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8 April 1966

AN ANALYSIS OF THE MLF AS A SOLUTION TO NATO'S NUCLEAR POLITICAL PROBLEM

By

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USAWC RESEARCH ELEMENT
(Thesis)

An Analysis of the MLF as a Solution to NATO's Nuclear Political Problem

by

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Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania
8 April 1966

SUMMARY

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SUMMARY

The control of nuclear weapons and the strategy for their employment has presented problems in the NATO alliance for more than a decade. The United States proposed the multilateral nuclear force (MLF) as a response to European nations political and strategic pressures in this area. It was US policymakers' hopes that this proposal would reduce European demands for national nuclear forces. This thesis examines this US proposal with emphasis on the political aspects.

The US views are presented in chapters 2 and 3. Chapter 2 includes US policy against proliferation of nuclear forces on the basis this would endanger all nations concerned. It sets forth the necessity for central control of all allied nuclear weapons and some of the reasons for US change of strategy from one of massive retaliation to one of flexible response.

Chapter 3 presents the proposal for the MLF. This would be a force of 25 ships resembling merchant vessels, each armed with eight Polaris missiles. These ships would be manned with mixed crews from participating nations and assigned to NATO. The purpose of the proposal was to give nonnuclear nations of the Alliance a chance to participate in their nuclear defense, prevent proliferation of nuclear weapons, and promote political cohesion within the Alliance. However, this proposal did not in reality relinquish any degree of US nuclear control to the allies. For the foreseeable future, the US veto over use of the weapons in this force would remain absolute. In late 1964 it was decided to cease US pressure for adoption of this proposal and to await European developments.

The divergent views of major European allies are outlined in chapter 4. The British made a counterproposal for an allied nuclear force to be organized around existing national forces. This proposal was designed to minimize West German participation. The French refused to have any part of the US proposal and were strongly opposed to West German participation. Some of the smaller allied nations stayed with the proposal more from fear of extending control of nuclear weapons to Germany than from strategic appreciation of European defense needs. West Germany strongly supported the proposal to gain closer ties with the United States and more equal partnership status. She feels she deserves this status because of her record of participation in the Alliance.

An evaluation of the views are presented in chapter 5. Finally, it is concluded that the MLF proposal does not meet the nuclear sharing needs of the Alliance, nor can it be easily modified to do so. However, there continues to exist a real need for more cooperation and coordination among the NATO allies in nuclear defense matters.

This must be accomplished on an allied partnership basis. But under present political conditions and differences in power positions of the various allies, it cannot be accomplished on a true equal partnership basis.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

For more than a decade the problem of sharing and control of nuclear weapons has troubled the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The differences among the allies concerning this problem began with the United States and Soviet thermonuclear explosions in 1953 and NATO's commitment to a tactical nuclear strategy in 1954. They have been growing steadily more urgent since 1957, when the Russians orbited the first earth satellites.

A basic source of the problem is that the sovereign states which form the Alliance have natural inclinations for control over their military destiny. However, the growth of Soviet nuclear power has rendered their survival dependent on US weapons. At the same time, the increasing capability of the Soviet Union to threaten serious devastation to the United States has raised doubts in Europe as to the willingness of the US Government to exercise control of nuclear weapons in a manner compatible with European interests. The French and British efforts to overcome US nuclear monopoly by developing their own nuclear forces have further complicated the problem of mutual confidence within the Alliance.[1]

The nuclear problem of the Alliance is not primarily military but political. In military terms, the continued US control of the

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[1]Robert E. Osgood, Nuclear Control in NATO, pp. 1-5.

majority of the nuclear forces probably would best serve NATO. Many Europeans however, feel that this near monopoly is no longer acceptable.[2]

This thesis examines the problem of nuclear sharing and control in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization with emphais on the political aspects such as political cohesion, proliferation of nuclear weapons, sovereignty of states, sharing of decisions and consultation before changing Alliance defense strategy. It sets forth the US proposal for a multilateral nuclear force as a solution to the problem and discusses the critical political weaknesses of this proposal. To accomplish this, the national positions of member nations of the Alliance are examined and conflicts between the positions of the United States and other NATO nations are evaluated. Conclusions are drawn as to possible modifications of the multilateral force proposal to solve the nuclear sharing and control problems of the Alliance.

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[2]Wilfred L. Kohl, "Nuclear Sharing in NATO and the Multilateral Force," Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 80, Mar. 1965, pp. 88-90.

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND OF NATO'S NUCLEAR PROBLEM

This chapter presents some of the background of the NATO nuclear problem and some of the factors that led to the US proposal for the allied multilateral nuclear force as a solution to the problem. Included are the US views concerning nonproliferation of nuclear weapons, the changing US strategy for defense of Western Europe and the US role in nuclear control within the Alliance.

Three factors within the Alliance have produced the difficulties over nuclear weapons. They are the need for greater centralized control of military operations, the desire of each major ally to have substantial influence on common decisions and to participate in the planning of the controlled operation foreseen by the US doctrine of flexible response, and the desires of major allies to share in the prestige and political power control of nuclear weapons confers or is thought to confer.[1]

The problem is made more difficult to solve because countries of the NATO alliance have made little or no formal cessions of sovereignty to the Alliance, in either the political or military field. The evolution of policies has to emerge from the difficult processes of intergovernmental negotiation and agreement.[2]

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[1]Henry A. Kissinger, The Troubled Partnership, pp. 177-178.
[2]Alastair Buchan, NATO in the 1960's, p. 117.

The importance of the nuclear problem was emphasized by President Johnson in a speech on 7 May 1965, on the 20th anniversary of the ending of World War II in Europe. He spoke of the need for European unity and Atlantic partnership, and he stated:

> Here is some of our unfinished and urgent business . . . . We must work out more effective forms of common defense. All Atlantic nations who wish to do so have a right to share in collective nuclear defense, while halting the spread of nuclear weapons.[3]

NONPROLIFERATION

The United States has strongly discouraged the development of allied national nuclear forces. Secretary Rusk discussed this policy in a speech in April 1964 in which he said the United States did not see security for anyone in a world of proliferating national nuclear weapons systems. He stated that the US position is that nationally owned and manned strategic missile forces could be divisive within the Alliance and unsettling in terms of East-West relations.[4]

Prior to this, in 1962, Secretary McNamara had expressed the US position on nonproliferation. He stated:

> Relatively weak national nuclear forces with enemy cities as their targets are not likely to be sufficient to perform even the function of deterrence. . . . In event of war, the use of such a force against the cities of a major nuclear power would be tantamount to suicide, whereas its employment against significant military targets would have

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[3]Lyndon B. Johnson, "Remarks on 1945 Victory," Washington Post, 8 May 1965, p. A13.

[4]Dean Rusk, "The Atlantic Alliance," US State Department Pamphlet, Speech before the Overseas Press Club, New York, 7 Apr. 1964.

> a negligible effect on the outcome of the conflict. Meanwhile, the creation of a single additional national nuclear force encourages the proliferation of nuclear power with all of its attendant dangers.[5]

In discussing US policy against independent allied national nuclear forces, Osgood pointed out the policy is based on the position that the US nuclear forces are linked to Europe and US nuclear power is adequate for all combat and deterrence functions. The US does not believe the allies can improve their security or bargaining position by means of necessarily inferior forces. Investments in these forces will divert expenditures required for building up NATO conventional forces, which the United States has strongly recommended. Additional national nuclear forces will cause national rivalries and suspicions, and the French force in particular will create pressures in West Germany for equal nuclear status. The United States also believes that the number of independent national nuclear forces will increase the danger of nuclear war. In addition, an uncoordinated countercity national nuclear force such as the French are developing will interfere with the option of fighting a controlled counterforce nuclear war. If an ally regards these forces as a trigger on US forces, it can only weaken the US commitment to defend Europe and reduce the credibility of the US deterrent. Finally, additional national forces will make disarmament agreements

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[5]Robert S. McNamara, The Fiscal 1966-70 Defense Program and 1966 Defense Budget, Statement before the House Armed Services Committee, 18 Feb. 1965. (Referred to hereafter as McNamara, Fiscal 1966-70 Defense Program.)

more difficult to attain and will encourage national nuclear efforts outside the Alliance.[6]

Before Congress in January 1963, McNamara pointed out that the US nuclear forces cost about $15 billion a year, almost as much as all the European allies spend on their total defense programs. It would take the combined resources of all European allies to create a truly significant nuclear capability with which to face the Soviet threat.[7]

THE PROBLEM OVER NUCLEAR STRATEGY

In the Alliance there are also major differences over the strategy for employment of nuclear weapons. In the early 1950's, the US strategy was based on the early use of nuclear weapons. The strategy developed by NATO depended entirely on the vast US superiority in these weapons and delivery systems. The strategy depended on taking the initiative in using nuclear weapons in massive retaliation to Soviet aggression. At the time, this strategy posed unacceptable risks for the Soviets and acceptable risks for NATO for all levels of Soviet aggression.[8]

The credibility of this massive retaliation strategy began to decline and give way to a limited nuclear war concept in 1953. Under

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[6]Robert E. Osgood, The Case for the MLF: A Critical Evaluation. pp. 3-4.

