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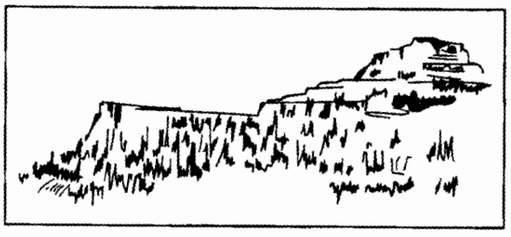

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OFFENSIVE VERSUS DEFENSIVE TRADEOFFS IN THE EUROPEAN THEATER

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SUMMARY

Researchers with the Nuclear History Project are concerned with the development of nuclear force structures. The author is one of the researchers and in this paper discusses offensive versus defensive tradeoffs in the European theater. The paper was presented at a seminar in Los Alamos on July 27, 1987, sponsored by the Center for National Security Studies.

The political and military relationships within NATO are seen to be in transition. The author analyzes this transition by reviewing past watersheds: the 1956–1958 discussions about stationing medium-range ballistic missiles in Europe; the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty; the intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) discussions of 1979–1987; and the president's 1983 Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) speech.

The author points out that it will make sense to reconsider the role of particular defense structures in bringing about both a politically acceptable and militarily credible balance in Europe.

ABSTRACT

This paper is based on a talk given at Los Alamos on July 27, 1987. The author sees a transition in the political and military relationships within NATO and analyzes the transition from a historical perspective.

OFFENSIVE VERSUS DEFENSIVE TRADEOFFS IN THE EUROPEAN THEATER

by

Catherine McArdle Kelleher

INTRODUCTION

The Nuclear History Project is a comprehensive project that Ernest May and Uwe Nerlich, who is from the Stiftung Wissenschaft un Politik in West Germany, have organized. The project involves about 50 researchers in Britain, Germany, France, and the United States. Those researchers and I are looking at various aspects of the actual development of nuclear force structures, at the way in which choices have been made, and at the roles of particular actors in the policymaking process.

This essay is about offensive/defensive tradeoffs in the European theater. "Theater" in this case entails the interaction of offensive and defensive balances, and also the degree to which they have been conditioned, even allowed to drift, on the basis of certain assumptions about the future strategic balance between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Since at least the early 1960s, American strategists have argued that, in practice (if not always in rhetorical pronouncement or in theory), the offensive/defensive balance in Europe was a secondary question, so long as one could rely on the offensive strategic superiority of the United States. But around 1972 there was no American offensive superiority. There have been attempts by various actors within the Reagan administration and within European governments to come to terms with what nuclear parity means for force structures and for political ambitions and goals over the next decade. I am amazed that there is almost nobody one can talk to, either on the left or the right in Europe, who does not believe that the European-American relationship is now in a transition phase. I would say that very few, if any, individuals now suggest that the next decade will resemble the last two, in terms of either the political or political/military relationships within the NATO alliance.

BACKGROUND

Let me introduce some historical background to illustrate where the past watersheds have been. I would like to examine the history of the 1950s, in which there was some heated debate about the degree to which offensive and defensive balances and East-West balances were critical to the arrival of stability or even deterrence. On the military side, there were major differences of opinion as to what constituted the appropriate force structure.

Perhaps the first occasion when this debate became public was in the 1956–1958 discussions concerning the stationing of medium-range ballistic missiles in Europe. The United States government argued that the stationing of medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM) forces in Europe was needed for a number of reasons, not the least of which was a series of failures of American intercontinental ballistic missile test fires. And the United States, from 1956 to 1958, actively pursued this option in alliance and bilateral channels. There

was enthusiastic support at NATO headquarters, which said this was a theater weapon system that Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR) needed, particularly because of the projected Soviet deployment of what was thought to be the SS-6, and later turned out to be the SS-4s and SS-5s in numbers between 700 and 800.

There were, however, some fairly unenthusiastic European reactions, particularly among the French and Germans. It was argued in Bonn, for example, that the stationing of offensive medium-range missiles in Europe was a destabilizing phenomenon and a "lightning rod" for Europeans. Thus, it was not something that they wished to be associated with.

Eventually came the Thor and Jupiter deployments. Some elites, particularly prominent characters in France and Germany, were more concerned about a set of arrangements related to large-scale battle and stressed the development of defensive conceptions, either in an air defense mode or an active or passive ground-based defense mode.

The concept of an offensive, European-based intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM) or MRBM force was one that attracted some American interest and some European interests in that period. However, the idea of either a comprehensive air defense system, or a defensive system that would ultimately emerge later as an anti-ballistic missile (ABM) system, was played with only at the margins. Indeed, even some military careers were invested and got cutoff. Why was that?

Looking at the theater situation either from a military point of view or a political/military perspective, all the defensive variants available in the theater force picture turned out to be of low utility. On the basis of geography, even in terms of 1956–1958 technology, flight times were very short. The question of target acquisition, or real-time information about what was happening, was part of a much more complicated picture.

