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1)

IMPLICATIONS FOR NATO OF U.S. CONTROLLED NUCLEAR RESPONSE\*

by

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Summary of remarks of Dr. Malcolm Hoag, Staff Member of the Economics Department, The RAND Corporation, Professor in Residence, Department of Political Science, University of California, Los Angeles. Summary prepared by Daniel Weiler, Junior Fellow, National Security Studies Program.

The implications of controlled nuclear response for our NATO allies must be considered in terms of specific response policies. They can be defined by the relationship of alternative policies to alternative objectives. The objectives are:

1. Deter war
2. Limit damage in war
3. Deter in war

Alternative policies include:

1. Minimum deterrence (targets are cities only)--seek only to deter war
2. Counterforce (cities plus)--to deter war and limit damage
3. Restrained counterforce (city sparing)--to deter war, limit damage, and gain intra-war deterrence
4. Limited strategic retaliation (cities one by one)--to deter war and gain intra-war deterrence

Policies of restrained counterforce and limited strategic retaliation attempt, fundamentally, to continue to hold an enemy people hostage even in war. To destroy these people would be to destroy our own bargaining power. Some strategists argue for a policy of restrained counterforce--which, by sparing cities while hitting military targets, save lives; and others argue for a policy of limited strategic retaliation, which would at least leave most cities unhit.

U.S. policy has changed over the years from one of minimum deterrence to counterforce to restrained counterforce. Any

policy which tries to gain the objective of intra-war deterrence is properly labeled controlled nuclear response (i.e., restrained counterforce or limited strategic retaliation). It should be remembered, though, that of the objectives named, it will usually not be possible to maximize all three at the same time with any one policy.

Policies of controlled nuclear response have many implications for NATO. Under the "old" policy, there were only two choices for the use of general war forces: Go or No-go. Planning was nonetheless very difficult. The forces had to be made safe against damage or unauthorized launching, and yet responsive to a signal for their coordinated use at one time.

Under "new" policies, choices may be made for both a first wave of attack and later waves drawn from withheld forces. In each case, No-go is one possible decision. But if the decision is Go, then it must at least be decided if the first wave is to be city-sparing, or all-out; and if the second wave is to be restrained or all-out.

Coordination is much harder from a technical point of view than with the "old" strategy. Then months of detailed effort might be devoted to programming a large nuclear force. Now, part of the force must be re-programmed between the first and a later strike--which could be a matter of only minutes or hours in a disrupt environment. Its programming will depend on information as to the effectiveness of the first strike, and

enemy reactions. And it is still necessary that a later wave be coordinated to go or arrive all at the same time.

With such a strategy, we will presumably want to tell the enemy what we have done and will do, unless he meets our terms (for ending the war, limiting damage, etc.). We therefore have the additional problem of knowing just what it is we have done. Under the "old" strategy, it mattered much less, because we had not intended to withhold forces from spared targets to coerce the enemy.

We argue to both the Europeans and the Soviet Union that our controlled nuclear response policy is not a "national suicide in case of war" policy, and therefore a credible policy for us actually to adopt.

However, the advent of quick-flight ICBM's creates a temptation to place most of the weapons under one assured political authority (so they can be more reliable and better coordinated in case of war), i.e., the U.S. zone of interior. This looks to the Europeans like nuclear withdrawal, no matter what we argue about credibility.

If such a force is under different commands, with different doctrines and philosophies, coordination is that much more difficult--and coordination is essential to strategies of any kind, in particular ones of controlled nuclear response. The bulk of NATO forces are now committed, under one allied commander, to military targets. This fits any option of U.S. strategic plans, and hence is compatible. Even a national European (e.g., French) "city-busting" force can fit, if such

a force can be relied upon to go only with later waves aimed at such targets. But it is incompatible if the "city-busting" force goes on any first wave. This goes to the technical heart of the Franco-U.S. argument. The force de frappe, if used as described, ruins any policy of restraint, and thrusts us back to the "old" policy without as much military damage to the enemy as before. Of course the strategic implications are not the prime reason for Franco-American differences. Of greater importance is the way in which the French have pressed their case, and arms control.