[7]William W. Kaufmann, The McNamara Strategy, pp. 122-124.

[8]Robert R. Bowie, "Strategy and the Atlantic Alliance," International Organization, Vol. 17, Summer 1963, pp. 709-710.

this concept NATO's ground forces would check a Soviet advance with tactical nuclear weapons. This strategy would give NATO forces in the defensive qualitative advantage over the larger Communist forces but it would confine the use of nuclear weapons to the battlefield. By the time the NATO forces had been trained and equipped to conduct limited nuclear warfare and had become dependent on this capability, the strategy was being discarded in Washington. The Soviet Union was developing nuclear weapons systems capable of causing vast destruction, both in Europe and the United States. For Europeans, this diminished the credibility of the US commitment to use its strategic nuclear force in their behalf because to do so would mean exposing US cities to nuclear attack. Possession of intercontinental bombers and ballistic missiles with thermonuclear payloads by both the Soviets and the United States seemed, to US strategists, to place an unacceptable hazard on a tactical nuclear response to limited thrust.[9]

When Kennedy became president, the Administration made it clear, and the policy has not been reversed, that greater flexibility of response was sought in a buildup of nonnuclear forces in NATO.[10]

This flexible response strategy is based on a US commitment to employ its strategic forces against the Soviet Union in event of an assault on Western Europe too large to be contained by nonnuclear

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[9]US Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Problems and Trends in Atlantic Partnership I, 14 Sep. 1962, p. 32.

[10]Seymour J. Deitchman, Limited War and American Defense Policy, p. 48.

forces alone. It calls for nonnuclear capabilities adequate to contain limited thrusts within the NATO perimeter and to prevent a Soviet takeover of one of the exposed salients. The other allies have been urged to increase their conventional forces. The US objective is a force that can deal effectively with nonnuclear aggression for a period of time sufficiently long to encourage a pause in the fighting. The pause, hopefully, would allow the two sides to negotiate a cease fire and the aggressor to think through the consequences of escalating the conflict.[11]

The views of many Europeans toward this strategy were expressed by Aron. He wrote that it aims at minimizing the risk of the use of the only weapons to which the US mainland is really vulnerable. Regardless of wehther or not it is the most effective strategy, it appears much too closely identified with strictly national interests of the United States not to arouse European suspicions. It leaves the impression the United States would turn Europe into both the theater and the victim of operations to prevent escalation of hostilities and would limit its participation to an "expeditionary" force.[12]

UNITED STATES ROLE IN NUCLEAR COMMAND AND CONTROL

To fully understand the NATO nuclear control problem, one must understand the degree of US involvement and recognize that no solution

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[11]US Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Problems and Trends in Atlantic Partnership II, 17 June 1963, pp. 10-11.

[12]Raymond Aron, "Why Europe Fears Us," The Atlantic, Vol. 214, Dec. 1964, pp. 47-52.

will fully satisfy all criteria of the allies. Any solution for nuclear control should be judged mainly by how far it fulfills three requirements. First, it should reinforce Atlantic unity. Second, it should assure responsible political control over the weapons and unify the deterrent. Finally, any solution should take account of the fact that the situation is still evolving and the shape of Europe is not yet finally determined.[13]

The US position is that its interests and its integrity are deeply involved in Europe, and it must treat any effort to conquer the NATO area in Europe as an attack on itself. US officials believe the idea that the United States would not be prepared to use its nuclear weapons to defend Europe under appropriate conditions is hardly tenable. And the United States would have to treat any Soviet move to destroy or control Europe as a direct threat to its survival. The fact remains however, the continuing nuclear monopoly by the United States no longer is feasible because of the existence of British and French nuclear programs and the nuclear sharing desires of some other member nations, including the Federal Republic of Germany.[14]

Although the United States has "assigned" nuclear weapons, including a Polaris submarine fleet, to NATO, it is important to

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[13]Robert R. Bowie, "Strategy and the Atlantic Alliance," International Organization, Summer 1963, p. 719.

[14]Ibid., pp. 721-722.

keep in mind that all NATO forces are national forces. In the case of US "assigned" forces, the line of command is from Washington through the appropriate US headquarters. NATO headquarters are planning headquarters that control forces assigned to them during specified maneuvers or in war. Each allied nation of the Alliance reserves the right to go to war according to its constitutional processes. For example, the chain of command for most of the Polaris submarine force "assigned" to NATO is from the President of the United States to the US Commander in Chief, Atlantic. The same admiral is also NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic. Whatever hat the admiral wears, the President continues in ultimate control of the Polaris force. The veto of the President remains absolute.[15]

In February 1965, Secretary McNamara reemphasized the US position for centralized control for all allied nuclear forces. He stated that the United States believes that the strategic nuclear forces assigned to NATO must be controlled under a single chain of command and must be fully coordinated with external strategic forces. The complex of targets against which nuclear weapons would be used must be viewed as a single system. Because of the tremendous destructive potential of nuclear exchange and the great speed at which it would take place, decisions must be made and executed very quickly. Targets must be allocated to weapons in advance, taking into account

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[15]Henry A. Kissinger, "NATO's Nuclear Dilemma," The Reporter, 28 Mar. 1963, p. 29.

the character of the targets, their urgency, importance, and degree of hardness, as well as the character of the weapons, their range, yield, accuracy, and speed. He added, any agreement the United States enters into must reinforce the basic policy of nondissemination of nuclear weapons, i.e., the consent of the United States must be obtained prior to the firing of nuclear weapons. In reference to national forces, McNamara stressed that any strategic nuclear forces in Europe not assigned to NATO, however organized, should be closely coordinated with our own forces so they could be jointly targeted.[16]

The United States appears to have three broad choices in pursuing an Atlantic nuclear policy. First, it can attempt to suppress other nuclear forces in the Alliance and insist that nuclear defense is a US responsibility with our allies playing an advisor role. This appears to be precluded by British and French refusal to abolish their nuclear forces. Second, it can try to eliminate the existing nuclear forces by bringing the nonnuclear allies into the nuclear field as part of a structure in which the United States retains a veto. To reduce the significance of national forces, the new nuclear force would have to be of sufficient size to dwarf the British and French nuclear programs. This is essentially the US-proposed multilateral force which will be discussed in the next chapter. Third, it can base its nuclear policy on the existing nuclear programs and seek to coordinate them by strengthening the

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[16]McNamara, Fiscal 1966-70 Defense Program, pp. 15-30.

process of political consultation.[17] Some efforts being made in this area will be outlined later.

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[17]Kissinger, The Troubled Partnership, pp. 166-167.

CHAPTER 3

UNITED STATES PROPOSAL FOR A MULTILATERAL FORCE (MLF)

In 1959 General Norstadt first proposed a form of nuclear sharing and control of nuclear weapons for the NATO alliance. He wanted to reassure the European allies that nuclear weapons would be available for their defense by making NATO a "fourth nuclear power." He believed land-based nuclear missiles were needed to replace obsolescent aircraft to meet future requirements for defense of Europe.[1]

In 1960 an integrated NATO multilateral nuclear force was proposed by the Eisenhower Administration. The force was to be a solution to NATO's nuclear problem. The proposal was reaffirmed by President Kennedy in 1961 and was discussed with the British at Nassau the following year.

