported increasing their American military equipment purchases. The Netherlands was the only NATO member to assume the additional budgetary costs resulting from stationing American troops in their country. Canada and West Germany concluded that their bilateral offset agreements contributed to meeting the burden-sharing standard.¹⁶⁴ These countries agreed to continue pursuing these agreements. West Germany was the leading country that decided to establish an offset agreement with the United States to reduce the balance-of-payments deficit, finally concluding an agreement on April 25, 1974. West Germany agreed to provide \$2.218

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Whitney, "Troop-Cost Talks with Bonn Stall."

¹⁶² "Denmark Inflation Rate 1960-2021," Macrotrends, <https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/DNK/denmark/inflation-rate-cpi>

¹⁶³ Robert Haveman, "Unemployment in Western Europe and the United States: A Problem of Demand, Structure, or Measurement?" *The American Economic Review* 68, no. 2 (1978): 45.

¹⁶⁴ "Central Intelligence Bulletin." CIA Archives Virtual Reading Room, <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP85T00353R000100010006-9.pdf>

billion to offset the costs of the United States maintaining 197,000 troops in their country. Specifically, West Germany spent \$225 million to modernize barracks used by American forces, \$843 million on low-interest U.S. treasury bonds and securities, and \$1.03 billion on U.S. arms purchases.¹⁶⁵ This financial agreement exempted American troops stationed in West Germany from \$8 million in real-estate taxes and airport landing fees. In addition, Germany agreed to spend a \$75 million on U.S. uranium and \$37 million on joint scientific ventures.¹⁶⁶ This agreement offset the military balance-of-payments deficit, ensuring that the United States would not initiate the Jackson-Nunn Amendment's penalty provisions.

There were two primary reasons why West Germany established an offset agreement with the United States. First, there were a considerable number of American troops stationed in West Germany. Compared to other countries in the NATO alliance, the United States placed a substantial number of troops in this country. The United States had almost 75 percent of its 280,000 military forces in Western Europe stationed in West Germany.¹⁶⁷ West Germany's relatively stable economy made it possible to create an offset agreement with the United States. For example, West Germany's economy was not affected by this oil embargo as severely as other European countries. West Germany's real gross domestic product increased by 3.8 percent in 1972 to 4.8 in 1973, while its unemployment rose only slightly.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁵ "U.S. Bonn Accord on Troops Signed."

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Zimmermann, "The Improbable Permanence of a Commitment," 21.

¹⁶⁸ James, "Cooperation, Competition, and Conflict," 83.

The United States and West Germany's offset agreement in 1974 allowed these countries to deal with the burden-sharing issue in a fiscally advantageous way. The United States reduced its balance-of-payment deficit and gained \$2.218 billion through the offset agreement with West Germany. Additionally, a *New York Times* editorial explained that the United States and West Germany welcomed the offset agreement because it provided more dollars for the United States while costing West Germany fewer marks than the previous agreement.¹⁶⁹ Mark revaluation and dollar devaluation were the reasons behind this economic condition.

The Legacy of the Jackson-Nunn Amendment

The Jackson-Nunn Amendment was an effective short-term solution for the burden-sharing debate within the United States, placating congressional grievances about this issue. This amendment ensured Senate defeat of the Mansfield and the Cranston-Humphrey Amendments. Furthermore, Jackson and Nunn's legislation lowered American government officials' view that the United States carries an excessive number of financial obligations in NATO because other allies do not contribute sufficiently. The final Presidential report to Congress on May 16, 1975, concludes that NATO members had more than offset the American balance-of-payments deficit.¹⁷⁰

Senators Jackson and Nunn reinforced the idea of burden-sharing in NATO for American government officials. Throughout the mid-1960s, Congress criticized European

¹⁶⁹ "U.S. Bonn Accord on Troops Signed."

¹⁷⁰ Department of State Briefing Paper, May 1975, "Background Paper: Burdensharing, The Jackson-Nunn Amendment." Gerald F. Ford Presidential Library and Museum, Virtual Library, <https://www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/library/exhibits/bluecadet/035800155-002.pdf>

allies' lack of support for U.S. international actions, such as the Vietnam War, and their allegedly inadequate defense spending. The Jackson-Nunn Amendment, the first Senate legislation passed that dealt with burden-sharing, connected this dilemma with the balance-of-payments deficit incurred by the stationing of U.S. American troops in Europe. The Jackson-Nunn Amendment influenced the negotiations with European allies by adding a penalty provision that could have decreased American forces in Europe.

A *New York Times* article recognized specific problems with the Jackson-Nunn Amendment. This article argued that this amendment potentially made negotiating with the Soviet Union more difficult. If the Jackson-Nunn Amendment forced a unilateral cutback of American forces, it would make negotiations regarding troop reductions with the Soviet Union more challenging. This article considered the Jackson-Nunn Agreement a “greater travesty of defense planning” than any other policy and that every aspect of it was wrong.¹⁷¹ Additionally, the same *New York Times* article provided the counter-argument against the Jackson-Nunn Amendment that Western European members in this alliance had increased their defense spending for the previous three years. For instance, Germany increased its defense spending from 3.1 percent in 1970 to 3.2 percent in 1973.¹⁷² This article recommended that the United States encourage its NATO allies to unite their forces through more cooperation with defense efforts. The article concluded that this approach would be more beneficial: “That is a far more fruitful way to get them

¹⁷¹ “Defense Funds Travesty,” *New York Times*, December 8, 1973.

¹⁷² “SIPRI Military Expenditure Database.”

to take on a larger share of the mutual defense burden than a petty squabble over offset payments. As for Jackson-Nunn, it should be repealed.”¹⁷³

The U.S. executive and legislative branches still had grievances about burden-sharing despite implementing the Jackson-Nunn Amendment. American government officials acknowledged in a CIA briefing on May 19, 1974, that they were disappointed at the European allies’ response over the years about redefining burden-sharing.¹⁷⁴ Additionally, the Senate defeated another Mansfield proposal by 54 to 35 votes in June 1974. Mansfield’s legislation required a 125,000-troop reduction in Europe over the next eighteen months. This amendment failed to gain passage by a larger margin than the other resolutions that attempted to reduce American forces abroad. Mansfield cited the U.S. national debt of \$475 billion as the primary reason for decreasing American forces abroad. Shortly afterward, the Senate rejected a proposed compromise for a 76,000-force reduction abroad. In 1974, the United States had about 450,000 service members stationed overseas.¹⁷⁵

The reason the U.S. government continued the burden-sharing debate after the Jackson-Nunn Amendment pertains to European NATO members’ lack of improvement in their defense spending after 1973. West Germany’s defense spending stayed the same at 3.2 percent of its gross domestic product from 1973 to 1976. Additionally, the United Kingdom’s defense spending remained at 4.4 percent of GDP from 1973 to 1977.

¹⁷³ “Defense Funds Travesty.”

¹⁷⁴ Library of Congress, 23, May 1974, “Hak’s Decisions.” CIA Archives Virtual Reading Room, <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/LOC-HAK-260-3-14-4.pdf>.

¹⁷⁵ “The Nation,” *New York Times*, June 9, 1974.

Portugal's defense spending decreased significantly from 4.6 percent of GDP in 1973 to 3.1 in 1976.¹⁷⁶ These statistics demonstrate the consequences of the Jackson-Nunn Amendment not adding a stipulation that required European NATO members to improve their defense spending.

To conclude, the Jackson-Nunn Amendment was an effective legislative maneuver to decrease congressional support for Mansfield's far-reaching proposal. However, Jackson and Nunn's amendment proved to be significantly more than a political tactic to halt the Mansfield Amendment. Jackson and Nunn wanted the European members in NATO to contribute more to the alliance and needed to establish a policy that accomplished this task. West Germany's negotiating an offset agreement with the United States ensured that the president would not implement the Jackson-Nunn Amendment's penalty provisions. However, this agreement did not resolve the burden-sharing issue in the United States because not every alliance member began contributing more to NATO's continental defense. Consequently, the Carter administration attempted to convince the United States allies in NATO to contribute more to defense spending.

¹⁷⁶ "SIPRI Military Expenditure Database."

Chapter III: The 3 Percent Agreement; Another Short-Term Solution for Burden-Sharing

The 3 Percent Agreement placated congressional concerns about burden-sharing, causing efforts to reduce American forces in Europe to decline during the late 1970s and early 1980s. NATO approved the 3 Percent Agreement in May 1978. This policy involved an alliance pledge of increasing each nation's defense spending by 3 percent in real terms for each fiscal year from 1980 to 1985. President Jimmy Carter and his administration spearheaded NATO's adoption of this agreement. The Carter administration proposed the 3 Percent Agreement to improve burden-sharing, contain the U.S. defense budget, enhance NATO's continental defense, and counter the Soviet Union's growing military strength in Central Europe. Between 1980 and 1985, most allies failed to achieve the 3 Percent Agreement's objective. There are many factors that explain this circumstance, such as the lack of an enforcement mechanism in the 3 Percent Agreement, European countries experiencing stagflation, and the Carter administration focusing more on Middle Eastern conflicts than burden-sharing in NATO. Despite NATO allies failing to achieve the 3 percent growth benchmark, this agreement influenced U.S. thinking about burden-sharing. The 3 Percent Agreement transformed the perception of burden-sharing in the United States to emphasize alliance commitment toward increasing defense spending. However, NATO members not achieving the 3 Percent Agreement's goal caused congressional efforts to reduce U.S. forces in Europe to re-emerge in the mid-1980s. The 3 Percent Agreement proved to be more than a "set of guidelines" because Congress enacted less legislation that potentially harmed NATO than it could

have, improved Europe's continental defense, and changed the idea of burden-sharing in the United States.

Robert Komer, Harold Brown, and the 3 Percent Agreement's Creation

The Carter administration sought to improve NATO's continental defense. When Carter became president in 1977, NATO's defense efforts were questionable.¹⁷⁷ NATO's conventional force levels only modestly increased during the mid-1970s. The number of U.S. troops stationed in West Germany barely rose from 217,400 in 1974 to 218,400 in 1977.¹⁷⁸ Carter's Secretary of Defense Harold Brown primarily dealt with improving NATO's non-nuclear capabilities. Brown wanted the United States to reform NATO's coalition strategy because he recognized that the alliance did not have an adequate corresponding defense posture.¹⁷⁹ For example, he acknowledged that alliance members paid lip service to interdependence, but they never achieved this ambition.¹⁸⁰ As a result, the United States relied too heavily on supplying resources to enhance NATO's continental defense by itself instead of depending more on allied contributions.

Robert Komer's 1976 RAND Corporation study, "Rationalizing NATO's Defense Posture," greatly influenced Brown's thinking about multilateral reform in NATO. This study concluded that Western Europe had defensive deficiencies because of NATO's

¹⁷⁷ Sayle, *Enduring Alliance*, 2019.

¹⁷⁸ Zimmermann, "The Improbable Permanence of a Commitment," 2.

¹⁷⁹ Brown considered NATO's coalition strategy as members working collectively toward improving this alliance's continental defense.

¹⁸⁰ Edward Keefer, *Secretaries of Defense Historical Series*, Volume IX: *Harold Brown Offsetting the Soviet Military Challenge 1977-1981*, (Washington, D.C.: Office of Joint History, 2017), 424.

limited conventional forces.¹⁸¹ Komer's study advocated that the United States encourage official reforms and coalition planning, such as an alliance pledge to improve all the members' defense spending records.¹⁸² Brown selected Komer to join the Carter administration as an advisor because they shared similar strategic beliefs about NATO. Brown referred to Komer as his "unofficial NATO advisor." Together, Brown and Komer developed the 3 Percent Agreement.

Shortly after he joined the Carter administration, Komer presented Brown with an extensive program for improving NATO. Similar to Komer's "Rationalizing NATO's Defense Posture," the plan argued that the alliance did not allocate its combined resources efficiently. Furthermore, Komer advocated a collective effort that brought the rest of members' contributions to NATO's continental defense up to American standards of a 3 percent real increase in defense spending each year. This multilateral effort would be at a price that European parliaments could afford.¹⁸³ Brown accepted Komer's program, and it eventually contributed to developing the 3 Percent Agreement.

Komer wanted NATO to implement the 3 Percent Agreement because he considered previous approaches to obtaining more alliance contribution toward Europe's continental defense to be ineffective. According to Komer, these policies produced nothing more than "paper solutions," such as promises and studies.¹⁸⁴ The Lisbon force

¹⁸¹ Additionally, Senators Sam Nunn and Dewey Bartlett (Rep.-OK) released a similar survey about the United States and the NATO alliance in January 1977. Senators Nunn's and Bartlett's survey acknowledged NATO's deficiencies in continental defense.