The MLF could be designed to be in either the first or second wave of attack. If the second wave, NATO governments have more time to consult. This means protecting and controlling this force after the outbreak of war. A first wave response to military targets would be quicker and less demanding technically. Greater vulnerability of surface ships for example, can more easily be accepted.

A first wave military target programming for the MLF would probably be the policy most likely to persuade the U.S. to drop its veto, if any policy would. To make such an eventuality more difficult still, the consequences of dropping the veto could be made bigger, i.e., use the MLF against all targets.

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THE EVOLUTION OF NATO STRATEGY: I\*

by

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Summary of remarks of Dr. Hoag, staff member, Economics Department, The RAND Corporation, Senior Fellow, National Security Studies Program, and Professor in Residence in Political Science, 1963-64. Summary prepared by Daniel Weiler, Junior Fellow, National Security Studies Program.

In looking back to the beginnings of NATO, we must remember that there had been a period of almost total de-mobilization by the West; that alarm at Soviet behavior was only mounted gradually. Actually, one might say that Stalin gave birth to NATO: Events like the Berlin blockade and the Czech coup led at first to the Brussels Pact, and in 1949 to the unprecedented act of a joint U.S. - European alliance in time of peace. Given the history of uncertain American commitments to Europe-- in particular before World Wars I and II--this was an event of great political significance.

NATO was an alliance only on paper for a year; it was jolted into action by the Korean war. Though this war was in Asia, the real threat was felt to be one of aggression in Europe. General Bradley, you will recall, argued that the main focus of attention should be Europe, for Korea, he asserted, "was the wrong war, in the wrong place, at the wrong time." What Korea did was demonstrate Stalin's willingness to take great risks-- and this spelled danger to Europe. Defense budgets shot up, military forces grew, and a peacetime structure of command was created. Appointment of Eisenhower as SACEUR was a significant symbol of American commitment, for no American military man had greater prestige.



The beginning military base of NATO in Europe was poor 12-14 divisions, which, moreover, were stationed in the wrong places because their locations were determined by their occupation functions as marked by the different zones of occupation. Forces are now much better, but U.S. Army headquarters, for example, is still in Bavaria, while the weaker British Army of the Rhine leads allied contingents in covering the exposed northern plain.

The guiding concepts of NATO's role were the "classic" ones for the creation of a military structure. First, the Heads of government and Foreign Ministries subordinates were to agree on what needed to be done, leading to a political directive for military planning. Their conclusions were then transmitted to the generals and their staffs, for translation into a strategic concept and military requirements. Finally, the finance ministers were to deal with the price tag for these military requirements. Note carefully the rigidity of this procedure, without, in theory, any interaction back and forth among these three levels of decision-making.

The original SHAPE staff--experienced men who had been through World War II--did an impressive job in a great hurry. They planned for general war, on the assumption that if a Soviet attack came, it would be all-out. They asked what would be needed to stop such an invasion. They assumed that nuclear weapons would be used in such a conflict, but that it would not make a great deal of difference for the European theater in terms of the immediate problems they had to face. There were

just not many nuclear weapons in existence at this time. The American stockpile was very low, and the Soviets presumably had one bomb--which they had tested--in 1949. American nuclear scarcity supplied a prime reason for not using nuclear weapons in Korea (though there were of course many other reasons as well). They were being saved in case they were needed in Europe, which was the area of greatest importance. At this time, also, World War II concepts of strategic bombing prevailed. It was taken for granted that the limited number of available nuclear weapons would be used on Soviet industry, and it was felt that this blow to the Soviets would not be reflected in reduced supplies on the European battlefield for some time--perhaps for months. In this interval, the military planners had to deal with a formidable Red Army. In 1948 this army fell just short of three million men, but the Western reaction to Korea set off a Soviet reaction as well, and Red Army strength went to almost six million men by 1952; a figure held until 1955.