THE NASSAU AGREEMENT

The results of the Nassau meetings between President Kennedy and Prime Minister Macmillan in December 1962 increased the differences with General de Gaulle over allied nuclear matters. They recognized that more nuclear cooperation was desirable, and laid the ground for the possible development of a multilateral nuclear force. They agreed that for the immediate future a start could be

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[1]Robert E. Osgood, Nuclear Control in NATO, p. 2.

made by subscribing to NATO some part of their countries' nuclear forces already in existence. Such forces would be assigned as part of NATO forces and targeted in accordance with NATO plans. Since 1958 the United States had been helping the British create a submarine force, and this force was to become a part of the British contribution. It was further agreed that the United States would make Polaris missiles (less warheads) available for the British submarines. The British were to be allowed to withdraw their forces from the NATO commitment for their own use should supreme national interests seem to them to demand it.[2]

Later, when France was asked to subscribe to the agreement, she refused to do so. She also turned down the US offer of Polaris missiles on the basis that she had neither the submarines to launch them nor the thermonuclear warheads to arm them. Lack of prior consultation with France and apparent British favoritism on the part of the United States has continued to be a source of controversy with De Gaulle.[3]

Following the Nassau meetings, President de Gaulle vetoed the membership of Great Britain in the Common Market. The United States then increased its efforts for approval of its MLF proposal, which emerged as the principal US effort to restore the cohesion of the Alliance.[4]

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[2]US Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Problems and Trends in Atlantic Partnership II, 17 June 1963, pp. 55-56.

[3]Ibid., pp. 60-63.

[4]Robert R. Bowie, "Strategy and the Atlantic Alliance," International Organization, Summer 1963, pp. 726-727.

THE MLF PROPOSAL

The US concept for the proposed NATO multilateral nuclear force is that it would consist of a fleet of surface warships armed with Polaris missiles owned, controlled, and manned jointly by a number of NATO nations. Initially it would have 25 ships resembling merchant vessels, each armed with eight Polaris A-3 missiles with a range of 3,000 miles.[5]

The MLF ships would be ships of war, but merchant hulls would be used to make them less easily identifiable, except at short range. They would sail the merchant lanes close to Western European shores and often in territorial waters. Thus, it would be difficult for enemy aircraft and submarines to track them without coming under countersurveillance of European forces. The fleet would be under command of an allied officer assigned to NATO, and placed under the operational control of SACEUR. It would be subject to NATO guidelines with regard to targeting and strategic planning.[6]

The force would be manned by a mix of officers and crews numbering about ten thousand from participating nations. Each ship would be manned by nationals from at least three countries, with no nation providing more than 40 percent of the personnel for any ship. English would be the language. The force would be open to any NATO member nation desiring to participate and willing to assume a fair

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[5] US Congressional Record, Vol. 111, 5 Jan. 1965, p. 82 (hereafter referred to as Congressional Record).

[6] Wilford L. Kohl, "Nuclear Sharing in NATO and the Multilateral Force," Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 80, Mar. 1965, p. 92.

share of the responsibilities and cost. No nation's share could exceed 40 percent of the total.[7]

The total cost of the MLF for the first five years was estimated to range between $2.3 and $3 billion. The annual operation cost of the fleet was estimated to be $150 million. These costs were to be divided among the participating nations. The missiles and most electronic gear were to be procured in the United States, and the ships would be built in European countries.

After approval by member nations, an agreement to establish this force would require US Congressional approval. After final approval it would take three years before the first ship would be operational and from five to six years for the entire fleet.[8]

PURPOSE

The purpose behind the US proposal was that it would enhance the unity of the Alliance by meeting the desires of its allies to lessen their dependence on the US nuclear monopoly and give them a chance to share in the nuclear defense. It was designed to anticipate future desires of Germany and other allies for participation in nuclear matters, to tie these countries to an integrated arrangement within NATO, and discourage future development of national forces in these countries. The MLF also was to serve as an educational device. Participating nations were expected to come to realize the great cost

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[7]Gerard C. Smith, "The Nuclear Defense of NATO," Department of State Bulletin, 18 May 1964, p. 786.

[8]Congressional Record, p. 90.

involved and the complexities of developing and managing nuclear weapons and to become satisfied with the role the MLF would give them. It was thought that the MLF would meet the military need in NATO to counter the Russian MFBM threat. Finally, it was to become a political instrument to further US Atlantic policy. This was especially true after De Gaulle's veto of British entry into the Common Market. The force was to offer a further opportunity to work toward greater unity in Europe and closer partnership between Europe and the United States. It was viewed as an alternative to De Gaulle's bid for leadership of a European "third force," based on the evolving French nuclear force, and as an alternative to the possibility of any future Franco-German nuclear arrangement.[9]

However, many Americans and Europeans suggest that the MLF would not meet any military requirement that is not being met, or could not be met in another form, and that the rationale for the force is mainly political.

In reference to satisfying supposed present or future German desires in the nuclear field, advocates agree that it is unrealistic to assume that the Germans will continue to contribute the largest share of NATO's conventional strength while standing aside as Britain and France proceed with the development of independent national nuclear forces.[10]

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[9] Kohl, op. cit., pp. 92-94.

[10] John Newhouse, "The Multilateral Force: An Appraisal," Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, Sep. 1964, p. 14.

For the initial period, Germany appears to be willing to rely on some form of committee where each major nation has a voice. But for the future we must expect that it will desire to review the issue to decide whether or not the United States would give up its veto, especially in favor of a united Europe. The originators believe a multilateral force would provide a framework for meeting any demands for an integrated European force. It would satisfy the German desires for equal treatment and voice in nuclear defense without creation of politically divisive national forces. Those Europeans who favor an integrated Europe can regard the multilateral force as a factor moving Europe in that direction.[11]

The MLF also is defended on the ground that it might provide an alternative and more satisfactory arrangement for Britain and France at such time as either or both decided to discontinue national nuclear programs. The two could merge their nuclear weapons with the MLF, to which they could then assign a large portion of the cost of these weapons.[12]

The United States does not consider valid the objection that a multilateral force will tend to divide the Alliance by isolating France, on the basis that France has actually isolated herself by her insistence on a wholly independent national nuclear force. It is the US view that to refrain from actions, such as developing the MLF, because France does not agree would in effect give her a veto over Alliance actions and thus paralyze the organization.[13]

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[11]Bowie, op. cit., p. 729.
[12]Newhouse, op. cit., p. 14.
[13]Bowie, op. cit., p. 729.

In reference to the educational aspect of the MLF, it is argued that it would serve to expose Europeans to a strategic nuclear weapons program. It would offer Europeans participation in operation and control of nuclear weapons systems, it would acquaint them with how target assessments and assignments are made. And it possibly would encourage an awareness of the need for a realistic balance between nuclear and nonnuclear resources. The MLF provides for considerable European investment--hence a stake--in the enterprise.[14]

It also is argued that the MLF is an integration program, and any integration within the Alliance would be beneficial. While the MLF may be unnecessary from a military standpoint, it would have the political advantage of operating in the European theater and would cover targets now covered by US weapons systems. This would have a favorable psychological effect in Europe and presumably would permit retirement of at least some US weapons. This, in turn, would contribute to thwarting the Gaullist design for Europe and further reduce the possibility of a Franco-German undertaking at the nuclear weapons level.[15]

CONTROL

One of the hardest problems in working out a multilateral force solution is control over its use. This issue opens up questions as

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[14]Newhouse, op. cit., p. 14.
[15]Ibid.

to which nations should participate in the force, and how it should be related to NATO or US forces. Discussions over these points have brought to light the confusion that exists throughout the Alliance concerning the meaning of the world "control." Since NATO is a bilingual alliance, it is easy to understand how the confusion came about. In terms of NATO the French word controle can be roughly equated with access to planning and policy decisions, and the English word control with influence over operational decisions.[16] It is the latter meaning that is referred to here.