¹⁸² Robert Komer, Chauncey Bell, Evelyn Boyd, HJ Mcchrystal, RL Schneider, and EL Schwab, "Rationalizing NATO's Defense Posture." (Santa Monica, CA, 1975), RAND Corporation. <https://www.rand.org/pubs/reports/R1657.html>

¹⁸³ Keefer, Harold Brown, 424.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

goals provide an example of these failed promises. In 1952, NATO countries established these goals in response to the outbreak of the Korean War. The central objection was the creation of forty-two divisions with another forty-five reserve units that could mobilize within thirty days. However, NATO members failed to achieve this benchmark.¹⁸⁵ To achieve more progress, NATO needed more commitments from its members toward continental defense. The 3 Percent Agreement differed from the old approach because alliance members pledged to increase their defense spending.

The Soviet Union's growing military threat provided both Komer and Carter a reason for NATO members to increase their defense spending. Soviet military spending rose by 4 to 5 percent annually from 1971 to 1976.¹⁸⁶ Komer considered that the NATO alliance needed a formidable defense against a potential Warsaw Pact attack. Carter wanted to enhance NATO's defenses for the same reason. During a speech to NATO members at the London Summit in May 1977, Carter emphasized that the Soviet Union had substantially built up its military:

The threat facing the alliance has grown steadily in recent years. The Soviet Union has achieved essential strategic nuclear equivalence. Its theater nuclear forces have been strengthened. The Warsaw Pact's conventional forces in Europe emphasize an offensive posture. These forces are much stronger than needed for any defense purpose.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁵ *Foreign Relations of the United States*, Volume I, General: Economic and Political Matters, 1952-1954. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v01p1/d162>

¹⁸⁶ Kaplan, *The Long Entanglement*, 80.

¹⁸⁷ J. Carter, *President's Address to The Conference of NATO Countries*, London, England. May 10, 1977.

Consequently, Carter and Komer argued that NATO needed to improve its continental defense by emphasizing weaponry and personnel quality.¹⁸⁸

Brown and Komer proposed the 3 Percent Agreement because they believed that weaker members needed to increase their defense budget spending. Komer's "Rationalizing NATO's Defense Posture" considered that NATO provided minimal attention to the truism that "a chain is only strong as its weakest link."¹⁸⁹ In strategic defense terms, it did not make a difference how strong U.S. forces were if the Warsaw Pact could politically exploit a weaker NATO country. Additionally, this agreement intended to improve NATO's lack of cooperation through each member pledging to improve its defense spending.¹⁹⁰

Another reason why the Carter administration proposed the 3 Percent Agreement was to ameliorate the issue of burden-sharing. Regarding this problem, Komer considered that the United States had made the most significant financial effort with NATO's collective defense. However, Komer criticized the United States for delaying effective action on burden-sharing by being all too ready to shoulder an unnecessarily heavy burden.¹⁹¹ In fact, Komer blamed the United States, not just the European countries, for failing to find a better solution to burden-sharing.

Brown and Komer's 3 percent proposal received mixed responses from the military and government officials. The U.S. Army, Air Force, and Navy endorsed this

¹⁸⁸ Komer, "Rationalizing NATO's Defense Posture."

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Keefer, *Harold Brown*, 425.

plan; Secretary of the Army Clifford Alexander Jr. and Secretary of the Air Force John Stetson enthusiastically supported this agreement. Additionally, President Carter's National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski supported this proposal; Brzezinski agreed with the general concepts of Komer and Brown's plan and considered that this agreement would guide the development of a defensive plan in NATO for the following years.¹⁹² However, some military planners opposed Komer and Brown's plan to improve NATO's conventional forces. Joint Chief of Staff planners argued that this plan was too ambitious because it required extensive diplomatic consultations with U.S. allies in NATO.

The Carter administration also consulted Congress about implementing the 3 Percent Agreement in NATO. During a meeting on February 1, 1977, President Carter and Secretary of State Cyrus Vance discussed what became the 3 Percent Agreement with Senators Edward Brooke (Rep.-MA), Frank Church (Dem.-ID), and Clifford Case (Rep.-NJ).¹⁹³ These congressional members supported the idea of European members in NATO increasing their defense spending. However, the administration consulted more with military and NATO officials about this initiative than with Congress.

Supreme Allied Commander of Europe (SACEUR) Alexander Haig also had concerns about Komer and Brown's proposal.¹⁹⁴ He considered that it was attempting too

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1977-1980*. Volume I, *Foundations of Foreign Policy*, ed. Kristin Ahlberg and Adam Howard (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2014), 79

¹⁹⁴ "Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR)," North Atlantic Treaty Organization. May 3, 2019, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_50110.htm

much because this agreement pressured European members in this alliance. Some of these countries were facing economic difficulties and political instability. Haig believed that an individual approach taken over time would elicit better results in convincing NATO members to contribute more to their defense spending than a percentage agreement. Moreover, Haig advocated that this proposal emphasized continental defense too much and it looked past NATO's weaker northern defensive flank with Norway, Iceland, and the North Atlantic sea lanes and the southern flank area comprising Greece, Turkey, Italy, and the Mediterranean sea pathways.¹⁹⁵ Despite Haig's concerns about this agreement, he eventually signed on to this plan in late April 1977.

On May 10, 1977, President Carter advocated that NATO implement the 3 Percent Agreement during a NAC Conference in London. Carter recommended this proposal by emphasizing cooperation toward improving NATO's defense efforts:

The collective deterrent strength of our alliance is effective. But it will only remain so if we work to improve it. The United States is prepared to make a major effort to this end – as Vice President [Walter] Mondale told you in January – in expectation that our allies will do the same.¹⁹⁶

Earlier that year, Mondale had promised that the United States would increase its defense spending if NATO members made improvements in theirs. However, NATO members did not agree to implement Carter's proposal for another year. Britain, Turkey, and

¹⁹⁵ Keefer, *Harold Brown*, 425.

¹⁹⁶ Carter, *President's Address* to The Conference of NATO Countries.

Portugal were reluctant to commit to the proposed 3 Percent Agreement due to their own economic problems.¹⁹⁷

There were some congressional concerns about U.S. forces stationed in Europe when Carter initially advocated that NATO adopt the 3 Percent Agreement. Senator Gary Hart (Dem.-CO) criticized the rationale behind stationing American forces in Europe in a *New York Times* article in December 1977. During this period, the United States had 218,400 troops in Western Europe. Hart concluded that the NATO alliance had not effectively used these forces in this region.¹⁹⁸ He advocated a smaller U.S. military presence in Western Europe and that European allies in NATO should handle more of the burden of land defense. In addition, Senator Mike Gravel (Dem.-AK) advocated reducing U.S. forces stationed in Western Europe.¹⁹⁹

Certain American journalists recognized NATO's decreasing deterrence and military capabilities; they welcomed a potential alliance pledge to improve each member's defense spending annually. In December 1977, *New York Times* writer Drew Middleton considered that a problem in NATO pertained to doubts about alliance forces implementing their current strategy and deterrence:

At the moment, according to American and European military planners, NATO is in one of its recurrent crises. It arises from the increasing cost of weapons, sharp differences over how NATO forces should be positioned and equipped and the

¹⁹⁷ Keefer, *Harold Brown*, 426.

¹⁹⁸ Drew Middleton, "US Aide Urges NATO to Cut Cost of Arms," *New York Times*, December 4, 1977.

¹⁹⁹ Williams, *The Senate and U.S. Troops in Europe*, 255.

continued failure of alliance members to achieve standardization of weapons and equipment.²⁰⁰

The Soviet Union's increasing military strength exacerbated these difficulties. Middleton concluded that resolving the present problem would come from a NATO alliance pledge of increasing each member's defense spending by a specific percent over the following five years.²⁰¹ Bernard Weinraub also discussed NATO's decreasing deterrence capabilities in a *New York Times* article. Weinraub reported that the Soviet Union spent 12 percent of their gross domestic product the previous year on military spending while the United States allocated 5.5 percent. Western Europe spent 3.5 percent of its gross domestic product on military spending.²⁰²

Before the Washington NATO Summit in late May 1978, NATO defense ministers had mixed responses to Brown when discussing the possibility of achieving the 3 Percent Agreement's benchmark. Some European members pledged to adhere to this agreement during a diplomatic meeting in Brussels, Belgium in mid-May 1978. For example, Dutch Defense Minister Willem Scholten promised that his government would increase defense spending by 3 percent. However, other alliance members did not agree to achieve this benchmark. West Germany's Defense Minister Hans Apel told Brown that he could not convince the Bundestag to provide more resources for NATO's continental

²⁰⁰ Middleton, "US Aide Urges NATO to Cut Cost of Arms."

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² Bernard Weinraub, "NATO Sets a 3% Arms Budget Rise," *New York Times*, May 18, 1977.

defense.²⁰³ Additionally, Belgium's Defense Minister Paul Vanden Boeynants reported that his government would be unable to fulfill its pledge of a 3 percent increase in defense spending.²⁰⁴

On May 31, 1978, NATO officially adopted the 3 Percent Agreement during the Washington NATO Summit. NATO countries indicated their intentions to annually increase their defense spending in the region of 3 percent in real terms from 1980 to 1984.²⁰⁵ The 3 Percent Agreement had specific caveats. For example, this agreement recognized that economic circumstances would affect a member state's ability to reach its benchmark. Another stipulation in this initiative involved inflation. According to the agreement, "Nations should provide full compensation for the inflationary impact of rising pay and price levels to ensure that planned real increases are achieved."²⁰⁶ European nations' skepticism about achieving this agreement's benchmark had decreased since the previous diplomatic meeting in Belgium. Historian Frederick Zilian concluded that the continuing deficiencies between NATO and the Soviet Union's defense posture convinced European countries in this alliance to commit to this benchmark.²⁰⁷

²⁰³ According to Apel, West Germany would not fund its share of a NATO airborne warning and control system until the United States bought more equipment and defense systems from West Germany. Keefer, *Harold Brown*, 430.

²⁰⁴ Brown advocated that Carter confront Belgium's prime minister in an open session of a NATO summit with the accusation of weakening the alliance. Ibid.

²⁰⁵ North Atlantic Council, *Final Communique*, (Washington, 1978). <https://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c780530a.htm>

²⁰⁶ Defense Planning Committee, *Ministerial Guidance -- 1977*, (Brussel, 1977). <https://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c770517b.htm>

²⁰⁷ Frederick Zilian, "The Shifting Military Balance in Central Europe," in *The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War, 1968-1990: A Handbook*, Vol. 2. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 159.

During the same summit, Brown, with the help of Komer, convinced NATO to establish the Long Term Defense Program (LTDP). This initiative enhanced NATO's non-nuclear capabilities through ten proactive defense measures. For instance, this program intended to improve NATO's conventional forces, reinforcement capabilities, air defenses, and maritime posture. An alliance program manager would oversee the implementation of each measure under the LTDP.²⁰⁸ The 3 Percent Agreement helped finance this initiative. When the alliance adopted these initiatives, NATO encouraged adopting the LTDP to achieve the 3 Percent Agreement's benchmark.²⁰⁹

Together, the LTDP and the 3 Percent Agreement intended to initiate more efficient military spending for NATO countries. Carter recognized the necessity of cost-effective military spending. He wanted to eliminate waste and duplication between national defense programs in NATO. To reach this goal, Carter concluded that the United States and its European allies needed to cooperate in defense production. The 3 Percent Agreement and the LTDP would result in more chances for two-way trans-Atlantic traffic in defense equipment, enhancing NATO's overall defense capabilities. For instance, when advocating these initiatives in 1977, Carter argued that a joint European defense production effort would contribute to achieving economies of scale beyond the reach of national programs.²¹⁰ The United States would financially benefit the most from

²⁰⁸ Raymond Garthoff, "The NATO Decision on Theater Nuclear Forces." *Political Science Quarterly* 98, no. 2 1983, 198.

²⁰⁹ North Atlantic Council, *Final Communiqué*, (Washington D.C., 1978).
<https://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c780530a.htm>

²¹⁰ Carter, *President's Address to The Conference of NATO Countries*.

achieving an economy of scale in military spending because it spends more resources than other member states.

Reactions to the 3 Percent Agreement

Some U.S. senators showed enthusiasm regarding the 3 Percent Agreement and other policies that the Carter administration helped implement in NATO. Nineteen senators from the Foreign Relations, Armed Services, and Intelligence committees applauded these policies. Senators Sam Nunn, John Warner (Rep.-VA), and Lawton Chiles (Dem.-FL) were some who supported President Carter's initiatives. These senators were responding to the Five Year Defense Program, the LTDP, and the 3 Percent Agreement in December 1979.²¹¹ The Five Year Defense Program involved a combination of older initiatives that modernized strategic forces and built up non-nuclear capabilities.²¹² These members of congress concluded that the 3 Percent Agreement demonstrates a step forward in dealing with the Soviet military buildup. Importantly, the senators considered that this agreement helped ameliorate burden-sharing in NATO by members pledging to increase their defense spending.