Gradually, the force requirements and the time it would take to meet them emerged. A target date of 1954 was set for the capability desired. The choice of this date was more or less an arbitrary one, though a few did feel that 1954 would be a year of maximum danger due to a presumed Soviet nuclear weapons buildup. Early judgements had been that the Red Army could not be stopped, and that Western forces might have to retreat behind the Pyrenees. By 1954, it was felt, this frontier could be moved up to the Rhine.

When all the requirements for a defense of Europe were figured out, the cost was appalling, and there took place a "crash reconciliation" between plans and finance ministers. Either they had to squeeze out what the generals wanted, or slow up the rate at which the requirements would be met. And so the system of "annual reviews" for such reconciliations was established, though now the annual reviews are supposed to be superseded by more thorough triennial reviews.

In February, 1952, the (Lisbon) Committee appointed to make the first crash reconciliation, presented its report, and NATO settled for a goal of some 96 divisions plus supporting arms, for all fronts. This was lower than the original goal, but still included reserve divisions, and some Italian and Scandinavian divisions. The goal today is 30 ready divisions on the central front, together with additional divisions for the other fronts, plus reserve divisions. The actual total number of divisions desired has never varied much; they are still talking about something in the neighborhood of 100 divisions for Europe. There have been changes, notably in the mix of reserve and ready divisions, but the total perspective has not altered much.

Between 1950 and 1954 especially, the aim was to create balanced forces by having each NATO member contribute the kinds of forces for which it was most suited. But differing national capacities are exploitable in this way only if you have extreme solidarity politically. A "balanced" contribution may look

very unbalanced to the country doing the contributing, particularly if it has to fight alone somewhere (as in a colonial territory) and finds itself at a disadvantage for having concentrated only on armies, or planes, or artillery, or what have you.

The role of Germany presented a particular issue, for a German military contribution was deemed necessary and yet fearsome to allies. The European Defense Community (EDC)--an all-European army to which each country would contribute units--was an attempt to reconcile this need for European forces with the desire to keep Germany from having a self-sufficient national army of its own. However, the French, who invented the idea, also killed it in 1954.

Related to the concept of balanced forces was an idealistic design for NATO as a whole on the economic front. Essentially, this was a burden-sharing scheme: finance ministers were to agree on the appropriate share of GNP to be contributed by each country, with financial transfers to even out the burdens resulting from unequal military contributions, which were to be based on military efficiency only. So complex and difficult a scheme could be implemented, in NATO's early days, by the expedient of altering the distribution of American foreign aid. The U.S. would be asked to give aid so as to equalize financial burdens arising from the common effort, rather than having the European countries themselves transfer monies back and forth in a much more complex multilateral clearing arrangement.

In this period, then, large armed forces and a structure of command was created. EDC and the burden sharing plan both

failed, however, and the time wasted in argument over EDC-- plus its failure--pushed the date of any German contribution beyond 1954.

The end of 1954 was a real watershed for NATO. A variety of pressures had been growing. The buildup of Western divisions was coming along too slowly. Some argued that armies were in effect old fashioned anyway, due to the importance of nuclear weapons. The various pressures were resolved by making it clear that any war in Europe would deliberately be made nuclear by NATO if it was not a nuclear war to begin with.

The military argued that this would maximize the deterrent, and that American stockpile superiority would assure victory--albeit a horrible one--if deterrence should fail.

The finance ministers were happy because this looked like a cheaper way to get the same thing by substituting fissionable material for men. It coincided in the United States with the 1953 "new look" concept, wherein the Eisenhower administration was looking for ways in which to reduce defense spending over the "long haul."

The political argument--which never changes--is that a firm commitment to nuclear response made for solidarity. It seemed to make the eastern flank of NATO equal to the eastern seaboard of the United States, and put the American homeland in the fight just as much as it did Europe.