US policymakers believe that a multilateral force should clearly be designed not for a separate defense of Europe but for combinations with US nuclear forces in planning, targeting, and other ways. They view the NATO defense problem as a single problem. The growth of Soviet power and her expansion into Eastern Europe have made Western Europe vital to North American security. At the same time, Western Europe cannot successfully defend against Communist aggression without US assistance. It is difficult also to see how a strategic nuclear war could be limited to Europe or the United States.[17]

However, the Atlantic area is not a single political unit, and until it is, control will present an ultimate dilemma. In the long run, Europeans are not likely to be satisfied with a solution that

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[16] Alstair Buchan, NATO in the 1960's, p. 96.
[17] Osgood, op. cit., pp. 56-57.

leaves all decisions to a President elected by only one nation of the Alliance.[18]

Under the proposal, the United States would retain a veto over all decisions to fire the missiles. Voting procedures for other representatives of the MLF governing board were not decided upon but might require unanimous agreement.[19]

An MLF operating under a unanimity principle in which every major member has a veto power has been criticized by many on strategic grounds as an ineffective deterrent; one which would be paralyzed by a single veto and therefore would lack credibility in Soviet eyes.[20]

Klaus Knorr, for example, has written that the unanimity principle would work only if the whole Alliance were attacked simultaneously by nuclear or conventional forces; that it would not work in the more likely contingency of a limited attack against one member of the Alliance, accompanied by selective use of nuclear threats. At least one member of the control group might conceivably veto the use of the MLF: for example, a "Why die for Turkey?" situation. The MLF would have little or no credibility except in situations so straight forward that there would be no hesitation about using US-based strategic weapons anyway.[21]

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[18]Bowie, op. cit., pp. 727-728.
[19]Kohl, op. cit., pp. 97-98.
[20]Ibid., 99.
[21]Klaus Knorr, A NATO Nuclear Force: The Problem of Management, Center of International Studies, Princeton University, 5 Feb. 1963, pp. 3-6.

STATUS OF THE PROPOSAL

The campaign for the MLF was slowed toward the end of 1964 by the President's directive to the executive branch. Johnson ordered that US pressure for acceptance of the MLF cease; that no proposal for an allied nuclear force be considered unless it bore the joint approval of at least the United Kingdom and West Germany; and that France should be fully consulted at least before any proposal be accepted.[22]

In May 1965, Secretary McNamara presented a new US approach in an attempt to break the deadlock. He proposed to the NATO Defense Ministers a plan for providing a greater degree of participation in nuclear decisions for US allies. He suggested creation of a select committee of four or five Defense Ministers that would address itself to two important aspects of the nuclear problem. First would be the search for possible ways of improving and extending allied participation in planning and use of nuclear forces, including strategic forces. Second, would be the search for possible ways of improving communications to assure speedy consultation concerning any decision to use nuclear forces. Any measures that the committee approved would be submitted to higher authority for approval; presumably, in the last analysis, the NATO governments.[23] A degree of of accord has been reached on this proposal on a temporary basis,

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[22] Congressional Record, p. 80.

[23] Waverly Root, "US Offers Broadened A-Sharing," Washington Post, 1 June 1965, p. A1.

but it is not the small group proposed. Instead there are ten participating nations, but France is not one of them.

In disarmament talks the Soviets have opposed any development of NATO nuclear forces on the basis it would be proliferation of nuclear weapons. Their attacks against the MLF and their proposals for nonproliferation agreements have been presented in ways that tend to divide the NATO alliance. They have specifically opposed any participation in nuclear forces by West Germany.

However, the US State Department has been unwilling to sacrifice the MLF to a nuclear nonproliferation agreement.[24] In Moscow, in July 1965, Ambassador-at-large Harriman informed Premier Kosygin that the US position on the multilateral force is unchanged, and it did not consider the MLF incompatible with a nonproliferation agreement. Later, in West Germany, Mr. Harriman gave German officials assurances that the United States will not sell out vital German interests to get a nonproliferation treaty. Chancellor Erhard's reply was that West Germany has renounced ABC weapons but wishes to be defended with the same weapons with which it is threatened.[25]

In December 1965 in Washington, Erhard and President Johnson agreed that the Federal Republic of Germany and other interested partners in the Alliance should have an appropriate part in nuclear defense, and in their view, an Alliance nuclear arrangement would

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[24]"The Bomb: From Hiroshima to . . . " Newsweek, Vol. 66, 9 Aug. 1965, pp. 52-57.

[25]Author J. Olsen, "Kosygin Overture to US Reported," New York Times, 25 July 1965, pp. 1-2.

not constitute proliferation of nuclear weapons.[26] However, no time limit was set for future talks, and the joint communique dropped all earlier pledges to work for an allied nuclear force in the form of a mixed-manned-navy of missile ships. This appears to put the MLF on the shelf for the present.

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[26]"The Johnson-to-Erhard Communique," New York Times, 22 Dec. 1965, p. 10.

CHAPTER 4

DIVERGENT VIEWS

As pointed out in chapter 1, the evolving situation in the Alliance, the degree of US nuclear control and national interests of member nations have given rise to some major allied differences over control and use nuclear weapons. The views of the United States have been presented in the two preceding chapters. A brief summary of these views are included here as a lead into the discussion of divergent views of the other members. Emphasis will be given to the differences of the major European allies.

THE UNITED STATES

Since NATO was organized, the United States has provided the vast majority of nuclear deterrent forces. The success of these forces and the Alliance is evidenced by the fact there has been no Soviet aggression in Western Europe since NATO was organized.

As McNamara stated, the United States spends as much to maintain these strategic nuclear forces as all the other NATO allies spend on their entire defense budgets. The United States considers it is committed to assist in the defense of Western Europe and the presence of her forces in Europe demonstrates her partnership role. The defense of this area is considered essential to US security, and at the same time US assistance is essential to European survival.

US planners believe small national nuclear forces, which are either in existence or within the capabilities of several allied nations, are dangerous and any such forces must be under centralized control and coordinated with US strategic forces. The United States proposed the MLF in an attempt to satisfy the allied desires for more participation in their nuclear defenses. They believed it would help prevent proliferation of nuclear forces and would tie the European allies closer together politically. It also was an attempt on their part to maintain the central control of nuclear forces. McNamara stated, any agreement the United States enters into must include the consent of the United States prior to firing of nuclear weapons. It is obvious the United States considers her power too great and the stakes too dangerous to relinquish control under the present political situation in Europe.

GREAT BRITAIN

The current British Labor Government under Prime Minister Wilson continues to be committed to a nuclear weapons policy. The government justifies the maintenance of nuclear forces on the basis of the major British role in defending Middle East interests and commitments in Asia.[1] These forces are thought to give Britain an increased understanding of the consequences of nuclear warfare, which has had important implications on views about NATO strategy.

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[1]Harold Wilson, "Britain 1965, Foreign Affairs," Vital Speeches of the Day, Vol. 31, 15 Jan. 1965, pp. 202-203.

In this regard, Britain does not agree with the current NATO strategy of tactical nuclear war on land. It is the British position, in view of the overwhelming US nuclear strike forces committed to support of Europe in case of war, that NATO forces should be designed to deal with miscalculated incursions and suppress any local conflict by conventional forces. After this, strategic nuclear forces would supply all the answers. This is very close to Gaullist strategy of massive retaliation.[2]

The British believe that nuclear weapons cannot be used in a controlled and selected manner even on the battlefield. And any use of nuclear weapons would make escalation to a general war "virtually unavoidable." This view stems from an appreciation of the vulnerability of the British Isles to unacceptable destruction from nuclear attack.[3]

The Labor Government also is opposed to the MLF. It does not believe the problems of weapons control has been met by the proposal, and therefore, development of the force would make better relations with the USSR impossible. In this regard, the view of the British Labour Party was expressed by Mr. Harold Wilson on December 14, 1964 when he reiterated the party opposition "to any arrangement whereby Germany might get a finger on the nuclear trigger."[4]

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[2]Norman H. Gibbs, "British Labor Party's Defense Program--New or Old?" Air Force and Space Digest, June 1965, pp. 44-48.

[3]Carl H. Amme, Jr., "Nuclear Control and the Multilateral Force," United States Naval Institute Proceedings, Apr. 1965, p. 26.

[4]Eugene Hinterhoff, "MLF or ANF: An Analysis and Comparison," NATO's Fifteen Nations, Vol. 10, Apr.-May 1965, pp. 25-26.