American journalist Richard Burt questioned if European members in NATO would achieve the 3 Percent Agreement's lofty ambitions. Burt, a correspondent for the *New York Times*, concluded that the United States might have difficulties convincing its NATO allies to carry out the 3 Percent Agreement. "Pentagon and State Department

²¹¹ *Foreign Relations of the United States*, Volume XXXIII, *SALT II*, 1972–1980.

<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v33/d244>

²¹² Additionally, this plan constructed a quick reaction force to intervene in areas such as the Persian Gulf. George Wilson, "Carter Is Converted To a Big Spender On Defense Projects." *Washington Post*, January 29, 1980.

officials acknowledged that several allied governments remain suspicious of the Administration's initiative," Burt wrote, "and that it has not always been easy to get them to agree to its crucial points."²¹³ However, Burt did not provide the names of these government officials who made these statements. In addition, Burt argued that NATO leaders might not follow through with this agreement by citing a longtime alliance representative's comments. The individual concluded that allied governments had paid lip service to upgrading NATO's defenses for twenty years.²¹⁴

Representative Les Aspin (Dem.-WI) also criticized NATO's 3 Percent Agreement, specifically rejecting the idea that best method of contributing to this alliance was raising defense spending. Aspin argued that 3 percent growth was not a rational benchmark on which to base a defense budget:

The NATO Ministers probably thought that they would be simplifying matters by agreeing to a 3 percent real growth pledge. It turns out, however, to be highly complex, open to wide and varying interpretation. In some instances, it allows a fairly substantial cut in the administration's defense budget to result (strangely) in higher levels of real growth; it also permits differing conclusions as to just how much an FY 1980 budget would total in the constraints of 3% real growth.²¹⁵

Additionally, Aspin discounted the idea that the Soviet Union substantially improved its military strength. Despite the Soviet Union increasing its defense budget for the previous

²¹³ Richard Burt, "US Presses NATO to Approve Ambitious Programs for Defense." *New York Times*, May 29, 1978.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Les Aspin. "The Three Percent Solution: NATO and the U.S. Defense Budget." *Challenge* 22, no. 2, 1979, 22.

decade, Aspin concluded that this improvement did not mean that the Soviets had more power than the United States. Rather, there were other factors to consider, such as the U.S. and Soviet economies, financial structures, and military mission. Ultimately, Aspin concluded that NATO's defense policy should place more emphasis on weapons systems and mission requirements than increasing a country's defense spending.²¹⁶

On May 15, 1979, NATO's defense ministers extended the 3 Percent Agreement through 1985. Additionally, the alliance declared it would spend \$4.5 billion on improving rapid reinforcement troop facilities.²¹⁷ NATO expanded this initiative primarily in response to the Soviet Union expanding its nuclear forces in Eastern Europe. Chairman of NATO's Military Committee, Norwegian General Merman Zeiner Gunderson, called this expansion "a deliberate attempt by the Soviets to destabilize the theater nuclear balance and a serious threat to Europe and the solidarity of the alliance."²¹⁸

A Shift Away from the 3 Percent Agreement

Carter's advocacy of the dual-track decision shifted the administration's focus away from the 3 Percent Agreement. The Carter administration was the leading architect behind NATO establishing the dual-track decision. Defense and foreign ministers of NATO countries approved the dual-track decision on December 12, 1979. NATO established the dual-track initiative in response to the Soviet SS-20 saber missile system

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ Drew Middleton, "NATO Extends 3% Rise in Annual Spending to '85." *New York Times*, May 16, 1979.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

targeting Europe. In 1976, the Soviet Union began deploying the SS-20 missile system to Warsaw Pact countries, and in 1977 units became fully operational.²¹⁹ Dual-track involved two parallel and complementary approaches. First, it sought nuclear arms-control agreements with the Soviet Union. Second, this policy would improve NATO's nuclear capabilities by the United States promising to deploy American intermediate-range nuclear missiles by 1983 if the Soviets declined a nuclear arms deal.²²⁰ If not for the dual-track initiative, the Carter administration could have allocated more time to persuading alliance members to increase their defense spending.

Furthermore, the Iran hostage crisis caused the Carter administration to shift its attention away from NATO. In 1979, Iranian students invaded the American embassy located in Tehran in response to Carter deciding to permit the Shah of Iran, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, to come to New York for medical treatment. The Iranian students held fifty-two Americans hostage. Carter unsuccessfully tried several methods to rescue the hostages, such as taking this matter to the United Nations Security Council, economic sanctions, and a disastrous military rescue operation.²²¹ Instead of persuading U.S. allies in NATO to be prepared to increase their defense spending, Defense Secretary Brown and his staff became fully engaged in all administration decisions on Iran, except the hostage release negotiations.²²²

²¹⁹ Garthoff, "The NATO Decision on Theater Nuclear Forces," 198

²²⁰ Sayle, *Enduring Alliance*, 205.

²²¹ Scott Kaufman, *Plans Unraveled: The Foreign Policy of the Carter Administration*. (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2008), 199.

²²² Keefer, *Harold Brown*, 285.

Carter's response to the Soviet Union invading Afghanistan on December 25, 1979, further diverted his administration's attention away from NATO. Carter considered this Soviet invasion a direct threat to Middle Eastern stability and American security. The president proclaimed the Carter Doctrine, boycotted the 1980 Olympic games held in Moscow, and imposed economic sanctions on the Soviet Union.²²³ This invasion caused the United States to decrease its efforts of persuading its allies in NATO to complete the 3 Percent Agreement's benchmarks. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan could have encouraged the Carter administration to redouble their efforts in convincing their allies in NATO to be ready to increase their defense spending. Instead, Carter's administration focused on other policies.

The 3 Percent Agreement's Outcome

Carter's proposed defense spending record and Ronald Reagan's actual military budget met the 3 Percent Agreement's benchmark. The Carter administration intended to meet this agreement's requirement of improving the U.S. defense spending record by 3 percent from 1980 to 1985. The projected growth of defense spending for the U.S. from 1980 to 1981 was 3.3 percent. From 1981 to 1982, it was 4.3 percent. The following year this percentage was projected to increase to 4.4 percent. Carter's administration intended to slightly decrease this percentage to 4.3 percent from 1983 to 1984.²²⁴ However, Reagan defeated Carter in the 1980 presidential election, so the Reagan administration

²²³ The Carter Doctrine declared that the United States would use military force to protect American national interests in the Persian Gulf. Betty Glad, *An Outsider in the White House: Jimmy Carter, His Advisors, and the Making of American Foreign Policy*. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 2009), 199-200.

²²⁴ Jimmy Carter Library, Office of Staff Secretary, Series: Presidential Files, Folder: 2/19/80.
https://www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov/digital_library/ss0/148878/151/SSO_148878_151_05.pdf

dealt with achieving the 3 Percent Agreement's goal. Throughout Reagan's presidency, his administration improved U.S. defense spending considerably. Reagan increased U.S. defense spending by an average of 5.5 percent annually from 1981 to 1985.²²⁵

The majority of NATO members initially had a promising start with increasing their defense spending by 3 percent each year. In 1980, the weighted average real increase for all NATO members (excluding the U.S.) was 2.6 percent; this number rose to 2.8 in 1981. NATO states did not achieve the 3 Percent Agreement's goal after 1981. In 1982, the percentage fell from 2.8 to 2.3 percent. Furthering this decline, NATO members' (excluding the U.S.) defense spending was between 2.1 and 1.9 percent in 1983. The Reagan administration projected that NATO's percentage would be around 1.2 and 1.7 percent in the 1984 Secretary of Defense's annual report.²²⁶ In 1984, the percentage was 1.2 percent.

Most European states in the NATO alliance did not increase their defense spending by 3 percent from 1980 to 1985. For instance, West Germany averaged only a 0.7 percent growth in its defense spending from 1980 to 1985. The closest that this country came to reaching the 3 percent benchmark was a 2.1 percent improvement in 1985. In addition, France did not meet this 3 percent growth goal. France's defense spending growth average was 1.3 percent from 1980 to 1985.²²⁷

²²⁵ However, Reagan's increases had nothing to do with meeting the 3 percent goal. The Reagan administration never justified those increases by invoking the 3 Percent Agreement. David Henry and Richard Oliver, "The Defense Build Up, 1977-85: Effects on Production and Employment." *Monthly Labor Review*, August 1987, 3.

²²⁶ Sloan, "Managing the NATO Alliance: Congress and Burdensharing," 403.

²²⁷ Christopher Allen and Paul Diehl, "The Defense Issue In West Germany: Constraints on Increased Military Allocations." *Armed Forces & Society* 15, no. 1 (1988): 99.

There was one European member in NATO that achieved the 3 Percent Agreement's objective of improving defense spending by 3 percent in real terms each year from 1980 to 1985. The United Kingdom averaged a 3.7 percent increase in defense spending from 1980 to 1985. Because of the Falklands War in 1983, the United Kingdom improved its defense spending by 10.1 percent in real terms. Additionally, Turkey managed to achieve a 3 percent increase in their defense spending from 1980 to 1985 by averaging 4.25 percent during this period.²²⁸

One of the Reagan administration's political approaches to NATO affairs affected the 3 Percent Agreement's outcome. Reagan did not pressure European allies to increase their conventional forces or improve their defense budgets.²²⁹ At the time, the Reagan administration was more concerned about persuading its NATO allies to follow the dual-track decision than convincing its allies to increase their defense spending. This factor caused European members in this alliance not to honor the 3 percent increase in their defense budgets because the United States placed minimal political pressure to achieve this benchmark.²³⁰

Inflated oil prices in the wake of the Iranian Revolution caused economic hardships for alliance members, which added to the difficulties of achieving the 3 percent benchmark. In January 1979, protests about economic and political issues escalated into a

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Lawrence Kaplan, *NATO Divided, NATO United: The Evolution of an Alliance*. (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2012), 88.

²³⁰ Despite that greater U.S. pressure had seldom produced more European compliance, the Reagan administration spending more effort convincing its NATO allies to honor the 3 Percent Agreement could have arguably improved this initiative's outcome.

revolution in Iran. Consequently, Iran's leader, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, fled the country to Egypt. Shortly afterward, Supreme Leader Ruhollah Khomeini's Islamic Republic gained political control of Iran. The Iranian Revolution disrupted Iran's oil supplies to Western Europe. This reduction in oil supplies became problematic because Iran was the world's second-largest oil exporter. Robert McNally's *Crude Volatility* reveals that oil importers purchased a larger quantity of oil as a precaution, causing price hikes: "Actual world production rose in 1979, but the lows of Iran's mb/d triggered a 126 percent price increase for oil – even though inventories and price capacity were still ample. Mb/d means a thousand barrels per day."²³¹ The global oil price increase from the Iranian Revolution sent the United States and Western Europe into an energy crisis. This crisis was another reason why European allies in NATO did not improve their defense spending by 3 percent.

Global oil production worsened after the Iranian Revolution. The international oil market was in turmoil during the summer and early fall of 1979, and its global effects far exceeded those in the previous years.²³² For instance, the oil market worsened significantly when Iraq attacked Iran in 1980, starting the Iran-Iraq War. Similar to Iran, Iraq was an oil-exporting power. As a result, the global production of oil became more disrupted; it decreased by 5 percent from 1979 to 1980, and crude oil prices rose to more than \$40 per barrel. Additionally, the combined world crude prices had increased by \$23 per barrel, a 165 percent increase, from 1978 to 1980.²³³

²³¹ McNally, *Crude Volatility*, 143.

²³² Ibid, 148.

²³³ Ibid.

Economic difficulties from the global oil crisis created a reason for European members in NATO not to fulfill the 3 Percent Agreement's goal. For example, West Germany's inflation rate increased from about 3 percent in 1978 to 5 in 1980.²³⁴ Additionally, West Germany's economic growth in its gross domestic product dropped from 0.9 percent in 1980 to -1.1 in 1982.²³⁵ West German government officials concluded that they could not contribute more to their defense spending for this reason. Despite eventually achieving the 3 percent goal, Britain expressed concern about reaching this agreement's benchmark. For instance, Britain concluded that achieving the 3 Percent Agreement's provisions would only be possible if there was an improvement in its economic situation.