The easy answer was always defense by pre-emption. And the offensive force character made it easy to say that if one pre-empts, one could take care of any problem that any defense would ever deal with. Thus, from the point of view of those who worried seriously about it, there had to be an offensive force, a quick-reaction force on hair-trigger alert that could move out quickly and eliminate the offensive problem. Whether it was aircraft-based or missile-based was not really a question. It was simply a matter of using all available means. And best of all, at least in terms of the political side, was the idea to raise the specter that any serious exchange in Europe was going to turn into an intercontinental exchange. That specter would take care of the problem by preventing it from happening at all.

So high an investment in the deterrent value required visible and available nuclear systems, clearly linked to American offensive forces and American offensive superiority. However, no one really explained what was involved, particularly in the German case after 1958. The idea of the central importance of theater nuclear weapons to overall deterrence was rarely put across in any of the political statements made at the time. No one explicitly said that this was really a deterrent system based on visible and available nuclear weapons in Europe. Nor did anyone say that these European-based systems were unable, in fact, to solve the theater problem.

A conspiracy of silence as to what would be the role of European-based nuclear weapons began to develop on the American side sometime during the early Kennedy administration. In 1962 the Kennedy administration reached a decision that all ground-based European forces would be incapable, unless they were on aircraft, of reaching Soviet territory. It was decided that anything capable of striking Soviet territory had to be under control of the American president. This decision was not well publicized at the time and certainly not publicized when it was redone by the Carter administration in 1978. As first talked about in the late 1950s, the original Pershing missile was to have the 1500- to 2000-nautical-mile range. It was not deployed with that range. Those missiles with this range that were already deployed in Europe, the Mace and Matador, were pulled back. Many of the commitments made during the discussions of the Thor

and Jupiter missiles were simply withdrawn. This was centralized, discriminate, American nuclear control. And in essence, while the European country that owned the launcher could say no to a launch, it could not order a launch without the authority of the American president.

The conspiracy of silence led to a weapons structure that did not appear related to any careful theater analysis; however, often people later wrote and suggested it was. Remember that the initial projections between 1958 and 1959 were for several thousand tactical nuclear weapons for Europe. Sometime between 1962 and 1965, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara came up with the figure of 7,000 tactical nuclear weapons for Europe, which related more to production requirements for fissile materials than anything else. This figure was not made public until 1967, and then only unintentionally. Moreover, the number 7,000 was never really 7,000. Sometimes it was higher, sometimes lower. It depended on how things were.

Defense-oriented arguments became overwhelmed by a similar kind of political calculation. Some advanced the argument that passive defense measures along the inner-German border could rely on either pre-emplacement (through pre-chambering) of atomic demolition munitions, or some sort of barrier defense.

However, the idea of passive defense, known after 1964 as the "Trettner Trench" (named after the German equivalent of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff who unfortunately and somewhat undeservedly became associated with it), was politically unacceptable in the Federal Republic because it made dramatically clear where forward defense was going to start—namely, in conflict on West German soil, inside West German territory. It was also unacceptable in terms of those who wanted no visible barriers to future German reunification. Further, it was politically unacceptable in terms of the sets of deliberate incentives developed by the West German government that had moved one-third of the West German population as well as 25 per cent of all German industrial capability within one tank hour of the inner-German border.

Thus, political defense, that is, arms control that preferably entailed long negotiations, was the only acceptable defense still remaining. Mobility or maneuver warfare was pushed aside, not only because of the density of the West German population, but also because of a difficult control situation. Given the deployment of missiles, it is amazing in retrospect that something awful did not happen between 1956 and 1962. Somehow, we managed to avoid catastrophe and the nightmare of both uncontrolled and unauthorized use. But in the process, a number of decisions were arrived at that are not well understood today. As these decisions are re-examined, and as we think our way through whether these are decisions to make now and in the future, we should remember that they reflect certain types of calculations about what was needed then and what may not be necessary now, what the risks are, and how one minimizes those risks. This remains true whether one talks about the goals of stability or perhaps the continued linkage of certain kinds of force structures in Europe with those of the American global force posture.

Before the latest set of intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) discussions took place from 1979 to 1987, it was likely that the last time the issues of nuclear deterrence and the defense of Europe were topical was in connection with the 1968 Nonproliferation Treaty and the 1972 ABM Treaty. The arguments made in both instances essentially turned on the possibility of yet another attempt at an active defense system. At one point, planners in the United States developed a sea-based ABM system (SABMIS), which the United States was to provide as an ABM system for the European continent, paralleling what was to be done for the United States. It was yet another chance for the Multilateral Force to sail. The United States initially intended to deploy surface ships with ABM technology in the sea lanes off of Europe, mixing them, in effect, with freighter traffic and domestic shipping. There were overriding problems of accuracy and controllability, however, and the majority decided that such a system was unnecessary, even before the ABM Treaty was in prospect. In addition, the Asian variant was judged totally unnecessary, and so the United States ending up eliminating a number of the options it sought to protect under the ABM Treaty.