Other objections are the lack of a provision in the proposal for nations to withdraw their nuclear contributions to meet national needs, and the possibility at some time in the future the United States might give up its veto. The British view any scheme as totally unacceptable which, either at the outset or at a later date, might permit the US veto on the use of strategic weapons being withdrawn or made subject to any system of majority voting. They consider that any combination of the NATO alliances that could override either the United States or Britain by a majority vote would involve unacceptable proliferation.[5]

Finally, Britain feels that the MLF with its surface vessels is the least desirable way of applying the mixed-manned principle. And a major weakness of the MLF stems from confusing the phsical possession of a weapon with the control of its use.[6]

Mr. Wilson has proposed an Atlantic Nuclear Force (ANF), which is basically a multinational as distinct from a multilateral arrangement and one designed to minimize German participation.[7]

The proposed new force would consist of the British V-bomber force, exclusive of the aircraft needed for existing commitments outside the NATO area; the British fleet of Polaris submarines; at least an equal number of US submarines; some kind of mixed-manned and

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[5]Wilson, op. cit., p. 208.
[6]Hinteroff, op. cit., p. 22.
[7]Gibbs, op. cit., p. 48.

jointly owned elemently in which nonnuclear powers could participate; and any forces France may decide to contribute.[8]

The force would be under a single authority in which all countries taking part would be entitled to be represented. The United States, the United Kingdom, and France, if she took part, would have a veto over the use of all elements in the force and over any changes that might be proposed in the control system. Other European countries could have either a single veto, or, if they wanted, a group veto.

The authority governing the force, acting entirely on instructions from its members' governments, would have the duties to provide the force commander with political guidance to approve plans to make the decision to release nuclear weapons to the force commander and to develop agreed policy on the roles of all types of strategic and tactical nuclear weapons. Targeting by the ANF would be coordinated with all US forces in the Atlantic.

According to Mr. Wilson, his proposal has three objectives: to foster the strength and unity of the Alliance by taking account of the position of those nonnuclear members who want to exercise greater influence on nuclear planning, policy, and strategy; to insure that nuclear forces committed to NATO would be united under a single system forming an integral part of the defense structure of the Alliance as a whole and covering, as far as possible, strategic and tactical nuclear weapons; and to promote increased consultation within the

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[8]Hinteroff, op. cit., pp. 22-24.

Alliance on the policy of the Western powers in regard to nuclear weapons in any part of the world.[9]

Mr. Wilson demands a veto on any future reconstruction of the ANF constitution. His reasons are believed to be the lingering obsessions with the "German danger," and the fact that he cannot conceive of Britain entering a tightly federated Europe, such as a European deterrent presupposes.[10]

Although Mr. Wilson has pushed his proposal for some time, a great deal of uncertainty at present exists as to whether Britain places a higher priority on achieving a treaty with the Soviet Union limiting the spread of nuclear weapons or on the Atlantic Nuclear Force.[11] In his talks with President Johnson in Washington in December 1965, the Prime Minister clearly preferred to leave the nuclear sharing problem in abeyance. He does not now appear to be under the intensive political pressure to push through his 1964 campaign promises for an alternative to the MLF.[12]

DE GAULLE AND THE FRENCH POSITION

The return of Charles de Gaulle to power in France in 1958 has done more than anything else to restrict the growth of closer ties

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[9]Wilson, op. cit., pp. 205-208.

[10]J. H. Huizinga, "Which Way Europe?" Foreign Affairs, Vol. 43, Apr. 1965, p. 487.

[11]John W. Finney, McNamara Is Off to NATO Parleys," New York Times, 26 Nov. 1965, p. 13.

[12]"New Issues for NATO," New York Times, 26 Dec. 1965, p. S21.

among NATO member countries. Soon after his return he expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that most of the NATO decisions had been made by the United States alone or by the United States and Britain together. He asked for an equal share with the United States in direction of allied strategy and policy and indicated that France's role must escalate to codirection with the United States, and possibly Britain, over global strategy.

When his proposal failed and he was unable to achieve equal status, his dissatisfaction found expression in a dwindling military contribution to the Alliance. De Gaulle made it known later in 1958 that he would allow no US missile bases on French soil and no stockpiling of US nuclear weapons over which France had no control. In 1959 France told the North Atlantic Council that it would retain command over the entire French fleet in the Mediterranean, even in wartime, and in April of that year De Gaulle withdrew French senior staff officers from NATO commands in the Mediterranean and English Channel. Only two French divisions and minor air forces are now "assigned" to NATO.[13]

Political debates on an independent nuclear deterrent began in France in 1956. The program was still having economic and technical difficulty when De Gaulle returned to power in 1958. It was at this time that the United States amended the MacMahon Act on atomic energy in favor of Britain but not in favor of France. This induced

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[13]Richard L. Worsnop, "Reconstruction of NATO," Editorial Research Reports, Vol. 2, 1954, pp. 853-854.

De Gaulle to continue the French nuclear weapons development program in spite of strong allied opposition.[14]

In October 1965, the French Defense Minister stated that the French strategic nuclear force had become a reality and two squadrons of 12 Mirage IV bombers were almost combat ready. In 1966, 50 of the 62 planned bombers will be largely operational. France plans that firing tests will begin in the fall of 1966 for solid-fuel ground-to-ground strategic ballistic missiles and for Polaris-style missiles. Also, work will begin on 30 underground silos for the 2,000-mile range ballistic missiles.[15]

Through these and other acts of nationalism such as boycotting the Common Market, France's relations with NATO continue to deteriorate. De Gaulle believes that the revival of European political and economic strength should have been accompanied by increased representation for Europe in the Alliance's structure; he feels that the United States has disproportionate amount of influence in NATO. His long range policy is based on the assumptions that war in Europe is unlikely, the United States eventually will withdraw its troops from Western Europe, and the Soviet Union will pull back its remaining forces from Eastern Europe. He is developing the independent nuclear striking force as a cornerstone to his foreign and defense policies.[16]

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[14]Alastair Buchan, NATO in 1960's, pp. 84-85.

[15]Peter Baestrup, "French Nuclear Striking Force is a Reality, Minister Asserts," New York Times, 22 Oct. 1965, p. 18C.

[16]Worsnop, op. cit., pp. 854-856.

The French believe an independent force is a status symbol and a political instrument with advantages the US-proposed MLF cannot offer. Their national nuclear force is designed to justify the French claim to be the leader among the democratic European nation. Also, France is aware of the fact that any nation aspiring to be recognized as a wolrd power must be a member of the "nuclear club." Therefore, neither her independent nuclear force nor control of this force can be shared with any other nation.[17]

France also has justified her nuclear forces on the basis of the changing East-West strategic balance and the expressed doubt that the United States would automatically come to the aid of France if French national interests were threatened. In his press conference in January 1963, De Gaulle said, "No one in the world--particularly no one in America--can say if, where, when, how and to what extent the American nuclear weapons would be employed to defend Europe."[18]

In spite of the weakness of the French atomic force, the fact is that De Gaulle has made France into an operational atomic power in a very few years. He reasons that the Soviet Union will not dare attack France, so long as French nuclear weapons are capable of inflicting serious damage on Soviet cities. In the Western camp, the fear is that unless something is done other nations far less responsible will soon have their fingers on the atomic trigger.[19]

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[17]Raymond Aron, The Great Debate; Theories of Nuclear Strategy, p. 98.

[18]Robert R. Bowie, "Strategy and the Atlantic Alliance," International Organization, Summer 1963, p. 723.

[19]"Arms Race: A Neat Dilemma," Newsweek, Vol. 64, 26 July 1965, p. 36.

In addition to other allied differences, De Gaulle opposes the US strategy of flexible response for the defense of Western Europe. The French concept is based on the immediate, all-out use of nuclear weapons against the USSR by NATO in response to any Soviet aggression into NATO territory. His "force de frappe" would respond to any attack with, essentially, a countercity nuclear attack. This is in sharp contrast to the US strategic concept of a graduated defense of Europe, commensurate with the scale and nature of the attack; conventional if possible, tactical-nuclear if necessary, strategic-nuclear if inescapable. Under the US concept, even big nuclear counterattacks would be directed against enemy forces and not enemy cities as proposed by the French.[20]

Among the European NATO nations France has voiced the strongest opposition to the proposal for a multilateral force and has decisively rejected it. De Gaulle believes the MLF is a political instrument designed to prolong the US influence on the Continent and strengthen West German ties with the United States. He sees it as an instrument that would set the European part of the Atlantic Community on the road toward political integration, which he opposes in favor of coordination based on a system of still-sovereign national states.

De Gaulle argues that the plan requires European states to give up their sovereignty, but puts little or no such requirement on the

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[20] Max Johnson, "The Story of MLF: What it is and What's at Stake," US News and World Report, Vol. 57, 14 Dec. 1964, pp. 44-45.