There were international issues that could have incentivized NATO countries to increase their defense spending. Drew Middleton's *New York Times* article argues this point by illuminating the central problems that alliance members faced during this period. Middleton concludes that the Soviet Union projected its power even more onto the third world beyond NATO's traditional spheres of influence. For example, the Soviet Union became politically involved near the Horn of Africa when they began providing economic aid to Ethiopia during the late 1970s.²³⁶ This involvement could have threatened NATO countries' oil supplies. In theory, the Soviet Union could move into the

²³⁴ John Young, "Western Europe and the end of the Cold War," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War Volume III*, ed Melvyn Leffler and Odd Westad, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

²³⁵ Additionally, during a Senate speech about the NATO alliance on June 20, 1984, Senator Richard Lugar (Rep.-IN) asserted that European parliaments could not increase their defense spending because of Europe's current economic environment. Middleton, "US Aide Urges NATO to Cut Cost of Arms."

²³⁶ Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War: A World History*. (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2017), 488.

Horn of Africa and then the Middle East. More Soviet influence in this area posed a potential threat to NATO countries because Western Europe was dependent on the Persian Gulf's oil supplies. Additionally, NATO allies dealt with the aftermath of President Josip Broz Tito's death in Yugoslavia. Middleton concludes that a pro-Soviet power could emerge in Yugoslavia, affecting the stability of Central Europe.²³⁷ These concerns could have convinced alliance members to reach the 3 Percent Agreement's goal; however, NATO members did not achieve this initiative's benchmark. Consequently, European NATO members were not going to achieve the goals of the 3 Percent Agreement short of an attack on their own soil.

Historical Perspectives about the 3 Percent Agreement

Some historians discount the 3 Percent Agreement's importance. For example, Simon Lunn and Nicholas Williams referred to the 3 Percent Agreement as merely a "general guideline": "The 1978 pledge of a 3% annual real increase lingered as a general guideline but then foundered on the reluctance of allies to spend on what came to be seen as arbitrary challenge, unrelated to actual required outputs."²³⁸ According to Lunn and Williams, alliance members reluctantly endorsed this agreement. Additionally, they argued that the 3 Percent Agreement had standard caveats, such as that it was merely an aim and that political and financial circumstances affected what NATO members would achieve.

²³⁷ Drew Middleton, "The Problems Facing NATO," *New York Times*, May 29, 1978.

²³⁸ Simon Lunn and Nicholas Williams. "NATO Defense Spending: The Irrationality of 2%," June 2017. <https://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/wpcontent/uploads/2017/10/170608N-Issues-Brief-Defence-Spending.pdf>

Lunn and Williams' main criticism of the 3 Percent Agreement correctly demonstrates the fundamental flaw with this initiative. Their larger point was that the 3 Percent Agreement did not include any consequences for members who failed to reach this initiative's benchmark. The 3 Percent Agreement would have been a more effective measure that placated burden-sharing if this initiative had an enforcement mechanism. Carter's administration should have included a stipulation, such as the United States reducing its forces stationed in Western Europe if its allies in NATO did not reach this agreement's benchmark, which compelled its NATO allies to reach the 3 percent goal.

Some of Nunn and Williams' criticisms about the 3 Percent Agreement have some defects. Lunn and Williams exaggerate the unwillingness of NATO members to endorse the 3 Percent Agreement. Some European members in this alliance, such as West Germany and Belgium, expressed skepticism about achieving this benchmark during a diplomatic meeting in Brussels, Belgium. However, these countries demonstrated significantly less reluctance to implement this initiative during the NATO Washington Summit a few weeks later. After all, President Carter remarked that every NATO member attending this conference had unanimously agreed with implementing the 3 Percent Agreement.²³⁹ The deficiencies between Europe's defense posture and the Soviet Union convinced European countries in NATO to commit to this initiative.²⁴⁰

Additionally, Nunn and Williams fail to mention that one of the caveats in this agreement

²³⁹ Jimmy Carter, "Text of Remarks on NATO Defense Policy, May 31, 1978," in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Jimmy Carter 1978, Book I-January 1 to June 30, 1978*. (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office: 1979), 1020.

²⁴⁰ Zilian, "The Shifting Military Balance in Central Europe," 159.

accounted for inflation. After all, 3 percent real growth was a substantial increase in defense spending.

Despite this historical claim that the 3 Percent Agreement was a “general guideline” for NATO, this initiative had beneficial outcomes. The 3 Percent Agreement created more multilateral cooperation toward improving NATO’s continental defense. For instance, this agreement was the first NATO policy that dealt with an alliance-wide benchmark to improve each state’s defense spending record. Additionally, all NATO members pledged to improve their defense spending, an act of solidarity in itself. Despite that most NATO members did not achieve the 3 Percent Agreement’s goals, Stuart Eizenstat argues that the Carter administration restored the important role of U.S. leadership in NATO through convincing alliance members to pledge to implement this initiative.²⁴¹ Eizenstat argued that U.S. leadership had lapsed since the United States had escaped entanglement in Vietnam. Despite the fact that most NATO members did not accomplish the 3 Percent Agreement’s ambitions, this policy was a step in the right direction for improvement of allied contribution to NATO’s continental defense. Britain and Turkey met the 3 Percent Agreement’s objective.

Furthermore, the 3 Percent Agreement and the LTDP enhanced NATO’s defensive capabilities. After NATO adopted the 3 Percent Agreement and the LTDP, the alliance’s conventional forces and overall defense strength improved. Even though most nations failed to raise their defense spending by 3 percent, this initiative contributed to

²⁴¹ Stuart Eizenstat, *President Carter: The White House Years*, (New York City: Thomas Dunne Books, 2018), 608.

modernizing the U.S. and its NATO allies' conventional forces. From the 3 Percent Agreement financing the LTDP, NATO was more prepared for a potential Soviet and Warsaw Pact conflict, and the institution's weaponry supply stocks increased. Additionally, in a memorandum to Carter in 1980, Brown highlighted that the United States improved NATO's rapid deployment, ground, naval, and air forces.²⁴² NATO members potentially could have decreased their defense spending records if not for the 3 Percent Agreement. In fact, NATO Europe's total percentage of military spending did not decrease from 1980 to 1985. European members in NATO averaged a 1.5 percent increase in defense spending from 1980 to 1985.²⁴³ This initiative established a benchmark for NATO allies to achieve, so states had more of an incentive to improve their defense spending.

The 3 Percent Agreement helped contain the U.S. defense budget for the Carter administration in the future. In 1979, some senators wanted a more substantial improvement in the American defense budget.²⁴⁴ Specifically, Senator Ernest Hollings (Dem.-SC) sought to increase the defense budget by 5 percent each year. Senator Sam Nunn was also concerned that the U.S. defense budget was insufficient to meet the growing Soviet threat.²⁴⁵ However, Carter did not want to make such a substantial

²⁴² *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1977-1980*, Volume 1, Foundations of Foreign Policy. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v01/d162>

²⁴³ From 1975 to 1979, NATO countries' (excluding the United States) averaged a .78 percent increase in defense spending. Allen and Diehl, "The Defense Issue In West Germany: Constraints on Increased Military Allocations."

²⁴⁴ Jimmy Carter Library, Office of Staff Secretary, Series: Presidential Files, Folder: 9/13/79, https://www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov/digital_library/ss0/148878/130/SSO_148878_130_06.pdf

²⁴⁵ During a meeting with Frank Moore in September 1979, Senator Nunn expressed these concerns. Nunn concluded that Senators Jackson and Tower also wanted a larger improvement in the U.S. defense budget.

increase in the budget. Carter's administration used the 3 Percent Agreement as justification against Senator Hollings' demand. Director of the Office of Management and Budget James McIntyre and Assistant to the President for Congressional Liaison Frank Moore suggested to Carter that he use the U.S. commitment to 3 percent real growth as the reasoning to oppose Hollings's plan.²⁴⁶ Thus, the 3 Percent Agreement allowed the Carter administration to pursue an increase in defense spending while providing a reason for the United States not to have an over-expansive military budget.

During the late 1970s and early 1980s, the 3 Percent Agreement allayed some congressional concerns about burden-sharing. Several congressional members applauded the 3 Percent Agreement, such as Senators Nunn, John Warner, and Lawton Chiles. They all concluded that this initiative contributed to ameliorating burden-sharing in NATO.²⁴⁷ Additionally, congressional members did not introduce drastic legislation that reduced U.S. forces in Europe until 1984 when Senator Nunn proposed the Nunn Amendment.

The 3 Percent Agreement altered the U.S. government's concept of burden-sharing in NATO. Throughout the early and mid-1970s, congressional members cited the U.S. balance-of-payments deficit as evidence of European members not contributing enough to NATO's continental defense. After the Carter administration convinced the NATO alliance to adopt the 3 Percent Agreement, congressional members cited European members not improving their defense spending as evidence of these countries not

²⁴⁶ Jimmy Carter Library, Office of Staff Secretary, Series: Presidential Files, Folder: 9/13/79. https://www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov/digital_library/sso/148878/130/SSO_148878_130_06.pdf

²⁴⁷ *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1969–1976, Volume XXXIII, SALT II, 1972–1980. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v33/d244>

contributing sufficiently to NATO's continental defense. For example, during a Senate debate about burden-sharing on June 20, 1984, Senator James Sasser (Dem.-TN) acknowledged that only a few of the NATO allies met their defense commitments of meeting the 3 Percent Agreement's benchmark.²⁴⁸ Sasser's remarks underscore that the congressional concern about burden-sharing was more about European members in NATO not increasing their defense spending sufficiently than the U.S. balance-of-payments deficit.

The 3 Percent Agreement placated congressional concerns about burden-sharing during the late 1970s and early 1980s. The Carter administration advocated that NATO members agree to this policy for several reasons. First, it wanted to improve NATO's conventional force strength in Western Europe to counter the Soviet Union's growing military strength. Second, the Carter administration needed to finance the LTDP. Third, the 3 Percent Agreement limited the U.S. defense budget when Carter held office. In the short term, some NATO members improved their defense spending records. However, most NATO allies failed to achieve the 3 Percent Agreement's ambitions. The lack of an enforcement mechanism in the 3 Percent Agreement, economic issues, and foreign political problems all hindered progress with this benchmark. Above all, the 3 Percent Agreement changed the emphasis of congressional concerns about burden-sharing. Before NATO established this initiative, American government officials connected burden-sharing to the issue of the U.S. balance-of-payments deficit from stationing its

²⁴⁸ J. Sasser. *Is The Nunn-Roth Approach to the U.S. Role in NATO Sound?* Washington D.C., June 20, 1984.

forces in Europe. After the 3 Percent Agreement, American congressional members began citing European members in NATO not increasing their defense spending as evidence of the lack of burden-sharing.

Chapter IV: The Nunn Amendment; Another Congressional Reaction to Burden-Sharing

Congress remained skeptical about U.S. allies in NATO achieving the 3 Percent Agreement during the early 1980s. Some senators proposed legislation that attempted to limit U.S. forces in Europe, such as Ted Stevens (Rep.-AK). However, he was more concerned with European allies in NATO agreeing to construct a natural gas pipeline with the Soviet Union than increasing their defense spending. In 1984, congressional grievances about burden-sharing re-emerged when Senator Sam Nunn introduced the Nunn Amendment. The Reagan administration's 1984 congressional report on the 3 Percent Agreement fomented Senate concerns about European members not contributing enough to NATO's continental defense. Nunn's legislation called for a phased reduction of 30,000 troops per year in Western Europe over three years if European allies in NATO did not increase their defense budgets by 3 percent in real terms. Senator Nunn proposed this amendment to induce U.S. allies to contribute more resources to NATO, improve Europe's continental defense, and reduce this alliance's reliance on nuclear weapons.

President Ronald Reagan opposed the Nunn Amendment because he believed that this legislation would weaken NATO. After all, Nunn's proposal potentially reduced U.S. forces in Europe, providing the Soviet Union a strategic advantage. Because of Reagan's opposition and Western European lobbying efforts, the Senate voted down Nunn's legislation. After the Senate vote, Senator William Cohen (Rep.-ME) proposed a compromise amendment that froze the current number of American troops in Europe at 306,414. Despite the Senate not passing the original Nunn Amendment, this legislation

has historical significance. The Nunn Amendment demonstrated the congressional opposition toward NATO's nuclear strategy and caused alliance members to improve this alliance's conventional force capabilities.

From Congressional Skepticism to the Nunn Amendment

Despite not proposing drastic legislation related to burden-sharing in NATO, Congress remained concerned about this issue during the early 1980s. In 1980, Representative Melvin Price (Rep.-IL) introduced legislation that required the Secretary of Defense to report to Congress about allied progress with achieving the 3 Percent Agreement. Price added this stipulation to the Department of Defense Authorization Act of 1981.²⁴⁹ The Senate passed the 1981 Authorization Act by 84 to 3 votes on July 2, 1980, while the House of Representatives approved it by a 338 to 62 margin.²⁵⁰ Every year the presidential administration had to document member efforts at meeting the 3 percent spending objective, detail the cost-sharing arrangements with NATO, and highlight strategies to equalize the sharing of defense burdens within this alliance. In essence, the Authorization Act revealed congressional skepticism about allies contributing more to their defense spending.