The United States eliminated these ABM options with a lot of enthusiastic European support. For just as the Europeans have reacted to the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), the most compelling argument

in terms of European strategists and governing elites is that any defensive system which can be operated independently of any particular force balance in Europe or political military balance between East and West is not a good thing. This is particularly true if the defensive system puts a premium on homeland American defense. This alone brings into question the bases of policy and promises guaranteed under deterrence, the extension of the deterrence shield to Europe. That is something that will never be seen to be in European interests.

At the time, ABM, even a limited ABM system, was thought to have that kind of effect on the American security guarantee and the continued linkage, especially in the nuclear field. Anything that increases the United States' ability to defend its homeland is interpreted as something that threatens the American guarantee to Europe, although one could do the logic the other way.

DEFENSIVE-OFFENSIVE FORCES

The mix of what went into the 7,000 offensive systems changed drastically between 1962 and 1978. The decisions and discussions in Mr. Schlesinger's report (really Mr. Foster's report) in 1973–1974 are concerned with whether those changes made in 1973 to 1974 are the best that should have been made, as well as how these changes link to the changing offensive balance between the United States and the Soviet Union. When opposition to the 1977 NATO initiatives was expressed during the Carter administration, there was a re-examination of several questions. What does modernization really mean? How does the neutron bomb controversy of 1977–1978 interplay with the set of decisions regarding which systems get modernized, and how modernization itself is to be discussed? And the whole question of intermediate nuclear force itself and the reversal of the earlier decision to once again extend to a range that will not allow the Soviet Union a position of sanctuary from European-based missiles with American warheads, subject to European control—what does that mean in terms of both linkage to U.S. offensive systems and the offensive balance within Europe?

My argument is that the INF decision was basically a political one that found good and convenient reasons for its base, and perhaps even some military justifications as well. But it was really concerned with politically strengthening America's security guarantee to Europe. It was a way of effectively and visually placing systems where people would know that they were there. That was a very important support for extended deterrence, and in fact, a righting of the offensive theater balance. But appropriate military targets were selected only after a considerable period; sanctuary was the driving theme.

However, it was not a decision made with the amount of public participation for which one may have wished. The abruptness of the decision was communicated to various publics. And the resulting couple of years of public protests and demonstrations ultimately led to a decision to deploy on the part of all the weapons states that were designated at the outset. Almost everybody climbed on board.

The political conditions for the emplacement of these forces, in fact, were met. Nonsingularity (that is, not just forces on German territory) was a very important precondition dating back to the late 1950s, for example. The fact that all alliance members, even alliance members who refused to allow the peacetime storage of nuclear weapons in their territory (for example, Norway and Denmark), approved the decision and agreed to pay some portion of the infrastructure costs was considered a necessary condition for the requirement of risk sharing. And finally, the idea of the integration of these systems in terms of eventual targeting and political choices about their use represents a political condition dating back to 1962, that is, the agreement by the United States to integrate targeting and political authority within the Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP). The INF forces were theater forces, but integrated with global strategic force plans as well.

In all of this, certainly until recently, the discussion of defense within the theater and defense in terms of U.S. defense assumptions remained fairly low key. Until the President's SDI speech of 1983, defensive options to offset the balance had not been politically acceptable alternatives. Here, SDI raises all of the old worries and all of the old assumptions again. Is it possible? Is it politically acceptable? Is it even desirable in terms of trading off for defensive arrangements? I think if one talks about the political elites in Europe, the answer is unequivocally no.

However, SDI is a nice way to get in on the technological revolution. All of Mr. Weinberger's assumptions, 90 days for response notwithstanding, turn out to be nice things. All of the European industrial magnets have begun to have dreams about a high-tech revolution in which they, too, can participate and will not be left in the dust by the United States and Japan. It all appears promising, and they believe that even SDI itself will not happen, so why not get involved in the first stages?

It certainly is not in the Europeans' interest to push very hard for the actual deployment of SDI. And, in fact, the ABM Treaty, which previously had not had a lot of detailed political support, was suddenly venerated to the status of the holy writ. Since 1972 the ABM Treaty has become the cornerstone of the North Atlantic Alliance. Defenses within the theater, however, continue to have enormous political attraction. As the INF discussions continued, a good but not the real reason for deployments was found, that is, the SS-20. The SS-20 was elevated to the real reason for INF deployments, although that was never really the case. Thus, the question was raised whether it was possible to do something about the SS-20.

Defenses began to have an interesting role to play, and not only from the perspective of those looking for alternative defense modes. The groups that should not be ignored in the coming years are those who remember things about air defense that they had or were supposed to have forgotten. The price of the INF deployment was to be other changes in other forces; one could eliminate the NIKE system and count those warheads against the total number of 7,000—itself a holy figure that could not be touched without full political negotiation of what it meant to reduce the number. So the NIKEs were removed, and reductions were made in dual-capable aircraft assignments. Gradually, other withdrawals were undertaken to achieve what now seems so politically acceptable: in 1979, cuts to several thousand warheads, and now, under Montebello, cuts to a lower number by 1990.

Politically, therefore, the question of defense was invested with more attractiveness for European elites, particularly military elites, but political elites as well. To some extent, the package's present form is the discussion of anti-tactical ballistic missiles (ATBMs). This remains a fairly low-key discussion coinciding with European perceptions of insurmountable economic constraints; it is not an idea going anywhere in a hurry. But it is a nice thing to talk about, and it is a way in which conceptions of defense have been reintroduced into political discussions.