United States. In the last analysis, Europe still would be dependent for its security on US willingness to risk its own destruction by coming to her aid in event of attack. In De Gaulle's eyes this plan would leave Europe a junior partner under US domination. Without its own independent nuclear force, he maintains, Europe could never be certain of its security and could not play the role in the world he foresees for it. Therefore, he favors a confederated Europe of united but still independent states, which would cooperate politically with the United States but which also would be free to pursue its own policies.[21]

French opposition to the creation of the multilateral force was intensified late in 1964, when it became evident that West Germany was virtually committed to the plan.

At this time General de Gaulle blasted the proposal as a device for assuring US control of the defense of Europe. He informed his Common Market partners that they must choose between the MLF and a unified Europe. He used the dispute with Germany over grain prices as a lever to force delay on the MLF. He threatened to pull France out of the Common Market and perhaps even out of NATO unless the Germans follow a more European policy.[22]

In November 1965, French Premier Pompidou declared that if West Germany agreed to join in the MLF, it would be a violation of

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[21]Frank J. Johnson, "Crisis in the West," Washington Report, 14 Dec. 1964.

[22]Ronald Steel, "DeGaulle's Deadline; What do We Want in Europe?" The Commonweal, Vol. 89, 18 Dec. 1964, pp. 412-414.

the French-German Treaty. He asserted that the MLF was incompatible with creation of a united Europe and was directed politically against France. He added that the differences generated by the MLF program had strengthened France's view that it would be necessary to reorganize NATO to maintain it as an effective alliance.[23]

In his September 1965 press conference, De Gaulle stated that at the expiration of France's present commitment--that is, at the latest 1969--France will end what he terms the subordination. He describes this as integration which is provided for by NATO and which puts France's destiny in the hands of foreigners. He added:

> While others, citing arbitrary theories of the similarity of interests, say that our country should take a back seat, put aside its national personality within international organizations constructed so the United States can exercise, either inside or from outside, a dominant influence to which we have only to submit. It is in this way that the people of whom I talk envisage our participation in the United Nations or in NATO, or they wish us to dissolve ourselves in a federation called European, which would in fact be Atlantic. I do not believe that this type of national abdication would be justified. I do not think it would be useful to others, not even to America and Russia. For us it is a matter of keeping ourselves free of all subservience.[24]

Since World War II, De Gaulle's primary aim has been to achieve greater status and independence for a France overshadowed by the United States and the Soviet Union. In this regard, his vision of

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[23] Facts on File, 1964, Vol. 25.25, No. 1268, p. 461.

[24] "Text of de Gaulle's News Conference on NATO's Command and the Common Market," New York Times, 10 Sep. 1965, p. 2.

European unity is based on coordinating policies among sovereign states. He wants a Europe organized under French leadership and without sacrificing the relative independence of France.[25]

Although President de Gaulle was, in December 1965, forced into a humiliating run-off and then elected to another seven-year term by a margin of only ten percent, it is not likely that he will be any easier to deal with on matters of foreign affairs.[26]

THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

The foreign policy of the Federal Republic of Germany is based on three aims: to preserve peace, to defend the freedom of the country, and to restore German unity by peaceful means. When Germany joined NATO in 1955, the Western powers agreed that in exchange for substantial German military contributions to the Alliance, they would support German reunification under the principles of the right of self-determination and a free democratic constitution.[27]

In the Paris treaties of 1955, in which West Germany was accepted into NATO, the Germans renounced the manufacture of atomic, bacteriological, and chemical weapons on their own soil but only issued a policy decision on not acquiring such weapons elsewhere.[28]

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[25]Robert R. Bowie, "Tensions Within the Alliance," Foreign Affairs, Vol.42, Oct. 1963, pp. 55-57.

[26]Waverly Root, "De Gaulle Vote Likely to Add to Truculence," Washington Post, 21 Dec. 1965, p. A14.

[27]Fritz Erler, "The Alliance and the Future of Germany," Foreign Affairs, Apr. 1965, pp. 436-437.

[28]"MLF vs. Nonproliferation," Washington Post, 2 Aug. 1965, p. A14.

Occupying the most exposed position in Western Europe, West Germans have been constantly fearful of invasion and especially conscious of their dependence on the United States to deter any Soviet attack. They have attached the highest value to close ties with the United States, the presence of between five and six US divisions in West Germany, the deterrent effect of the threat of nuclear retaliation in case of any Soviet incursion, and adoption of a forward strategy under which an attempt would be made to defend all areas of West Germany. This has influenced Germany to build a strong conventional force, second only to the United States in NATO. West German fears, discontents, and natural aspirations have led to pressures for a greater share in the control of Alliance nuclear forces.

With achievement of prosperity and stability and with a steadily increasing contribution to Alliance defense forces, German leverage has grown. This leverage has been used to press for place and influence in Western political and military councils at all levels, to obtain at least a hearing for German views. It would be unreasonable to expect West German military and political officials to remain impervious to the reasoning that has led the British and the French to undertake independent nuclear efforts.[29]

At present West Germany, along with several other allies, participate in preparation for nuclear defense under the two-key system of control. Under this system the United States stockpile

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[29] US Congressional Record, Vol. III, 5 Jan. 1965, pp. 85-86.

nuclear warheads for employment by allied delivery means. The United States retains custody of the warheads, and even after approval for employment, there must be a duel technical mechanism release. This is under final US control. In addition, these weapons are tactical and none of them would reach a significant part of Russia nor counter more than 700 MRBMs trained on Western Europe.[30]

Ten years after joining NATO, Germany believes she has served her apprenticeship and proved her position in the Alliance. In November 1965, Chancellor Erhard told the Bundestag that West Germany demands a partnership in the formulation of nuclear strategy and there should be an end to a situation where a few members of NATO have their own nuclear weapons and others do not. The Chancellor emphasized:

> The policy of a big country cannot be shaped without political self-confidence, and that a people divided like the Germans needs to be convinced of its own right, of its own task and must have faith in the legitimacy of its policy and its interests.

He reiterated that West Germany was not seeking nuclear weapons under its own control but is thinking in terms of a common nuclear organization with its allies.[31]

West Germany is the only NATO ally fully committed to join the MLF. The German Government has given its full support to this proposal

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[30]Francois Duchene, "Beyond Alliance," The Atlantic Institute, 1965, pp. 48-49.

[31]Thomas J. Hamilton, "Erhard Renews Nuclear Request," New York Times, 11 Nov. 1965, p. C11.

It sees in the MLF a means to strengthen its ties with the United States and to tie US defense to Europe. It sees the force as a means of neutralizing the Soviet intermediate-range ballistic missiles targeted mainly on West Germany, as a means of tying the United States more firmly to NATO in terms of a nuclear response should events in Europe dictate, as a device for developing a full-fledged nuclear partnership with the United States and as a first step toward eventual control of its own nuclear force.[32]

Some German Government officials have expressed alarm over talks of giving up the plan for the force. In July 1965, Bonn's Foreign Minister Schroeder issued a blunt warning that if there was to be no MLF, then Germany would feel free to "acquire" its own force.[33] However, before Erhard traveled to Washington in December 1965, he let it be known that he had little hope of persuading President Johnson to go ahead with the MLF at this time. He has labored for a nuclear role under two severe handicaps: his political party is divided on the issue, and West Germany has had little or no support for her nuclear ambitions. Johnson's promise of an "appropriate" part for Bonn in nuclear defense appears to be a meager attempt to assure the Chancellor that something should be done about joint nuclear arrangements. But it appears West Germany's nuclear aspirations will have to wait.[34]

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[32]H. Ashton Crosby, "NATO Tomorrow," Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, May 1965, pp. 19-20.

[33]"Arms Race: A Neat Dilemma," op. cit.

[34]Thomas J. Hamilton, "Erhard Got Promise but Little More," New York Times, 26 Dec. 1965, p. E5.

In reference to defense strategy, the Germans also were hesitant initially to accept the strategy of flexible response. After the shock of the last war, the Germans are anxious not just to limit but to prevent hostilities altogether. Any military operation conducted on German soil poses a mortal threat to the morale of the nation and to the very existence of the Federal Republic. It is difficult to conceive of any war less than total where Germany is concerned. The entire country is about half the size of France, and what might look like limited operations from the perspective of the United States would be an all-out war as far as Bonn is concerned. Germany, on the front line, was reluctant to accept a strategy which increases the chance of minor aggression by reducing these of escalation.[35]

OTHER ALLIES

The smaller and weaker NATO allies have had limited leverage on decisions within the Alliance. From a historical standpoint this is the way it must be. But, in dealing with them as partners, it must be remembered that their sovereignty and survival is involved.