Some senators introduced legislation that limited U.S. forces in Europe throughout the early 1980s. In 1982, Stevens proposed an amendment to stop the Reagan administration from stationing an additional 20,000 troops in Western Europe.²⁵¹

²⁴⁹ Stanley R. Sloan, "Managing the NATO Alliance: Congress and Burdensharing," *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 4, no. 3, 1985, 402.

²⁵⁰ "H.R.6974-Department of Defense Authorization Act, 1981," Congress.gov, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/96th-congress/house-bill/6974>

²⁵¹ Stevens's Subcommittee on Defense Appropriations approved this initiative by a 12 to 1 vote.

However, Congress modified Stevens' legislation to limit American troops in Europe to the level attained in late September; the United States stationed 331,705 military forces in Europe at this time.²⁵² Senator Nunn contributed to making this compromise with Stevens. This modification allowed Reagan to waive this ceiling for national security reasons. The Reagan administration took this option in 1983 to permit stationing an additional 4,400 military troops in Europe.

Senator Stevens introduced his amendment for two main reasons. First, he believed that this amendment would be an effective cost-cutting measure in Reagan's costly military budget. Stevens did not support Reagan's proposed defense budget of \$216 billion for 1983 because he argued that it would worsen the already rising U.S. budget deficit.²⁵³ Second, senators who supported Stevens' legislation were displeased with Western European diplomatic attitudes toward the Soviet Union in 1982.²⁵⁴ In particular, Stevens criticized Western Europe's recent agreement with the Soviet Union that intended to create a natural gas pipeline from Siberia to Western Europe:

If they have reached the point now where they can rely upon the Soviets for an increased gas supply and feel comfortable with that, then I don't know of any reason why we should be increasing our commitments, particularly our ground-force commitment, to defend them.²⁵⁵

²⁵² Additionally, the Stevens Amendment proposed eliminating money for stockpiling heavy military equipment in Belgium and the Netherlands, cutting funds for deploying cruise missiles, and nullifying financial support for 93,000 West Germany reservists.

²⁵³ Leslie Gelb, "Reagan's Military Budget Puts Emphasis on a Buildup of Global Power." *New York Times*, February 2, 1982.

²⁵⁴ Gwertzman, "Reagan Aide Fights Congressional Cuts in NATO."

²⁵⁵ Reagan also opposed the pipeline. Ibid.

Reagan initiated a significant military buildup throughout his presidency while also drastically reducing government spending in some non-military programs. Jonathan Reed Winkler's chapter "Reagan and the Military" in *A Companion to Ronald Reagan* indicates this considerable effort: "Defense outlays in 1981 were 23.2 percent of the federal outlays and 5.2 percent of GNP. By the peak year of 1987, defense was 28.1 percent of federal outlays and 6.1 percent of GNP."²⁵⁶ This effort was the largest peacetime military buildup in American history. Reagan drastically cut the U.S. non-military budget. For example, Reagan's administration reduced the Environmental Protection Agency's budget and defunded the United States public housing programs.²⁵⁷

The Reagan administration opposed the Stevens Amendment for two reasons. First, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Lawrence Eagleburger, speaking on behalf of the administration, concluded that policies limiting U.S. influence in NATO would raise doubts in Western Europe and the Soviet Union about American commitment to this alliance. In particular, Eagleburger believed that the Stevens Amendment would result in Western European and Soviet speculation about an American retreat from Europe.²⁵⁸ Second, the Reagan administration argued that the Stevens Amendment's potential savings would be insignificant compared to the legislation's political consequences of the United States being perceived as an unreliable ally. During a

²⁵⁶ Jonathan Winkler, "Reagan and the Military," in *A Companion to Ronald Reagan*, ed. Andrew Johns, (Oxford, U.K.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015), 167.

²⁵⁷ Doug Rossinow, *The Reagan Era: A History of the 1980s*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 44.

²⁵⁸ Eagleburger made these arguments before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 1982 while filling in for Secretary of State George Shultz. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee was discussing the implications of the Stevens Amendment. Gwertzman, "Reagan Aide Fights Congressional Cuts in NATO."

statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 1984, Eagleburger estimated that the total savings envisioned would be about \$120 million, less than one-tenth of one percent of the total American military budget.²⁵⁹

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee supported the Reagan administration's analysis of the Stevens Amendment. Senator Charles Percy (Rep.-IL), the committee chair, staunchly opposed any monetary or troop reductions in the NATO alliance. As a result, Senator Percy convened a committee hearing to ensure that the Reagan administration could publicize its position without the White House issuing a statement. Additionally, some Democrats, Senators John Glenn (Dem.-OH) and Claiborne Pell (Dem.-RI), supported the Reagan administration's position on the Stevens Amendment.²⁶⁰

Congressional pressure about U.S. forces in Europe increased in 1983 when Senator Nunn proposed to continue the Stevens Amendment's limitation. Nunn's legislation carried over the Stevens Amendment's previous cap of 321,000 American forces in Europe. The Senate included this legislation in the 1984 Department of Defense Authorization Act.²⁶¹ Like the Stevens Amendment, Nunn's proposal allowed the president to add 4,400 forces in this region as cruise missile personnel. However, the Reagan administration had to submit several detailed reports to Congress that defense efforts from NATO allies had improved. The Senate passed the 1984 Authorization Act

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

²⁶¹ Sloan, "Managing the NATO Alliance: Congress and Burdensharing," 403.

by 83 to 8 votes on September 13, 1984, while the House approved this legislation by a 266 to 152 margin.²⁶²

The Reagan administration's 3 Percent Agreement report in 1984 galvanized Senate grievances about burden-sharing in NATO. In March 1984, the administration report concluded that NATO allies' (excluding the United States) growth in defense spending declined from 2.8 percent in 1981 to 2.3 in 1982. In 1983, their defense spending growth was between 2.1 and 1.9 percent. The Reagan administration estimated that this percentage would be between 1.2 and 1.7 percent in 1984.²⁶³ Senators openly criticized European inability to improve defense spending. For example, Senator Percy stated during a Senate speech in June 1984 that most European members in NATO, excluding Great Britain, had not achieved the 3 Percent Agreement's objective.²⁶⁴ Additionally, Nunn acknowledged that NATO members failed to live up to the 3 Percent Agreement during a speech about burden-sharing in June 1984.²⁶⁵ As a result of this report, Senator Nunn introduced legislation that pressured U.S. allies in NATO to contribute more to continental defense by threatening American troop withdrawals in Europe.

Congressional grievances about burden-sharing in NATO during the 1980s peaked when Senator Nunn introduced his amendment in June 1984. The Nunn

²⁶² S.675-Department of Defense Authorization Act, 1984, Congress.gov., <https://www.congress.gov/bill/98th-congress/senate-bill/675>

²⁶³ Kaplan, *NATO Divided, NATO United*, 88.

²⁶⁴ Charles Percy, *Is The Nunn-Roth Approach to The U.S. Role in NATO Sound?* Washington D.C., June 20, 1984.

²⁶⁵ Sam Nunn, *Is The Nunn-Roth Approach to The U.S. Role in NATO Sound?* Washington D.C., June 20, 1984.

Amendment stipulated that the U.S. would initiate a phased reduction of 30,000 troops per year in Europe for three years if European NATO members did not meet their commitment to increase their defense budgets by 3 percent. This initiative intended for the phased troop reduction to start in 1987 and then continue in 1988 and 1989.²⁶⁶

Additionally, Nunn's legislation included additional options for European contributions to NATO to avert U.S. troop withdrawals. They included bringing munition supplies up to the levels necessary for thirty days of conventional hostilities and improving airfield shelters.²⁶⁷

Nunn's Reasoning for Introducing the Nunn Amendment

Senator Nunn supported the NATO alliance throughout his congressional tenure. Nunn, the ranking member of the Senate Committee on Armed Services, was one of the leading congressional authorities on military issues and the NATO alliance when he proposed this amendment.²⁶⁸ Furthermore, Nunn was one of the main leaders in preventing the Senate from passing the Mansfield Amendment of 1973 by proposing the Jackson-Nunn Amendment. The Jackson-Nunn Amendment was less harmful toward NATO than Mansfield's legislation because it did not directly reduce U.S. forces in Europe.

Nunn proposed the Nunn Amendment because European allies in NATO had not fulfill their promises since the late 1970s. NATO members pledged to increase their

²⁶⁶ Williams, "European Security Cooperation and British Interests," 549.

²⁶⁷ Wayne Biddle, "Senate Bars Move to Reduce Troops with NATO Forces." *New York Times*, June 21, 1984.

²⁶⁸ United States Senate Committee on Armed Services, Senate.gov. <https://www.armed-services.senate.gov/about/history>

defense spending by 3 percent each year, acquire a thirty-day supply of conventional munitions, and establish facilities that would accommodate six American divisions and 1,500 tactical aircraft.²⁶⁹ However, NATO members failed to fulfill these commitments. In 1983, the average increase in European defense spending was below three percent, and no ally was near the thirty-day supply level of conventional munitions. Additionally, U.S. allies in NATO only provided about 20 percent of the reinforcement facilities and did not establish aircraft shelters.²⁷⁰

Furthermore, senators who supported the Nunn Amendment recognized European members' limited defense efforts in NATO. Senator James Sasser asserted during a Senate speech about the Nunn Amendment on June 20, 1984, that "our European allies are not living up to their defense commitments."²⁷¹ Specifically, Sasser cited West Germany as an example of European members not contributing enough resources to Europe's continental defense. For example, the Department of Defense drafted a restationing plan for American forces in West Germany, costing more than \$1.2 billion. The Armed Services Committee's Military Construction Subcommittee concluded that West Germany should provide a substantial number of resources for this construction plan. However, Assistant Secretary of Defense Lawrence Korb stated that West German

²⁶⁹ The United States promised to supply these divisions and the 1,500 aircraft within ten days as reinforcements in wartime. Robert Bowie, "Nunn Amendment: NATO Must Do More." *The Christian Science Monitor*, June 29, 1984.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

²⁷¹ J. Sasser, *Is The Nunn-Roth Approach to NATO Sound?* Washington D.C., June 20, 1984.

government officials said they did not have the resources to contribute to the Department's restationing plan.²⁷²

Senators who did not support the Nunn Amendment were nonetheless concerned about the issue of burden-sharing in NATO. During a Senate speech on June 20, 1984, Senator Percy agreed that European allies in NATO should contribute more to this alliance's continental defense. "In speaking against the amendment," Percy declared,

I make no apologies for our allies [sic] recent level of minimal defense improvements. Nor would I disguise the frustration and consternation that I feel when I read the most recent Defense Department burden-sharing report and learn that our allies are falling even further behind in their efforts to meet their commitment to a 3-percent defense spending increase.²⁷³

Percy asserted that European members in NATO needed to contribute more to this alliance's continental defense. Additionally, Senators Richard Lugar (Rep.-IN) and William Cohen, in their speeches arguing against Nunn's legislation, said that European members in NATO had not contributed enough resources to this alliance.

Strengthening NATO's conventional defense provided another reason for Senator Nunn to introduce the Nunn Amendment. Nunn believed that the United States could not achieve an effective deterrent against the Soviet Union without more contributions from other alliance members. During a congressional speech, Nunn said that the Nunn Amendment intended to "give NATO as an alliance every incentive to improve its

²⁷² Ibid.

²⁷³ C. Percy, *Is The Nunn-Roth Approach to NATO Sound?* Washington D.C., June 20, 1984.

conventional defenses.”²⁷⁴ The Nunn Amendment intended to jolt European members to improve their defense spending through troop withdrawals.

Nunn asserted that high-ranking officials in NATO conceded that this alliance’s decreasing continental defense abilities justified proposing the Nunn Amendment. On March 6, 1984, NATO’s Supreme Allied Commander, General Bernard Rogers, remarked that the alliance’s conventional defense had weakened over the years. According to Rogers, this deterioration could cause an increase in a reliance on nuclear arms for continental security. General Rogers reported these conclusions before the House Armed Services Committee. When advocating for the Nunn Amendment, Nunn utilized General Rogers’ statements. He said, “The other alternative, as General Rogers has said over and over again, is the alternative he would have to choose now in the event of any kind of war of that nature. He would have to choose to turn to the early use of nuclear weapons.”²⁷⁵ However, General Rogers opposed the Nunn Amendment. He recognized the issue of burden-sharing but did not want the United States to prod alliance members to contribute more to NATO’s continental defense.²⁷⁶ In fact, he wanted the United States to increase its military troops in Western Europe.