Anti-tactical ballistic missiles span at least seven different kinds of defensive weapons, and cover a multitude of different kinds of theater defensive systems. The one that the Reagan administration enunciated and then walked away from is a comprehensive, all-against-all system that is to cover everything that comes from the air—missiles, aircraft, or other systems. It incorporates some of the things known by the title of European Defense Initiative (EDI), which is a partner concept to SDI, although nobody is quite sure how to do it.

All of this concerns the possibility of dealing with American offensive vulnerability. It suggests a different tradeoff to be managed within the theater, as something that people should be concerned about.

Moving back to the offensive side of the equation, I would like to examine the role that nuclear forces are playing within the present context. It is a context in which one can safely assume further reductions in nuclear forces in Europe. My own hunch is that the INF Treaty and the double-zero and maybe a triple-zero option are not very far in our future. But whether by our own intentions or not, a set of political circumstances has been created in which an INF agreement cannot not be accepted. In other words, an

agreement is almost inevitable unless the Soviets once again save us from ourselves and do something stupid. If the Pershing IAs get included in an agreement, there subsequently will be the argument that it will be hard to maintain any nuclear forces if the stockpiles for the Pershings are eliminated. I cannot imagine how the present German government is going to deal with this problem, except to give in to what will be enormous public pressure, particularly if Mr. Gorbachev is as skillful as he has been in portraying this as the only obstacle to agreement.

In terms of theater-strategic forces, then, one is left with the British and French forces. While there are all sorts of agreements between the United States and the British about what can happen to those warheads and under what circumstances they might be reduced, there has always been an element of uncertainty regarding their use. For the British, it is a question of time and circumstances and whether it is in their national interest. Any combination of those three terms leads to the conclusion that a British nuclear force turns out to be subject to British political will, even though it is one that the United States sold to them at favorable rates, as the Trident. If there is any question concerning what may happen to that political will, I think that the last Thatcher election probably showed that anything challenging the control of British nuclear forces will fail at the polls.

There is not much to say about the French, except that they are holding their traditional position, which is, in effect, "not with ours you don't."

The only other theater offensive forces beyond dual-capable aircraft are those warheads that the United States assigned as theater forces to SACEUR, in what first was Polaris, is now Poseidon, and is soon to be Trident. Those forces were targeted under the SIOP from the very beginning and have been committed to SACEUR and assigned for his use. He has a great deal to say concerning their use, but not everything.

One can also talk about other forces in the area, such as cruise missiles on everything that floats. If Mr. Lehman's dream of 600 ships comes true by 1995, there will be American naval forces with theater responsibilities, conventional and nuclear.

But ultimately, if a triple-zero agreement is reached, the British and French forces, and the warheads assigned to SACEUR, are all that is left. Where does this leave us? In some difficulty, at least in terms of American expectations. Things are even worse if we add another assumption, namely, that the Allied and American unwillingness and perhaps inability to build up conventional forces will continue. I am not one of those who believes that conventional force improvements (not to say increases) will happen quickly or cheaply, all of the benefits of future technology notwithstanding. All of this will cost a great deal of money.

More importantly, it will cost a great deal of political capital. It will mean conscription in the United States. It will mean greater reliance on the role of women, which up until now the Congress has steadfastly approved in principle, but not in practice. Large numbers of people who are essential to the continued well-being and economic prosperity of all of the partner nations, including the United States, will be dedicated for long periods to military service, whether one wishes to believe it or not. The task of running the present and future European defense with *Category IV forces* cannot be done. This is true both in terms of the present force requirements and, in fact, the requirements that are conceivable given the new technologies coming on line.

Where this leaves us, I think, is in a period of not simply transition, but in one where there are some high-priority choices to be made.

One way around the dilemmas is not to buy the assumption about the triple-zero option. The position of the native governments at the Defense Planning Group could be, "No, no, never . . . it is not going to happen. We are going to modernize battlefield systems, and we are going to have improved missiles which can go on aircraft. And we are going to do a capability assignment. We are going to do everything we can to be sure that there is an assured nuclear component in the present NATO Flexible Forward Defense Strategy."

I wish them the best of luck; however, I am a doubter if it comes to actual money and getting parliaments to say that "this is what we are going to do because we are busily negotiating an INF agreement." If it has to come out in the open, and it almost certainly will, then there will be a major change in the political environment in Europe. The public will ask, "Why is it so? Explain to us why it must be so." And I would bet that the full explanation of the theory of deterrence, and what is expected in European conflict scenarios, will widen rather than narrow the gap between public and elite perceptions. I believe that argument is true whether the explanation comes in the form of General Rogers' attempt to continue support for the mix of conventional and nuclear forces in Europe, or whether it is the belated "coming clean" of the various European governments, notably the Germans.