In reference to the US multilateral force proposal, five countries, in addition to Great Britain and West Germany, agreed to consider participating. These were Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, Greece and Turkey. Norway and Denmark, along with France, refused

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[35]Raymond Aron, The Great Debate: Theories of Nuclear Stragegy, p. 91.

to take any part.[36] Most of the smaller allies that stayed with the proposal did so more because of fear of extending control of nuclear weapons to Germany than because of their strategic appreciation of Europe's defense needs.[37]

SOVIET UNION

The Soviet Union has expressed strong opposition to any type of NATO nuclear force, and she has maintained a steady propaganda campaign against the MLF. The USSR, as well as the United States and Great Britain, is opposed to the further proliferation of nuclear weapons. The MLF was proposed hoping to achieve this aim. However, the USSR refused to concede that this concept had any antiproliferation value and argued to the contrary.[38] She has been particularly critical of any plan that would permit participation by the Federal Republic of Germany. She claims that any nuclear sharing in NATO would be proliferation and her representatives at the disarmament talks in Geneva have made it clear that the USSR will not accept any nonproliferation treaty that leaves the door open for establishment of any force such as the MLF.[39]

Vigorous opposition to any sharing of nuclear weapons by the United States with NATO nations continues to be a component of Soviet

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[36]Amitai Etzioni, "The Multilateral Force: Germany's Finger on the Atom," The Nation, 12 Oct. 1964.

[37]Henry A. Kissinger, "NATO's Nuclear Dilemma," The Reporter, 28 Mar. 1963, pp. 32-33.

[38]William C. Foster, "Risks of Nuclear Proliferation: New Direction in Arms Control and Disarmament," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 43, No. 4, July 1965, p. 596.

[39]Mohsin Ali, "Long Tough Talks in Prospect at Geneva," Washington Post, 27 July 1965, p. A16.

policy. If sharing happened through the establishment of the MLF, this sharing of nuclear weapons could serve as an instrument for cementing political ties between Western Europe and the United States. Western disunity seems to be the primary purpose of the Soviets in opposing the multilateral force.[40]

On the Western side, many are pressing for a treaty against the spread of nuclear weapons, but Moscow is not going to share nuclear weapons or nuclear information to other countries with or without a treaty. It is not in her national interest to do so. Such a treaty would not prevent other countries (Germany, India, Israel, Japan, or Egypt) from getting nuclear weapons. In fact, as pointed out, Germany might very well be encouraged to develop such weapons, if she thought the United States were going to abandon plans for joint nuclear defense arrangements to get an effective nuclear treaty with the Soviet Union.

Moscow might agree to a treaty promising not to give nuclear weapons to other countries provided Washington scrapped its plans for any Atlantic nuclear force. The effect of this would be that Moscow would agree to do what she is doing now, while the United States would be expected to forget about a NATO nuclear force.[41]

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[40]Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Moscow and the MLF: Hostility and Ambivalence," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 43, No. 1, Oct. 1964, pp. 129-131.

[41]James Reston, "Washington: The False Nuclear Debate," New York Times, 15 Oct. 1965, p. 40M.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION

The problem of sharing and control of nuclear weapons continues to trouble NATO. It is generally recognized that the problem is mainly political. The United States proposed the multilateral force as a major step toward a solution. Some of the political aspects of the problem it was hoped the MLF would solve and which are evaluated involve proliferation of nuclear weapons and the control of nuclear forces within the Alliance; the problem of consultation over and coordination of Alliance defense strategy; the MLF as it effects the credibility of the nuclear deterrent and the sovereignty of participating nations; and the contributions of the proposal toward political cohesion in the Alliance.

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

The United States has opposed development of independent allied national nuclear forces on the basis that the US nuclear power provides adequate deterrence, and additional forces will increase the danger of nuclear war. In addition, they make it more difficult to achieve arms control.

However, to many Europeans, the US strategic nuclear deterrent has diminished in credibility with the development of the Soviet capability for large-scale nuclear damage to America. Doubts have been raised in Europe over the willingness of the US Government to

exercise control over nuclear weapons in a way compatible with European interests. The allies have not followed US recommendations to develop adequate conventional forces to fight a nonnuclear war, and therefore, have become more dependent on US forces.

The MLF was designed to prevent proliferation of nuclear weapons in the Alliance by providing joint participation in nuclear matters and discouraging NATO allies from developing national nuclear forces. It also was to provide a means for integrating British and French independent nuclear forces. But for reasons of prestige and sovereignty these countries were not willing to commit their nuclear forces to joint control. Both nations have continued to develop their independent nuclear capabilities.

Among the major allies, only West Germany supported the proposal. Another of the objectives of the proposal was to provide this nation a means to gain equal partnership status in nuclear matters. There is strong opposition within the Alliance and from the Soviet Union to German participation in nuclear control. However, it is not reasonable to expect her to continue to provide large conventional forces to the Alliance without a more equal part in nuclear participation. In the final analysis it does not appear that the MLF would prevent proliferation.

STRATEGY

The fact that the United States has had a near monopoly control over nuclear weapons in the Alliance, she has been in a position to

dictate the strategy to be employed. In 1961, when the US strategy for defense of Western Europe was changed from one of massive retaliation to one of flexible response it was done without prior consultation with the allies concerned. At the time none of the major allied nations agreed fully with the change, but for the most part they were forced to conform.

This failure to arrive at an agreed consensus in strategic concepts has led to some major differences, especially with France. As pointed out earlier, other nations have also failed to provide conventional forces in the numbers envisaged by the designers of the flexible response strategy. It appears that such major disagreements could be avoided by adequate consultation and coordination prior to changing strategy which vitally affects the security of all the allies.

NUCLEAR CONTROL

The control of nuclear weapons is one of the most difficult political problems in the Alliance. The United States would like to establish central control over the weapons and prevent their spread, but other allies have nuclear forces over which they do not desire to relinquish control.

If a consensus of strategic concepts for the defense of Western Europe could be reached, in strictly military terms, it probably is true that the security of the Alliance would best be served by centralized control in US hands. However, the changing political

balance between the United States and Europe and within Europe, and the desire for more self-respecting role in the world makes virtual nuclear monopoly by the United States no longer appropriate or acceptable to the Europeans for the long term.

The United States has attempted to provide some degree of contentment to her European allies by assigning strategic nuclear forces to NATO; providing tactical nuclear weapons to allies on a joint control basis; maintaining large complements of military forces in Europe; and, permitting some participation in nuclear planning. However, these measures will not satisfy Europeans as long as the United States maintains the degree of monopoly it now has over control of nuclear weapons, and retains a veto over employment of even the nuclear forces "assigned" to NATO. As long as the President of the United States has the power of final decision, European allies will continue to feel as if they are US wards. Thus, the Atlantic partnership may be weakened by US unwillingness to treat her allies as first class partners in the field of nuclear weapons.

Control measures for the MLF were never worked out in detail. But from examination, it appears that all participating nations and possibly other NATO allies would participate in the peacetime strategic planning for employment of the nuclear force, and in a crisis only a small group composing a governing board would have control. This might be on the principle of unanimity where each member had a veto or it might be by majority rule. Regardless of the system, initially the United States would retain a final veto over employment of the force.

The immediate US view is that she must have a veto on all operations of the MLF in the name of nonproliferation. Although the veto position is left open for the future, the degree of European political unity involving the real sharing of sovereignty necessary to induce the United States to relinquish control to an European body does not appear to be attainable in the foreseeable future. Therefore, under the English meaning of the word control which refers to influence over operational decisions, the allies would not be getting any more real control over nuclear weapons under the MLF than they have at present.

SOVEREIGNTY

It is only natural, with the economic recovery of Western European nations, for these allies to have a desire to have more influence on actions which affect their national security and their very survival. It also is natural for them to desire to be less dependent on one member of the Alliance, but it remains a fact that they are not in a position to defend themselves without the assistance of the United States and, more specifically, her nuclear forces. In their confrontation with the Soviet Union, the Europeans cannot but identify themselves with the wider Atlantic grouping and defense system. Conversely the United States cannot go it alone, without Europe, in a world full of problems. American security is thoroughly bound up with the security of Western Europe. This calls for a close

partnership which can exist among sovereign states only if they are willing to adapt themselves to new circumstances and cooperate in solving problems of mutual interest.