The Nunn Amendment intended to alter NATO’s dependency on nuclear weapons. Senator Nunn believed that NATO was too reliant on the strategy of using

²⁷⁴ Senator Nunn, speaking on the Nunn Amendment, 98th Cong., 2nd., *Congressional Record* 130 (June 20, 1984): S3266.

²⁷⁵ Nunn, *Is The Nunn-Roth Approach to The U.S. Role in NATO Sound?*

²⁷⁶ “General Urges Reviving Draft,” CIA Archives, General CIA Records Virtual Reading Room. <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP90-00806R000200710007-4.pdf>

nuclear weapons during a non-nuclear attack.²⁷⁷ He warned that NATO would have to decide whether to resort to nuclear weapons or choose defeat if the Soviet Union attacked Western Europe because of its weaker conventional military forces. During a Senate speech about NATO on June 20, 1984, Nunn argued that it was an untenable strategy:

I do not believe in the early use of nuclear weapons. I do not believe in placing the President of the United States and our Western leaders in a position of having to decide between two very unpleasant alternatives in the event of a conventional attack by the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact.²⁷⁸

Instead, Nunn believed that the best solution for changing a reliance on nuclear strategy was to strengthen NATO's conventional forces.

The Reagan administration increased the NATO alliance's nuclear capabilities throughout the early 1980s. In November 1983, Reagan authorized the deployment of Pershing II nuclear missiles to West Germany and cruise missiles to Britain and Belgium in accordance with the dual-track decision.²⁷⁹ Additionally, Reagan advised European prime ministers on how to convince their governments to accept the United States deploying INF missiles to their respective countries. For example, Belgium's prime minister Wilfred Martens visited President Reagan on January 14, 1983, to obtain political advice on how to persuade his parliament to accept INF missiles. Reagan told Martens to argue that with the new arms reduction negotiations underway, it was not time

²⁷⁷ Nunn, *Is The Nunn-Roth Approach to The U.S. Role in NATO Sound?*

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁹ William Drozdiak, "Fracturing NATO to Save It U.S. Missiles Drive Reagan, Europe Apart." *The Washington Post*, November 27, 1983.

to give the Soviet Union what they wanted in exchange for nothing. Additionally, the president concluded that the Soviet Union did not want European countries in NATO to have nuclear missiles in their respective countries. Reagan's advice to Martens contributed to Belgium's coalition government accepting the scheduled deployment of INF missiles on March 14, 1983.²⁸⁰

The Nunn Amendment also intended to ameliorate some of American financial issues. For example, the U.S. economy was suffering from substantial budget deficits during the Reagan presidency. During a Senate speech on June 20, 1984, Senator Sasser remarked that the United States had a \$190 billion deficit.²⁸¹ Making financial matters worse, the Reagan administration's defense budget increases throughout the 1980s exacerbated this problem. Consequently, Sasser believed that the United States "cannot continue to assume the role of financing a disproportionate share of the defense of the free world."²⁸² Nunn's amendment sought to ameliorate this problem by coercing European allies in NATO to increase their defense spending.²⁸³

In addition, the Nunn Amendment sought to improve U.S. diplomatic relations with Western Europe. Senator William Roth (Rep.-DE), who supported the Nunn Amendment, believed that the current inequitable distribution of burden-sharing in NATO was detrimental for American and Western European relations. This imbalance

²⁸⁰ George P. Shultz, *Turmoil and Triumph: My Years as Secretary of State*. (New York City: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1993), 522.

²⁸¹ J. Sasser, *Is The Nunn-Roth Approach to NATO Sound?* Washington D.C., June 20, 1984.

²⁸² *Ibid.*

²⁸³ However, the Reagan administration had no plans to reduce U.S. defense spending even if European members in NATO increased their defense spending.

fueled neo-isolationist trends that sought to ignore American national security concerns outside of the United States.²⁸⁴ Additionally, Roth argued that the American public would not be content with higher taxes from an increase in military spending if European members in NATO did not pull their weight. Roth believed that these trends could cause Congress to pass more drastic legislation that decreased U.S. forces in Western Europe, causing more diplomatic tension in NATO.²⁸⁵

Western Europe experiencing economic and infrastructure growth in the mid-1980s increased Senate support for the Nunn Amendment. Senator Roth argued that Western Europe's demographic and financial circumstances had improved: "Western Europe boasts a population larger than that of the United States, and, collectively, a higher level of government spending. Europe is no longer the United States [sic] junior partner in NATO."²⁸⁶ West Germany's economic growth rate increased from -1.1 percent in 1982 to 2.4 in 1984. The United Kingdom's percentage grew from 0.4 percent in 1982 to 2.4 in 1984, while Italy's rate improved from 0.4 percent in 1982 to 2.9 in 1984.²⁸⁷ Furthermore, Roth countered the argument that Europe experiencing an economic recession provided a reason for these countries not to achieve the 3 Percent Agreement's benchmark. For instance, the senator concluded that the requirement for a 3 percent increase in defense spending in the agreement was reasonable and well within European economic capabilities. Additionally, Roth argued that European members in NATO

²⁸⁴ However, Senator Roth does not provide an example of a neo-isolationist trend in the United States. W. Roth, *Is The Nunn-Roth Approach to NATO Sound?* Washington D.C., June 20, 1984.

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

²⁸⁷ Young, "Western Europe and the End of the Cold War," 300.

would not have agreed to such an increase if this benchmark was financially unreasonable.

Reagan, NATO, and the Nunn Amendment

Secretary of State Alexander Haig's April 25, 1981, speech about President Reagan's foreign policy shows that the Reagan administration aimed to foster better relations with NATO members. Haig said that the United States would also embrace consultation with its NATO allies. "Consultation should mean more than the formal act of soliciting options," Haig asserted, "It suggests what alliances really mean: shared interest, reliable performance, and sensitivity to each other's concerns."²⁸⁸ The Reagan administration sought to improve U.S. relations with its NATO allies because increasing solidarity would limit Soviet influence in Western Europe.²⁸⁹ Furthermore, Reagan increased American troop levels in Europe significantly throughout his presidency. His administration increased U.S. forces in West Germany from 238,400 in 1981 to 248,700 in 1984.²⁹⁰ Reagan reiterated the U.S. commitment to stationing American forces in Europe during a NATO summit speech in March 1988: "American troops will remain in Europe, under any administration, so long as Europeans want them to stay."²⁹¹

When Nunn introduced his amendment, the Reagan administration attempted to convince the Senate to defeat this legislation. During a phone conversation on June 19, 1984, U.S. Ambassador to NATO David Abshire urged Senator Roth not to vote for the

²⁸⁸ "Text of Haig's Speech on American Foreign Policy." *New York Times*, April 25, 1981.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁰ Hubert Zimmermann, "The Improbable Permanence of a Commitment," 2.

²⁹¹ Julie Johnson, "At NATO Parley, Reagan Reassures." *New York Times*, March 2, 1988.

amendment out of deference to Peter Carrington's inauguration the following Monday.²⁹² However, Abshire would not have supported the Nunn Amendment even with Nunn delaying this legislation for a few days. NATO was about to appoint Lord Carrington as its Secretary General in June 1984.²⁹³ In particular, Abshire had concerns about the Senate approving the Nunn Amendment because it would disrupt U.S. diplomatic relations with NATO officials. Abshire warned that the Nunn Amendment would give Carrington a negative message upon arrival rather than a temporary vote of confidence.²⁹⁴

The Reagan administration also opposed the Nunn Amendment because it would undermine the eventual Mutual Balanced Force Reduction negotiations (MBFR) with the Soviet Union. Regardless of Reagan's bellicose rhetoric toward the Soviet Union and improvements with U.S. forces in Western Europe, his administration wanted to negotiate troop reductions with the Soviet Union throughout the 1980s. During the initial MBFR negotiation, the Reagan administration desired to: "demonstrate flexibility compatible with our security requirements in response to Soviet movement. It is also important that the MBFR in Vienna remain the focus of arms reductions efforts involving conventional forces."²⁹⁵ During the MBFR meeting on March 6, 1984, the United States called for the Soviet Union to withdrawal 30,000 troops in return for U.S. removal of 13,000 forces. However, the Soviet Union proposed for the United States to reduce 20,000 forces, and

²⁹² The Reagan administration had other more compelling arguments against the Nunn Amendment. However, Abshire's plead was the initial reactionary argument against Nunn proposing this legislation.

²⁹³ "Senator Roth May Cosponsor Nunn Amendment," CIA Archives, General CIA Records Virtual Reading Room. <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP90B01370R000801050067-5.pdf>

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ "Interagency Reconsideration of Revised US MBFR Proposal," CIA Archives, General CIA Records Virtual Reading Room. <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP89B00423R000100030044-4.pdf>

their state would remove 13,000 troops. Both countries agreed to a ceiling of 700,000 ground forces and 200,000 air personnel.²⁹⁶ Reagan continued supporting the negotiation strategy of “peace through strength.” Nunn’s legislation subverted this approach because it reduced U.S. forces in Europe, giving the American government less of an advantage in negotiating with the Soviet Union.

Reagan administration officials also feared that the Nunn Amendment would backfire by jeopardizing U.S. efforts to improve NATO’s defense contributions. Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger believed that the Nunn Amendment would have the opposite effect of its intended goal of convincing its allies to contribute more to NATO’s continental defense.²⁹⁷ During a press conference near the Pentagon in June 1984, Weinberger asserted:

The question is whether an amendment such as this amendment that they're talking about in Congress now that would require us to withdraw 100,000 troops and weaken Europe is going to be anything that would encourage Europe to strengthen itself, and I happen to think it would not.²⁹⁸

Furthermore, he argued that threatening European allies with a troop withdrawal that potentially weakened Europe’s continental defense was the worst method of ameliorating the problem of burden-sharing.

²⁹⁶ Leslie Gelb, “Reagan Alters Stand on Troop Cuts,” *New York Times*, March 5, 1984.

²⁹⁷ Biddle, “Senate Bars Move to Reduce Troops with NATO Forces.”

²⁹⁸ “Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger warned Wednesday that a Senate...” *United Press International*, June 20, 1984.

Senate Opposition to the Nunn Amendment

Most Republican senators followed the Reagan administration's opposition to the Nunn Amendment. Republicans who sided with the Reagan administration on the Nunn Amendment believed that the president should convince NATO members to increase their defense spending by 3 percent. For example, Senator Tower concluded that the proposed amendment went beyond the jurisdiction of Congress: "We don't have any responsibility beyond this, do we?" He insisted. "Are we out on the cutting edge? No. Are we responsible for the day-to-day conduct of the diplomacy with our allies? No, we are not."²⁹⁹

Senators who opposed the Nunn Amendment questioned whether this legislation would realistically convince NATO members to improve their defense spending. During a Senate speech in June 1984, Senator Percy argued that Nunn's legislation would not persuade NATO allies to contribute more to its continental defense. Specifically, Percy believed that the amendment would result in confusion and resentment in Europe, causing the NATO alliance to unravel. Instead of the Nunn Amendment, Senator Percy wanted the Reagan administration to pursue more diplomatic efforts to resolve burden-sharing. In particular, he argued that the United States should continue leading by example by increasing its defense spending.³⁰⁰

Some senators argued that burden-sharing and multilateral cooperation in NATO had improved since the 1970s. During a Senate speech in June 1984, Senator Tower

²⁹⁹ J. Tower, *Is The Nunn-Roth Approach to NATO Sound?* Washington D.C., June 20, 1984.

³⁰⁰ Percy, *Is The Nunn-Roth Approach to NATO Sound?*

pointed out that European members' defense spending records had improved since the 1970s, while the U.S. defense spending record had fluctuated.³⁰¹ However, he did not provide statistics validating these claims about NATO members' defense spending efforts. Additionally, Tower believed that the United States and its European allies had made considerable progress with multilateral cooperation in NATO.³⁰² For these reasons, Tower believed that the United States implementing the Nunn Amendment would be unfair because European members in NATO had committed more resources toward this alliance's continental defense since the 1970s.

Senators opposing the Nunn Amendment also argued that it would further disrupt political cohesion in Western Europe, negatively affecting U.S. diplomatic relations with NATO allies. Senator Tower concluded that Western European countries had faced severe public backlash for accepting Pershing II and cruise missiles from the United States. In Belgium, 400,000 people mobilized for a protest against Reagan's nuclear policies in Brussels in October 1983.³⁰³ West German protest organizers said that around one million people participated in demonstrations in West Berlin, Bonn, Hamburg, and Stuttgart.³⁰⁴ Senator Tower cited Italy as another example: "The Italians – a fragile coalition government, made up of many leftwing elements; a fragile government indeed – stands fast on deployment. Should we kick them in the teeth; let them have it?"³⁰⁵ The

³⁰¹ Tower, *Is The Nunn-Roth Approach to NATO Sound?*

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ Lawrence Wittner, *Confronting the Bomb: A Short History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement*, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), 146.