One is then stuck with the talk of moving weapons to sea, and it seems that we have been down this route before in the 1960s. Again, the question arises concerning the validity of the argument that visibility is essential for credibility, and the degree to which risk-sharing is predicated on visible ground-based defense structures that, in fact, say, "one for all, and all for one." For in an operational sense, that is what risk-sharing has meant until now.

The other options are not overwhelmingly promising. Maintaining and perhaps expanding American conventional forces are fairly vain hopes. The administration will have to explain to the American Congress why it is maintaining 310,000 American servicemen in order to fight a conventional war in Europe. The argument that the problem has been managed in the past by an expeditionary force that went overseas when times got tough is one that sells well on the election stump. And besides, it is European territory, right? It seems to me that the Congress's tendency to view the Europeans as too lazy or cowardly to fight for their own defense is a perception that will require much effort to change.

Finally, there is the question of what the Soviets will do. My own nightmare is not the triple-zero option. It is that Mikhail Gorbachev will say that the Soviets have all of these T-48, T-52, and T-60 tanks that are just sitting around, rusting, and not doing very much. He then says, "Why don't we just simply cut all tanks in Europe by half? That sounds good, doesn't it? And if you like that, then I can move a tank army and do other sorts of things. You don't like this nuclear cut. Here's another one. Never met an arms control agreement we couldn't agree on."

And this is the argument that at the negotiating table and in public a certain Russian lieutenant general got his hands slapped for having said out loud in Geneva. And he is back at the table again, saying

> Just tell us what you want. What is it that you need? What is it that we need together to put permanently in place the kind of stability we have all enjoyed in Western Europe during the past 30 years. We can cut. We can go down to those nice days of the mid-1950s. You know, 150,000 active forces on East German and West German territory. A little stronger and thicker defense, out a little bit farther, moved back across the English Channel, on one side of the Polish Russian border. Or maybe it is the Atlantic. Then we can have all sorts of thinning out.

The "what" is a politically based stability that has never had anything to do with the particular offensive-defensive balance in Europe. Confidence-building measures have come a long way. They can go even farther. It is a picture of a European peace order based on politically acceptable circumstances having to do with the withdrawal of foreign forces from both sides of Europe. Foreign in this sense clearly means noncontinental.

Even if the British are allowed to stay with their army, it is a peace order that is based on a very different conception of the relationship between political goals and military forces than has been the case up to the present. There is much that is tempting in this vision. It is also one where bringing it into operational

reality is a very different problem. But it may well be that in arriving at the political preconditions for that kind of order, most of the conditions for operation will be achieved anyway. It is precisely this kind of interaction of political developments, military reductions, and perhaps an overwhelming wish to believe in the efficacy of arms control that could precipitate many of the conditions, particularly in terms of unilateral moves by the United States and a number of its West European allies. And so at that point, it seems to me, one will have set much of the vision into motion, at least in terms of the political framework.

CONCLUSIONS

Does this mean that all of this has to happen? I do not think so. But it does mean that the West must conceive of a different rationale, a very different defense concept, whether it is the particular role assigned to nuclear forces in Europe or the particular confidence required in our assessment of the conventional and nuclear balance. It will make sense to reconsider the role of particular defense structures in bringing about both a politically acceptable and militarily credible balance in Europe.

There are many alternatives, a number of which are being generated within political opposition groups and even more mainstream military groups in Europe. Many discussions are occurring among European militaries and European political military elites to which American observers are not a party at the moment. The role of what kinds of defenses, what sets of arrangements might be made, has a ready made place in the Franco-German discussions, and in the British-French staff talks, even at the "intimate" level at which they are being conducted. There is not much hope in terms of immediate movement. There is not much hope, in fact, in terms of the kinds of investment choices that have to be made at a time in which the economic constraints are extremely palpable.

It seems, then, that most of the easy assumptions are not up for question, but have been overtaken by events, concerning what counts about offensive and defensive forces in the European theater, and how this links to the broader U.S.-Soviet balance. That is something which we should respond to quickly, because short of an untimely death for Gorbachev or having his regime overtaken by a revolution from beneath, it is hard to see any near-term changes in the Soviet direction. And the silence from our side is truly deafening.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. If the force of your emerging triple zero plus the likelihood of a Soviet initiative on the conventional-force front occur, is it likely that pressure against the independent nuclear forces will not be far behind?

A. One would think so, but the real question is how that would happen. The most undesirable possibility, one being talked about quite openly by the British and the French, is whether the United States and Soviet Union would enter into a regime of deep cuts and agree to cut the British and French forces as well. In other words, it will then be a superpower condominium that will move against the British and the French. And the United States could conceivably yank the Trident deal untried. There is no reason not to, for it is not totally in place yet. Something similar happened before with the 1962 Skybolt for Polaris. But that would be a very dangerous thing to do now, especially since there are no happy talk-fests, like the Nuclear Planning Group, to put in its place and that would presumably attract a lot of British support. And, in looking at the election results, for both Mrs. Thatcher's marginal victory and the loss of initiative on the part of the Social Democratic Liberal Alliance, there seems to be an electable majority in Britain that says, "Yes, we want an independent nuclear force, and boy, do we want it now." In France, I do not think there is any serious opposition that questions the viability of the French nuclear force.