In regard to the MLF, this force is not of sufficient size to counter the nuclear threat to Western Europe. Even with the force under allied control, these nations would not be in a position to exercise national prerogatives. They would still be dependent on the United States. The collective control suggested in the preceding pages does not permit an individual nation to declare war using nuclear weapons, or to stay out of war if it desires.

The MLF would not give the European members the bargaining lever to convince the United States to come to their aid when their vital interests are threatened. Even if the United States did not insist on the right to veto, it would exist de facto; for if the President of the United States refused to commit the United States to war, there is unlikely to be a war started by the Western nations and the question of nuclear weapons will not arise. On the other hand, if war is forced upon Europe by open Soviet aggression, then the United States will be in it whether or not she likes it. From the US viewpoint this makes sense, but it is not accepted by all Europeans.

To the extent that it is concerned with the future of the Alliance, the United States has sought to encourage equal partnership. But to the extent that US nuclear interests are directly

involved, the United States has been concerned primarily to prevent the spread of nuclear deterrents and to control strategy in a crisis.

A political evaluation of the MLF from a sovereignty standpoint brings several points into focus. First, NATO as an organization is not a single political entity. Rather, it consists of 15 sovereign and independent states. Each is a political unit and views military strategy and foreign policy from a pedestal of political sovereignty. Second, collectively owned nuclear forces cannot be centrally controlled by a single state without the other nations forfeiting some of their national status and authority. Third, no single country can formulate strategy for an alliance and insist on complete freedom to make political decisions while expecting other members to consent to its decisions without being consulted or given the opportunity to contribute to them.

In the final analysis, concern over the nuclear issue stems from the realization of national leaders that nuclear war is unthinkable but possible, and the unity and strength of the Atlantic Alliance is the strongest defense against the spread of Communist power. In this regard, less powerful nations must rely on the machinery of an Alliance--and possibly at some sacrifice of their national sovereignty--to make certain they aren't left in an isolated position.

POLITICAL COHESION

One of the US aims has been to work toward closer political unity in Europe and closer partnership between Europe and the United

States. An objective of the MLF was to promote this policy. In addition to Alliance unity, other political goals of the proposal was to reduce the role France was planning on the continent, to satisfy German desires for nuclear participation, and nonproliferation which was discussed earlier.

From the widely divergent views, it is obvious the MLF would not accomplish these political goals. Even in the proposal stage it has not promoted European political unity. France is flatly opposed to the idea and has continued to pursue extreme nationalistic policies. Britain is against the proposal and has proposed a broader concept of an Atlantic force that would be based on elements of national forces. Neither nation desires to see the Federal Republic of Germany have any control over nuclear force, nor is either willing to give up control of its own nuclear forces for multilateral participation. They are convinced that several centers of decision complicates the Soviets calculation and thus enhances deterrence.

Other allies have expressed varying degrees of interest from rejection of the proposal to a reluctant willingness to participate on a small scale. Only West Germany supports the proposal. Under the circumstances, it is difficult to see how it would promote a politically united Europe with close ties with America.

In view of Soviet opposition to West German participation, it does not appear to promote the main goal of the Federal Republic, which is reunification by peaceful means. Though it may give

Germany a foot slightly inside the nuclear door and tie her a little closer to the United States, it does not give her any real control over nuclear weapons nor does it give her an equal partnership role.

MLF CREDIBILITY

In the discussion in chapter 3, it was pointed out that a MLF based on a unanimity principle in which every major member had a veto would lack credibility in the Soviet eyes. This would be specially true in the more likely contingency of a limited attack against only one member of the Alliance.

It also was noted that the force would not be of sufficient size to counter the Soviet MRBM threat to Western Europe. In this regard, it could only be effective when employed in coordination with the US strategic forces. These US forces are of sufficient strength to counter all the Soviet nuclear threat without the existence of MLF. It would add little to the credibility of the Western nuclear deterrent. In fact, resources expended by the European allies participating in a MLF would reduce the already limited resources available for conventional forces necessary for the successful employment of a flexible response strategy.

In summary, if the MLF were created, it is doubtful it would provide many of the answers to the nuclear sharing and control problem in NATO. It would not solve the allied differences over strategy for defense of Western Europe. It also is doubtful it would further political unity in Western Europe, prevent or reduce

proliferation of nuclear weapons within the Alliance, or give non-nuclear allies any additional degree of nuclear control that they do not now have by agreements with the United States. In any event, if the MLF is developed, other means of nuclear sharing will probably be necessary to solve this alliance problem.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

The continued existence of a nuclear sharing problem in NATO is a result of the remarkable economic recovery of Western European nations following the destruction in World War II, the nuclear technological advancements of the times, and the natural desires of sovereign states. No completely satisfactory solution to the problem appears to be possible until far greater political unity is achieved than exists in the Atlantic states today. In the meantime, Soviet power, the importance of Western Europe to American security, and the inability of the nations of Western Europe to defend themselves makes separate defenses of Western Europe and North America infeasible. But sooner or later there must be more sharing of nuclear defense responsibilities, if the Alliance is to survive as a viable defense organization.

It is easy to understand US concern over nuclear control because of the danger of escalation, a danger that will increase if operational decision is shared. Yet Europeans are not likely to be satisfied with a solution that leaves all decisions to the president of only one nation.

The concept for a multilateral force in NATO was proposed by the United States in an attempt to resolve a critical political problem involving control of nuclear weapons. Not only did this concept indicate American preference for continued hegemony in European

affairs, it also was an attempt to maintain complete control of the West's nuclear deterrent by retaining the sole finger on the nuclear trigger.

To the United States, the MLF seemed responsive to European concern over the nuclear problem without committing these nations to management and control of a nuclear deterrent. However, to many Europeans, it created the illusion of participating while providing no more access to control and operational use of nuclear weapons than before. Among the major allies, only West Germany indorsed the concept. Such a divisive proposal could hardly be a solution to the problem of nuclear sharing.

Prior to proposing additional solutions to the nuclear dilemma, it seems necessary to arrive at a clearer understanding and consensus among the NATO nations on such matters as the strategy for using nuclear weapons, control of nuclear devices, and the meaning of a joint effort. Any organization or force, to serve a purpose, must stem from a requirement that is mutually demanded and agreed to.

The MLF is not based on agreed to or coordinated military strategy for the use of nuclear and conventional forces but rather on the doctrine of flexible response dictated by the United States. Changing the strategy without serious consultations with the allies and the unwillingness of the United States to face the political implications of its strategic views were principal causes of the intricate problem of nuclear control.

Since the United States appears unwilling to relinquish its monopoly over physical possession of its nuclear weapons, the alternative appears to be to grant allies more operational control of nuclear weapons and greater responsibility in formulation of military strategy, especially as to capabilities to counter Soviet MRBM's targeted on Western Europe.

European desires have not been necessarily for hardware. Cautious sharing of data, considerations and plans, and cooperation in preparing guidelines to be used in reacting to situations or crisis is preferred to either a lack of or limited consultation prior to announcing a strategy. This broader participation would provide self-education in facts and responsibilities reference nuclear warfare. Closer coordination and cooperation could instill greater confidence among the allies.

The idea of 15 nations consulting in a crisis when time is of the essence in an era of high speed nuclear delivery methods is not practical. However, it wouldn't restrict actions for its allies to know what the most powerful nation plans to do and to be familiar with various options, and it would help considerably to cement political unity.

To permit such participation, first, the Atomic Energy Act would have to be amended to permit the United States to grant more assistance to its NATO allies in the nuclear field. Second, European allies must abandon the obsolete strategy of massive retaliation. Such a strategy is no longer valid in view of the

enormous opposing nuclear power in the hands of the United States and the Soviet Union. It necessarily follows that all allied nuclear forces to be employed in defense of NATO must be centrally coordinated.

Finally, it should be proposed that NATO speak with one voice about a pact on nonproliferation of nuclear weapons. The United States should eliminate any fear on the part of any nation of the Alliance that she will participate in barging away the nuclear rights of any NATO ally.

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