³⁰⁴ James Markham, "Vast Crowds Hold Rallies in Europe Against U.S. Arms." *New York Times*, October 23, 1983.

³⁰⁵ Tower, *Is The Nunn-Roth Approach to NATO Sound?*

Nunn Amendment would further embarrass Western European governments because this legislation coerced these countries to increase their defense spending.

NATO, Western Europe, and the Nunn Amendment

High-ranking officials in NATO did not support the Nunn Amendment. NATO's military commander General Bernard Rogers pleaded with Senator Nunn not to re-introduce the Nunn Amendment during a conversation on March 2, 1985.³⁰⁶ General Rogers had concerns about NATO's forces not stopping an invasion by the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact countries. He concluded that the United States could not deploy ten divisions to Europe in ten days as required by this alliance's war plan.³⁰⁷ This lack of conventional force strength could result in the United States and its NATO allies resorting to nuclear options if the Soviet Union invaded Western Europe.

European members of NATO, such as Great Britain, also opposed the Nunn Amendment, with British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and her administration criticizing this legislation. Defense Secretary Michael Heseltine rejected Nunn's proposal by arguing that this amendment would divide the NATO alliance, "If you want to undermine the credibility of your allies and your security, just pass that amendment," he warned.³⁰⁸ Heseltine viewed the Nunn Amendment as an unacceptable, heavy-handed

³⁰⁶ "General Urges Reviving Draft," CIA Archives, General CIA Records Virtual Reading Room. <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP90-00806R000200710007-4.pdf>

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ "Ambassador's December 14 Call on Michael Hesseltine [sic]," CIA Archives, General CIA Records Virtual Reading Room. <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP90B01370R000801110050-6.pdf>

congressional attempt to dictate NATO's terms. He believed that this legislation was unwise because it compelled allies to contribute more to defense spending.³⁰⁹

The British government had two other concerns about the Nunn Amendment. First, Nunn's legislation did not distinguish that some European allies in NATO had met the 3 percent growth benchmark. During a phone conversation with U.S. ambassador to the United Kingdom Charles Price II and Senator Thomas Eagleton (Dem.-MO) in December 1984, Heseltine asserted that Britain had achieved the 3 Percent Agreement's guideline.³¹⁰ The United Kingdom had averaged a 3.7 percent growth in their defense spending from 1980 to 1983.³¹¹ Additionally, Canada and Luxembourg had attained the 3 percent growth objective during this period. Heseltine argued that the senators who supported the Nunn Amendment had made the bad judgment of lumping Britain with NATO allies that had not reached the 3 Percent Agreement's objective. Second, Heseltine believed that the Nunn Amendment placed the NATO allies in a difficult position. "The technique was/is not acceptable," he complained, "and leaves allied governments in the position of having to answer operational/opposition charges of subservience to American interests."³¹² The Nunn Amendment needed to acknowledge that Britain had met the 3 percent growth benchmark.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

³¹⁰ Ibid.

³¹¹ Christopher Allen and Paul Diehl, "The Defense Issue In West Germany: Constraints on Increased Military Allocations." *Armed Forces & Society* 15, no. 1 (1988), 99.

³¹² "Ambassador's December 14 Call on Michael Hesseltine [sic]," CIA Archives, General CIA Records Virtual Reading Room. <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP90B01370R000801110050-6.pdf>

Like Britain, West Germany opposed the Nunn Amendment. West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher rushed to Washington to ensure that Congress would not pass Nunn's amendment.³¹³ During the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis Conference on German-American Relations in December 1984, West German government officials argued that the Nunn Amendment unfairly punished their country due to other alliance members' failure to increase their defense spending adequately. A CIA record mentioned that an anonymous West German government official at this conference provided several examples of how this country had contributed to NATO's continental defense: "He cited the 1970s record of defense spending, the 1983 HNS agreement, FRG efforts to aid Spanish membership into NATO, as well as INF as proof of West Germany's contributions."³¹⁴ Fortunately for West German Foreign Minister Genscher, Congress did not pass the Nunn Amendment.

The Senate defeated the Nunn Amendment by 55 to 41 votes. However, Senator Cohen proposed a compromise amendment that the Senate overwhelmingly approved by a 94 to 3 vote margin.³¹⁵ Cohen's legislation froze the level of American troops in Europe at 326,414 unless the Secretary of Defense could certify to Congress that NATO allies had taken "significant measures" to improve their conventional defense capabilities.³¹⁶ Additionally, the Senate connected this amendment to the \$230 billion Defense

³¹³ Kaplan, *NATO Divided, NATO United*, 96.

³¹⁴ "IFPA Conference on German-American Relations," CIA Archives, General CIA Records Virtual Reading Room. <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP87R00529R000200170020-3.pdf>

³¹⁵ Williams, "European Security Cooperation and British Interests," 549.

³¹⁶ Sasser, *Is The Nunn-Roth Approach to NATO Sound?*

Authorization Act of 1985. Cohen's amendment ensured that Nunn would not propose another amendment that potentially reduced American forces in Europe.

The Nunn Amendment's Historical Significance

Despite the Senate voting down the Nunn Amendment; this legislation has historical significance. The Nunn Amendment reflected the congressional and presidential tensions over U.S. foreign policy during the 1980s. Most Democratic senators opposed the Reagan administration's policies about increases in military spending and Reagan's warlike rhetoric to the Soviet Union. During a Senate speech in June 1984, Senator Edward Kennedy (Dem.-MA) blamed Reagan's bellicose language toward the Soviets for worsening cooperation between the United States and its allies in NATO.³¹⁷ From 1981 to 1983, Reagan denounced the Soviet Union in several speeches. During an address to the British Parliament in June 1982, Reagan discussed the "decay of the Soviet experiment" and committed the U.S. to lead "the march of freedom and democracy which will leave Marxism-Leninism on the ashheap of history."³¹⁸ Continuing this harsh rhetoric, Reagan declared that the Soviet Union was the "evil empire" during a speech to the National Association of Evangelicals in March 1983.³¹⁹ Kennedy concluded that the Nunn Amendment sent an important foreign policy message to President Reagan and his administration:

³¹⁷ E. Kennedy, *Is The Nunn-Roth Approach to NATO Sound?* Washington DC, June 20, 1984.

³¹⁸ Ronald Reagan, "Address to Members of the British Parliament" (Speech, London, June 8, 1982), Ronald Reagan Presidential Library. <https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/speech/address-members-british-parliament>

³¹⁹ Ronald Reagan, "'Evil Empire' Speech" (Speech, Orlando, FL, March 8, 1983), UVA Miller Center. <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/march-8-1983-evil-empire-speech>

I also view this amendment as a message to the President that the Senate wants him to abandon his divisive policies toward Europe, and begin the effort to replace confrontation with the vital corporation that should lie at the heart of the alliance.³²⁰

Furthermore, Kennedy advocated that electing a different president could more effectively ameliorate the issue of burden-sharing in NATO.

European members of NATO contributed more to this alliance's continental defense after Senator Nunn proposed the Nunn Amendment. Dr. Jeff Record, a Senior Fellow at the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, cited an outcome of Nunn's legislation during the December IFPA Conference: "The DPC's [the Defense Planning Committee] recent agreement to increase infrastructure spending was viewed by one participant, Jeff Record, as proof of the Nunn Amendment's success."³²¹ In early December, NATO defense ministers agreed to spend \$7.85 billion on improving NATO's military infrastructure and constructing new troop facilities in West Germany over a six-year period. Additionally, Nunn's legislation incentivized the United States to pursue this construction plan with its European allies in NATO. A CIA report about the Nunn Amendment recommended that the Reagan administration should convince alliance members to implement a six-year infrastructure agreement so Nunn would be less motivated to propose another amendment that reduced U.S. forces in Western Europe.³²²

³²⁰ E. Kennedy, *Is The Nunn-Roth Approach to NATO Sound?*

³²¹ "IFPA Conference on German-American Relations," CIA Archives, General CIA Records Virtual Reading Room. <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP87R00529R000200170020-3.pdf>

³²² "Infrastructure – Exploiting Recent Congressional Activity," CIA Archives, General CIA Records Virtual Reading Room. <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP90B01370R000801050060-2.pdf>

Furthermore, the Nunn Amendment and the overall congressional discontent about burden-sharing in NATO prompted an alliance effort to strengthen its conventional force posture, the Conventional Defense Improvement initiative (CDI). This plan involved two approaches for improving NATO's military capabilities. First, CDI called for enhancing alliance defense planning through better coordination between its planning bodies and improvement of this policy in the future. Second, this initiative intended to remove deficiencies in NATO's conventional capabilities. NATO officially adopted CDI in May 1985. The CDI initiative had some successes; the United States, Britain, West Germany, and the Netherlands all achieved more than half of their respective force goals. However, other NATO members underperformed in achieving their force objectives.³²³ Despite CDI's partial outcome, Nunn's legislation caused NATO members to improve their contributions toward Europe's continental defense.

The Nunn Amendment demonstrates the U.S. government's concern about burden-sharing throughout the mid-1980s. During this period, members of Congress connected this issue to the notion that some NATO members did not spend enough on defense. Most U.S. senators believed that European members in NATO had not contributed sufficiently to this alliance's continental defense. Senator Nunn used the fact that most European members had not met the 3 Percent Agreement's objective of improving defense spending by 3 percent as justification for introducing the Nunn Amendment.³²⁴

³²³ Duffield, *Power Rules*, 226.

³²⁴ The Nunn Amendment, 98th, 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 130 (June 18, 1984): S2723.

To conclude, the Nunn Amendment demonstrates the congressional emphasis on burden-sharing throughout the mid-1980s and the legislative opposition to NATO's strategic reliance on using nuclear weapons if the Soviet Union invaded Western Europe. Senator Nunn proposed the Nunn Amendment to persuade European allies to improve their defense budget, enhance NATO's continental defense, and alter this alliance's nuclear strategy. The Reagan administration opposed Nunn's legislation for two reasons. First, the administration believed that this amendment would provide the Soviet Union a strategic advantage in Europe. Second, they had concerns that the Nunn Amendment could worsen American relations with European allies in NATO. Furthermore, NATO members, such as Great Britain and West Germany, rejected the Nunn Amendment because these states believed they contributed to this alliance's continental defense in other ways. As a result of political lobbying from the Reagan administration and West Germany, the Senate voted against the Nunn Amendment. Nunn's proposal was the last serious congressional effort to reduce American forces in Europe because of burden-sharing during the Cold War. Regardless of the U.S. not implementing this legislation, it helped persuade European allies to increase their contribution to NATO's continental defense by implementing CDI.

Conclusion: A Reflection on Burden-Sharing in NATO

These case studies are historically relevant to burden-sharing today. Mansfield's amendments illustrate the problems of burden-sharing in a NATO alliance with an inherent disparity of power. During the mid-1960s, Mansfield viewed burden-sharing as a more significant issue than it had been previously because he thought the United States was overcommitted in foreign policy, particularly in Vietnam. He also thought NATO's power dynamic had changed. Mansfield argued that European members could contribute more toward NATO's continental defense because their economies had improved substantially. Similar concerns about burden-sharing drive the current debate. This alliance continues to have this imbalance of power problem, resulting in the U.S. government proposing troop withdrawals in Germany. Recently, President Donald J. Trump approved a Pentagon plan to withdraw 9,500 American troops from Germany in June 2020.³²⁵ President Trump backed up this troop reduction by faulting Germany for not paying enough for NATO's defense, calling this long-time ally a "delinquent."³²⁶ Shortly after announcing this reduction, Trump concluded: "Until they [Germany] pay, we're removing our soldiers."³²⁷ However, President Joe Biden halted Trump's planned withdrawal of American forces in February 2021. Despite Biden stopping this troop reduction, this situation underscores that the United States continues to deal with this imbalance of power issue.

³²⁵ Howard Altman and Joe Gould, "President Approved Pentagon Plan to Pull 9,500 U.S. Troops in Germany." *Military Times*, June 30, 2020.

³²⁶ Robert Burns, "Trump Announces Major U.S. Troop Cut in 'Delinquent' Germany." *AP News*, June 15, 2020.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*

The Jackson-Nunn Amendment helps one understand the difficulties of burden-sharing. Despite the Jackson-Nunn Amendment causing West Germany to offset the \$2.2 billion U.S. balance-of-payments deficit, it did not resolve burden-sharing in NATO because not every alliance member provided resources to ameliorate this financial problem. Only West Germany offset the U.S. balance-of-payments deficit. NATO's imbalance of power caused burden-sharing to become more of a concern for Congress because of the decline of U.S. power. The congressional debate about this issue increased during the early 1970s due to the growing U.S. budget deficit. Additionally, this legislation illustrates the different ideas about contributions toward NATO's continental defense, specifically toward resolving the U.S. balance-of-payments deficit.