Q. In other words, we favor the idea that there is something special in a political and psychological sense about the British and French forces that would enable them to survive politically in an environment where other things are being cut. Doesn't this lead you to another one of the perennial principles, namely, an attempt to try to stabilize the strategic situation around a European independent force presumably based on these two? It has all been attempted before, but one is led to the question whether this sort of thing will actually work.

A. Yes, they might get it together. It is one of the parts of the cottage industry that is most reassuring—the questions and solutions are still the same. Or at least there do not seem to be many new ones coming forward. However, there is always a question regarding the role of the Germans, other than to pay. Paying is always first on the French agenda. In June 1986 the French offered the right of consultation of French nuclear forces to the Germans, time and circumstance and supreme national interest allowing. The offer included a quasi-hotline. That suggests that at least one key variable has changed, namely, the degree to which such an arrangement is politically acceptable in France.

However, the real question to ask is whether such an arrangement is politically acceptable in Germany. Based on my observation, there is nobody talking about it other than the far right of the Christian Socialist Union, which has been talking about it since 1960. So it is nothing new for them. The nut is what German politicians will stand up for and say, "This is what we want." This is hard to see on any question involving a direct break with the status quo. It is the preferred German position, except for the far right and far left, to let things evolve—slide a little, trip a little, move in that direction, let the United States leave rather than push them out. But the expectation is that everything is going to change.

Q. You painted a picture of the momentum building to the triple-zero agreement, and I wanted to know if there was something specific that you were thinking of in verification that would address these weapons systems. This is a very sticky issue, much stickier than many of the issues faced in the negotiations on tactical intermediate-range missiles.

A. I have little doubt that the preferred position of most American and European military officials, not to say it's the position of the German military, is that the battlefield system stay in. And, as you quite correctly point out, the verification problems, particulary if a very high level of confidence is required, are enormous. If everything has to be identified, and there cannot be any cheating, then, as far as I can tell, the problem is not resolvable on technical grounds.

At some point, then, one has to make an act of political faith that there is a comprehensive system capable of getting everything. However, there are two immutable facts. First, battlefield systems have ranges of less than 120 kilometers, meaning than they are going to be used on West German territory. Second, it seems that the political acceptability of those weapons for the Germans has always been that other people had nuclear weapons on their territory that were also going to be used. In other words, it was not just West German territory that was going to be blown up. That is what risk-sharing is all about. That is what nonsingularity is all about.

I do not think that one can assume that everybody has forgotten the wave of INF opposition. One could imagine West German political leaders standing up and explaining why those weapons have to stay while the rest of the weapons were removed, but this is a very slim probability. That would be political suicide, or maybe even simple political courage that so far no Western leader has been willing to display. And from the German perspective, what is the argument that battlefield weapons, which are going to explode in West German territory, must stay after INF weapons are removed? Perhaps one could use the standard contention that they are an essential link to the American force. But surely the argument would have to be more persuasive than that. What remains to be explained is why it was possible to cut the longer range systems, and why this is a better way to prevent massive attack.

Q. It is difficult to separate the constituencies behind the views you were discussing as we led up to the status quo. You spoke briefly about the United States as not being able to support its force, or maybe being unwilling to support 310,000 troops in Europe. And then I think of Europeans saying they would like to denuclearize in some form. Could you explain the interaction of these views? Would it be acceptable in Europe to see all of that happen? I do not know what is the consensus of defining what the deterrents should be. But if we go to triple zero, and we talk about withdrawing a few troops out of the Warsaw Pact just to make the situation look even better, how will the situation change? Will there still be this public sentiment that is leery of the nuclear forces?

A. Yes, because most European publics believe that war is inconceivable.

Q. You don't think a triple-zero agreement would change that sentiment?

A. It should, but I do not think it will. What one is talking about is the acceptance of Eastern and Western Europe as it currently is. That is, the political division of postwar Europe is now accepted as normal. Any student of history between 1815 and the present knows why that should not be the case. But it is accepted as normal. War, should it come, would involve destruction and change of such magnitude that is in no one's interest, and thus will not happen. Do I think this is a utopian view? Yes. Do I think it is strongly believed? Yes.

Q. Can you say something more about alternative defense system strategies?

A. I think they are very attractive in this kind of environment. Probably the idea that most Americans are familiar with is the so-called nonprovocative defense; a defense-dominant conventional force. Now, here comes the rationalist argument: any weapon can be used offensively or defensively; it just has to do with the degree of efficiency. But here the argument is that the conventional and nuclear missiles are reduced or taken away. Aircraft are reduced. One is talking in terms of lightly armed divisions and developing a network that binds units together in an interactive and realistic way in terms of local defense. There is a three-tier system of local defense, reserves, and active defenses. Mobility is not a requirement or even desired, so tanks are reduced. Geography is accounted for and exploited. The Central Front is not uniform in terms of terrain or defense requirements.

I am lumping together the main characteristics of a broad set of ideas. There are 15 or 16 different ways in which this is presented, some of them more militarily credible based on exercises or simulations, as well as the German experiences on the Eastern Front during World War II. And it is a discussion that was interrupted, as I tried to suggest, in 1957–1958. With the introduction of tactical nuclear weapons, a lot of these ideas came to a dead stop politically. But there were discussions then, and now the same arguments are being re-examined. All of this, however, turns on the assumption that one expects the same kind of defensive system on both sides of the inner-German border. Several of the plans do not make that assumption, but they are less realistic even in terms of their own objective specification of the conditions for stability.

Essentially, one is talking about the kind of Rapacki-Gromyko-Kennan arguments of 1956–1957, which entailed the physical separation of forces and differential levels of equipment. Missile defenses, for example, would be introduced only in the fourth zone, which starts just about at Greenwich, England. Overall, there would be changes in force structures, in the kinds of training that is done, and in the kinds of exercises undertaken. The scheme would follow the Stockholm confidence-building measures already agreed to, and then move three or four steps farther in terms of intrusiveness of verification systems, for example.

The point I want to stress is that the emphasis in nonprovocative defense is on creating a set of circumstances in which the political acceptability, even of a discussion, has changed radically. There is now a discussion of the need of a defense based on large numbers of active duty forces heavily armed

with offensive capabilities, versus a limited defense capability. Making the analogy to the SDI argument, many are asking what else can be done that limits the necessary damage done to cooperative relations in peacetime?

Q. Most military planners like to assume rational adversaries, but history tells us that is a false proposition. Isn't it better to be able to defend Europe by relying on the American presence instead of on the basis of a mobilization strategy that takes far longer than we will have to get into place?

A. Let me see if I can come at it from the other side. It is very hard to find a rational reason for anything that exists in the current European defense system. For example, where did the number 7,000 come from? It is impossible to say what the right mix is because I can point out 62 places where the mix has existed or at least been seriously discussed in different terms. It is even hard to say where the numbers originated concerning the division of conventional forces. The present force posture was based on the requirements for the Normandy Invasion. There is a direct lineage in terms of air wings, number of divisions, and separation between light and heavy combat units. All of these requirements are not derived directly from present military requirements, or even derived from an overall strategic concept that is related to notions about acceptable and unacceptable military and political risks.

Indeed, it is all knitted together at the edges, based on what we had to do, or what we thought we had to do, given what we thought we could do, what the political environment was, and what the requirements were. To say that out loud is similar to saying the emperor is naked and has been for a long time. But that still leaves the question of what to do about the emperor.

If one concedes to George Kennan that the maintenance of a certain kind of balance favoring American interests in Europe is essential to America's position in the world, then it is in the United States' interests that the area be kept stable and capable, in one way or another, of defending itself. If one assumes that it is better to have the United States present than to have to defend Europe on the basis of a mobilization strategy (once again), it seems that we are re-creating the logic train that led us to this situation in the first place.

It is important to avoid the confusion between what is required as opposed to what has seemed to be a good idea at the time. That is the point I am concerned about. Do I think nuclear weapons have to be in Europe? Yes. Do they have to be our nuclear weapons? Hopefully. Should there be nuclear weapons that are at least targeted jointly with ours? Yes, and in circumstances the United States defines as important, to be used in ways we also think are important. However, that is an item of political faith which I have yet to hear issue from the mouth of an American politician. And I do not expect to hear it soon.

Q. You have indicated that the INF treaty is very likely, and likely to go at very low levels, maybe even zero-zero. How much can the United States gain? What is the American negotiating position as far as you can fathom it? What are we going to gain in terms of the creation of the inspection system? Will it prevent surprise attacks, or will it prevent attack? What are we gaining to compensate for the apparent loss of deterrent?

A. Let me answer that by saying a little bit about one of the deals of the past that I wish I could undo, namely, the mid-1970s decision about which cruise missile to produce. The United States chose to go with variations of the Tomahawk. Under the INF agreement, that means that anything related to the Tomahawk is open for inspection. It does not matter if it is the Tomahawk for Europe or elsewhere. That should give an idea of the comprehensiveness of the system: We are not talking only about deployment, but production as well. Of course, our side gets to generate a list of designated areas that are not going to be inspected. But any site that relates to the systems that are covered by the INF agreement that involves a potential

producer, and/or deployer, and/or user is eligible for inspection by the other side. I think that works against American interests.

Does the United States gain anything from the INF treaty? It does in the sense that any agreement that allows our side the right of challenge on less than 72 hours notice is a step forward. Compare the INF verification scheme to that of the Limited Test Ban Treaty. The Soviets offered to give us two or three inspection sites. And the United States demanded nine, or was it twelve, sites. They then took back their offer. Many in this country thought that the United States had lost a golden opportunity in 1965 to have inspection sites with unlimited-challenge rights to visit inside the Soviet Union. Now, both sides have that opportunity again. There will be designated areas to go and visit electronically 24 hours a day, if not physically visit as well. And there will be the right of challenge on enough notice so that it is polite but not allowing time for much to be hidden. These are very significant measures, and they are unprecedented. However, it is important to remember whose society is more open.

Q. Is there more to gain by implementing an inspection system, considering that the Soviets know what is going on over here anyway?