Jackson and Nunn's legislation has applicability for burden-sharing in NATO today. A similar problem concerning burden-sharing drives the current debate, specifically NATO members questioning what constitutes effective assistance to the alliance's common good. For example, German Minister of Defense Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer questioned NATO's 2 percent goal during a speech to the American Council on Germany in July 2019.³²⁸ The 2 percent pledge is a recent initiative that deals with burden-sharing. NATO officials established this pledge in 2014 during the Wales Summit. Every NATO member promised to increase their defense spending to 2 percent of their gross domestic product by 2024.³²⁹ Kramp-Karrenbauer concluded that burden-

³²⁸ Marcus Colla, "The Burden of Friendship: Germany, Trump, and NATO." *The Interpreter*, July 5, 2019.

³²⁹ Jan Techau. "The Politics of 2 Percent: NATO and the Security Vacuum in Europe." *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 2015, 8.

sharing also relates to reliability, saying that NATO primarily depends on cooperation and trust.³³⁰

The 3 Percent Agreement demonstrates burden-sharing's complexities, while it also proves useful in understanding burden-sharing today. The Carter administration helped NATO establish the 3 Percent Agreement in April 1978; however, most allies failed to achieve its objective.³³¹ NATO members that did not reach the 3 percent growth objective argued that they contributed to this alliance's continental defense in other crucial ways. Currently, government officials and political strategists continue to struggle to define burden-sharing. Some policy analysts contend that NATO's 2 percent pledge has a narrow outlook on what constitutes a meaningful contribution to this alliance's continental defense. John Deni, a Research Professor at the U.S. Army War College, argued in an article that NATO's 2 percent goal only measures inputs and does not quantify security outputs, such as fighter jets, tanks, brigades, and submarines.³³²

The Nunn Amendment illustrates burden-sharing's difficulties during the 1980s. The congressional burden-sharing debate reached its crescendo when Senator Nunn introduced his Amendment in 1984. Historical circumstances during the mid-1980s caused members of Congress to view burden-sharing as a greater concern than in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Senator Nunn argued that European states had the financial means to reach the 3 percent benchmark when introducing this amendment. Additionally, he

³³⁰ Colla, "The Burden of Friendship."

³³¹ Only the United States, the United Kingdom, and Turkey increased their defense spending by this percentage.

³³² John Deni, "There's a Better Way to Press for NATO Burden-Sharing." *Defense One*, March 4, 2021.

concluded that European members in NATO needed to contribute more to NATO's continental defense to deter Soviet military aggression. A main concern about the Nunn Amendment continues to be an issue for the United States. In particular, opponents of Nunn's legislation argued that pressuring European members in NATO to fulfill the 3 Percent Agreement's benchmark would have created additional resistance to reaching this objective. Currently, this dilemma continues to impact policymakers. For example, U.S. government officials experienced a similar problem. European governments usually generate greater resistance if an unpopular president caustically pushes for more contribution toward NATO's continental defense. Trump's approach to burden-sharing caused counter-reactions, making it increasingly difficult for European governments to raise their defense spending to the 2 percent objective. For instance, Bundestag member Martin Schultz rejected the idea of raising Germany's defense spending during an interview question about President Trump's threats to withdraw the United States from NATO.³³³ Additionally, *New York Times* writer Katrin Bennhold concluded in an article that Trump's boisterous actions made it more difficult for European members in NATO to increase their defense spending.³³⁴

Despite the similarities between these case studies and the current issues of burden-sharing, there are critical differences between them. Since Mansfield proposed his initial amendment, NATO has expanded from fifteen to thirty members, with North

³³³ "'Europe Must Not Follow Trump's Military Build-Up Logic': A Chat with Merkel's Main Election Rival." *The Local*, August 9, 2017.

³³⁴ Katrin Bennhold, "German Defense Spending Is Falling Even Shorter. The U.S. Isn't Happy." *New York Times*, March 19, 2019.

Macedonia officially becoming the newest ally in 2020. Additionally, there are considerably different security threats that NATO has to deal with compared to what the Nixon administration prepared for when they implemented the Jackson-Nunn Amendment in 1973. For instance, Russia annexed Crimea in 2014 and invaded Ukraine in 2022.³³⁵ Furthermore, cyber-attacks have become more complex and destructive since the Cold War ended. This change has altered NATO's collective defense strategy to emphasize protecting against cyber-attacks. NATO members even have made a Cyber-Defense Pledge with each ally promising to improve their cyber defense in July 2016.³³⁶

These case studies reveal that different burden-sharing problems became more critical for the U.S. throughout NATO's history. The U.S. mainly had issues with the debt incurred by stationing its forces in Europe during the late 1950s and early 1960s. The Eisenhower administration first dealt with this problem. This issue continued into the Kennedy administration. In the mid-1960s, Mansfield altered the congressional burden-sharing debate by introducing his initial amendment. American government officials who supported Mansfield's legislation criticized European members' limited support of the U.S. war effort in Vietnam. The Mansfield Amendment of 1971 directed this issue toward the American balance-of-payments deficit incurred by the U.S. stationing its forces in Western Europe. In 1973, the Jackson-Nunn Amendment underscored this burden-sharing problem. The 3 Percent Agreement in 1978 was one of the few NATO policies that dealt with burden-sharing, and it altered the issue for the United States. For

³³⁵ "Putin's Forces Attack Ukraine."

³³⁶ "Cyber Defense." The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, July 2, 2021, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_78170.htm.

example, the debate moved toward defense spending in the 1980s because of the 3 Percent Agreement. The Nunn Amendment of 1984 shows the congressional concern about NATO members not achieving the 3 Percent Agreement's objective.

These burden-sharing initiatives were a product of world-historical events, such as the Vietnam War, the collapse of the Bretton Woods system, the global oil crisis in the late 1970s, and the United States and the Soviet Union's increasing nuclear tensions during the 1980s. The Vietnam War caused some senators to support the Mansfield Amendments of 1966 and 1971. Senator Stuart Symington voted for this legislation because European members in NATO were not contributing to this conflict. Regarding the Bretton Woods system, the Nixon administration took the United States off the gold standard in response to an acute U.S. balance-of-payments deficit. This decision undid a critical part of the Bretton Woods system. However, this strategy did not completely resolve this financial issue. Nixon was negotiating with West Germany and other European states to resolve the U.S. balance-of-payments deficit when Congress passed the Jackson-Nunn Amendment. The global oil crisis negatively impacted the 3 Percent Agreement's outcome. European states in NATO had to shift their government spending away from improving their defense spending because of economic issues. The Nunn Amendment was a Senate reaction to the increasing possibility of an American and Soviet nuclear conflict; Nunn sought to decrease NATO's reliance on nuclear strategy.

The Soviet Union's military capabilities influenced the Mansfield Amendments, the Jackson-Nunn Amendment, the 3 Percent Agreement, and the Nunn Amendment. Mansfield introduced his Amendments because he believed that stationing a large

number of U.S. forces in Europe was unnecessary because of the perceived decline of the Soviet Union's military threat. Conversely, Jackson proposed the Jackson-Nunn Amendment because he considered that the United States needed American forces in Europe and that European members in NATO should contribute more to this alliance's continental defense because of the Soviet armed forces threat. Furthermore, the 3 Percent Agreement was a reaction to the Soviet Union's growing military capabilities. The Carter administration wanted to improve NATO's conventional forces to counter Soviet military strength. The Nunn Amendment sought to convince European members to increase their defense spending because they believed that NATO needed a stronger deterrent against the Soviet Union; Senator Sasser argued this point during a Senate speech supporting the Nunn Amendment on June 20, 1984.³³⁷

These case studies demonstrate that NATO members have different ideas about how to contribute to this alliance's continental defense. Regarding Mansfield's legislation, West German government officials considered that the Trilateral Negotiations counted as providing military assistance to NATO. West Germany agreed to purchase \$500 million in medium-term American government bonds for the fiscal year of 1968. Conversely, Mansfield concluded that European members had not contributed sufficiently to NATO's continental defense. Regarding the Jackson-Nunn Amendment, Turkey objected to assisting by arguing that its recent arms purchase of U.S. weaponry was sufficient. Some political analysts criticized the 3 Percent Agreement because they viewed contributing to this alliance as more than increasing their defense spending. After

³³⁷ Sasser, *Is The Nunn-Roth Approach to NATO Sound?* Washington D.C., June 20, 1984.

all, former representative and Secretary of Defense Les Aspin asserted that this initiative had a narrow lens regarding what constitutes contribution to NATO's continental defense. Aspin argued that the 3 Percent Agreement was not a rational benchmark to establish a defense budget. While opposing the Nunn Amendment, West German politicians cited several ways their country helped out NATO financially during an international conference in December 1984.

After the Senate voted down the Nunn Amendment of 1984, there were discussions about reducing U.S. forces in Western Europe. Certain U.S. foreign policy specialists advocated decreasing American troops in this region shortly before the Cold War ended. For example, Zbigniew Brzezinski and Henry Kissinger publicly supported phasing 100,000 U.S. forces out of Europe in August 1986.³³⁸ Kissinger and Brzezinski believed that the then-current commitment of 325,000 American troops in Europe significantly impaired the U.S. capability to respond to other global security threats, such as in the Persian Gulf. Additionally, Brzezinski argued that this strategy would convince Western Europe to develop an autonomous European Defense Community (EDC), causing Europeans to assume their defense responsibilities gradually. Brzezinski concluded that the EDC could bring Europe's two halves together through multilateral cooperation.³³⁹

Members of Congress and government officials continued to support reducing U.S. forces in Europe after Kissinger and Brzezinski advocated for it in 1986. Nunn

³³⁸ Joseph Fromm, "The Case for Keeping American Troops in Europe." *The Christian Science Monitor*, August 20, 1986.

³³⁹ Ibid.

recommended this strategy throughout 1987; he invited Brzezinski to present his opinion about decreasing American troops in Europe during a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing in January 1987.³⁴⁰ Furthermore, former Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Perle believed that the U.S. role in Western Europe's security was diminishing in December 1989.³⁴¹ Continuing this trend, former Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger argued in a statement for the Senate Armed Services Committee that the time had come for Europe to move more toward the policy of France and Germany defending their continent than the United States in February 1990.³⁴²

The decreasing of Cold War tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union contributed to the United States reducing its troops in Western Europe. After the United States and the Soviet Union signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) in 1987, the number of American forces in Europe gradually declined.³⁴³ In 1987, the United States stationed 250,100 troops in West Germany. This total decreased to 203,100 soldiers in 1990. The number of American troops in Europe diminished even further when the Cold War ended. From 1991 to 1998, the total number of U.S. forces in Germany dropped from 203,1000 to 42,600.³⁴⁴ However, burden-sharing in NATO

³⁴⁰ Ernest Connie, "Allies Need to Help Prepare for U.S. Decline in Europe." *The Los Angeles Times*, January 26, 1987.

³⁴¹ Lieutenant David Lasher, "U.S. Combat Forces in Germany" in *Naval War College Review Volume XLIV*, ed. by Lieutenant Commander Stuart Smith, (Newport, RI: Naval War College Review Press, 1991), 76.

³⁴² James Schlesinger, "Cut U.S. Forces in Europe – Now." *The Washington Post*, February 4, 1990.

³⁴³ The United States and the Soviet Union agreed to reduce their nuclear arsenals by eliminating their conventional and nuclear ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles that ranged from 500 to 5,500 kilometers.

³⁴⁴ Zimmerman, "The Improbable Permanence of a Commitment," 4.

remained an issue for the United States after the Cold War ended and continues into the early 21st century.

These case studies demonstrate the continuing problems of burden-sharing in NATO. NATO's imbalance of power between each member contributes to the problems of burden-sharing. Consequently, certain historical circumstances worsen this issue, resulting in it becoming more of a concern for the U.S. government, particularly with Congress. Three main conditions that contributed to Americans becoming more concerned about burden-sharing involve the decline of U.S. power in foreign affairs, European economies improving, and the Soviet Union's decreasing or growing military power. These case studies correlate with burden-sharing today. In particular, NATO members continue to struggle with defining what constitutes meaningful contribution toward this alliance's continental defense. Germany's reluctance to reach the 2 percent agreement's objective by arguing that there are other important methods of contributing underscores this dilemma. These case studies exemplify that burden-sharing and the diplomatic problems it causes will not subside soon; NATO's disparity of power enmeshes burden-sharing with this alliance.

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