A. Yes, but the Soviets also have better information on what to look for. Just by that definition, our side is going to have to reinvent the wheel. To some extent, the seismic tests represent a step forward, although I wish they were done by the government and not a group of foundations. We have better data now than we had last year, and the data in two years will be much improved. In other words, we are having to build our database from a smaller pool of information than the Soviets have. Thus, if there is a situation in which we have half the information we need, and something happens, the United States could be in real trouble, or at least more trouble than the Soviets.

If it matters more to the American Congress in terms of political support than in terms of equivalent Soviet political instances that our side can monitor, then the administration will have to say with credibility that it knows enough, 99 per cent certain, so that what happens next does not matter. That is a big requirement. And my own sense, even when I look at candidates from the Democratic Party, is that there is not a lot of political courage these days. Perhaps because of systematic or honorable reasons. But the number of people who want to take on that act of faith is limited. But that is what is going to be asked under this inspection system. It is a big jump.

Q. Could you please explain how an INF agreement will affect the need for air defense. What technology is available, and what will our needs be now and in the future?

A. Everybody in the manufacturing business is certain that they have the right answer in terms of building the best defensive system. And MBB, the German firm, is far ahead in terms of selling something that is going to be of European design. But Raytheon and Mitre are sure that they have the answer with the Hawk and Patriot follow-ons. These are being pushed very much at the moment as being sort of able to do most things. And besides, if there is a double- or triple-zero agreement, then the SS-22, SS-23, and SS-21 problems are taken care of if the missiles are conventionally armed.

I do not buy the Patriot and Hawk ATBM-extended air defense arguments. They are good for a very limited number of the problems that need to be addressed. However, with the essential elimination of offensive missiles and anything that could be used in a nuclear mode, then many think that kind of ATBM system is not all that necessary, at least in the short run. One can argue that there will be a need for a defensive system which provides a conventional defense that is far more comprehensive, involves a broader concept of defense, and may be a more interesting option. But it will cost a lot of money. And the technology we have at the moment is only the beginning. I think that we are a long way from the maturation necessary to give better than a 15 to 20 per cent confidence level.

Q. You have not said very much about the Soviet view of a triple-zero agreement. You did allude to going beyond triple zero and offering tanks for tanks, and so on. What would be the rationale for that? It is conventional wisdom to get rid of the nuclear force and tip the balance in favor of Soviet conventional forces. Do they believe that?

A. There is a lot of evidence to suggest they do not.

Q. Why would they go beyond nuclear systems? Why would they offer horses for horses?

A. In part because it is cheap, politically and economically. They do not think we will go for it, and so they use the argument to get a lot of mileage from it. From my encounters with Soviets and Soviet/East European military officials in Europe, I conclude that there are two different teams working the sides of the discussion. In Europe, the arguments go along the lines of calling for nonprovocative defense. They contend that there is a need to remove things that look offensive, and tanks certainly look offensive. It is a cheap argument that goes a long way in suggesting to the Germans and Europeans that things are going to be different; that something new is going to happen.

The Soviets are having considerable difficulty within the Warsaw Pact. Of course, considerable difficulty is a relative term compared to the situation in the NATO Alliance—it still looks like the best we ever had, and maybe then some. But there is dissatisfaction among the Hungarians. The Soviets attempt to ignore the economic differences between the Poles and the East Germans, for example. Thus, things will have to be different because they, the non-Soviet Pact countries, cannot keep this kind of structure operating. They will do it for the foreseeable future, but they want some expectation that things are changing and a lot more argument about what it costs to support both the Soviet forces and their forces. And so there is the resounding hollow laughter of the Bulgarians who always do, the Czechs who have to, and the Poles who always do it with their fingers crossed, saying yes, we will spend more for conventional defense. And there is a lot of silence elsewhere.

I think the Soviets are serious in terms of wanting to improve their own domestic economy. The purposes of change are not necessarily in our own interests. I think that this looks like a way to make a wedge in to what is a difficult situation in terms of allocating available resources. But once one goes below the cheap deal, then it seems that the real test of intentions will occur.

If one examines the example of Option 3 that was tabled in the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction Talks in 1974, in which the American delegation offered a thousand warheads on the Western side for the removal of a whole Soviet tank army, the United States yanked the offer as the Soviets moved toward acceptance. This was an example of potential asymmetrical reduction, which would have cut into the Soviet conventional force posture that is used not only for deterrence against the West, but also has a lot to do with the Soviet relationship with the rest of the Pact countries. And where would those forces have had to come from? If not from East Germany, then from Czechoslovakia or Hungary, because that is the only place where they existed in large numbers.

Looking at the present situation, if the Soviets reduced tanks in East Germany, that would be a better test of how serious they are about arms control. It is a test which I think NATO is afraid to take because there are a number of governments that are content with the status quo. And as long as that line runs down the middle of Germany, then they find it terrific, with the Soviets responsible for good behavior on the east side, and the United States responsible on the west side. That is not something that can ever be said aloud within the alliance. But it is one of those problems which will deserve attention in the next decade.