The upshot of this thinking was an authorization for planning given the generals by the NATO Council at the end of

1954, to plan on the use of nuclear weapons from the outset of hostilities. Some of the literature on this subject has given the year of this directive as 1956. That was the year of the formal political directive, but the planning authorization-- which was the key decision--was made at the end of 1954. The generals, in their language, were persuaded to make a "capability" rather than "requirements" approach: to say what they could do with what forces they had and would get, supplemented as necessary by nuclear weapons, rather than to submit a list of what forces they needed without assurance of any such supplement. It was now agreed to accept the slower pace of conventional forces buildup, since it was reasoned that the job could still be done by nuclear weapons.

The first phase of NATO ends in 1954. There has not been any change since as significant as the one instituted in NATO strategy at that time.

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THE EVOLUTION OF NATO STRATEGY: II\*

by

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To recapitulate briefly, NATO military planners asked and still ask three fundamental questions: What is to be defended, how, and where? The answers were that the entire area of NATO was to be defended, not rear areas alone; by the threat of general war, not limited war; and that this defense would be "as far forward as possible." Thus the defense line would move forward in Europe as greater capabilities became available.

It is not true--though it is commonly alleged--that the Europeans were to make only a token contribution to NATO forces in the early years. Through impressive crash efforts they built big forces and many installations. But these, which by early 1950 design look now like preparations for limited war, were



designed for general war. Yet, even in size of force goals, they are not inappropriate for diversion to sizeable conventional preparedness, if doctrine were to change. Geography has not changed. The comparison which is often made between an older figure of "100" divisions and a current "30" misleads. The "30" does not include reserves, and is confined to the central front. The goal of all fronts, including reserves, remains near the 100 division figure.

The 1954 authorization, to rely on using nuclear weapons from the outset of hostilities, reconciled planners to a slower buildup of forces, especially of German forces. However, this authorization was not without its long-run complications for the design of forces. Getting forces with the dual capability to fight either nuclear or conventional war is at best very hard. Since the plans called for the use of nuclear weapons--presumably meaning a shorter and more violent conflict--stress had to be put on forces capable of fighting such a war. Still, experience and inertia led to a design that seemed conventional in large part. It would have required wholesale innovation to create a consistent force structure for two-sided nuclear war, a war which has never been experienced. Such a task was in fact too big, and has never been fully accomplished. The result is an uneasy blend of nuclear and conventional capabilities that to critics appears optimal for neither kind of war.

After the 1954 decision, the single most crucial date for NATO is the end of 1957. At that time there was a U.S. and joint NATO decision to put nuclear delivery systems, including IRBM's, into the hands of American allies in Europe, although with the U.S. retaining control of the warheads. There were many reasons for this decision. Above all, there was nuclear plenty; weapons were now available for the purpose. As a secondary reason, in case of general war, these weapons could reach the Soviet Union quicker. Airplane flight-time from European bases could be hours faster than from American bases. The IRBM, especially, was the only hyper-fast weapon -- comparable to the Soviet Sputnik rocket -- which could reach the Soviet Union at that time, given that America did not yet possess ICBM's. However, for IRBM's time necessary for political negotiation must be added to the ordinary amount of time needed to make them operational. By the time both negotiations and normal operational difficulties were overcome, much better protected ICBM's were becoming available. In Turkey, for example, IRBM's became operational just about in time to take them out again.

These deployments of 1957 did not necessarily indicate a change of alliance strategy to one of tactical nuclear war as

some have alleged. Though tactical nuclear operations did become possible, NATO general war doctrine remained. The 1957 decision, crucial as it was, was a deployment rather than strategic decision. Tactical nuclear weapons were a supplement to strategic weapons, not a substitute for them, although they could become either.

NATO forces were always ready to meet a very small conventional challenge in like manner despite "no limited war in Europe" doctrine. Curiously, in view of their later position, the Germans, motivated by high hypothetical German casualties in NATO nuclear war exercises played in the mid-fifties, were among the first to press for substantial conventional capability.

The arguments still rage about how much conventional strength (beyond the minimum needed to take care of ambiguous incidents) is desirable, and how much nuclear strength. Some argue that unless conventional capability is very high, deterrence is depreciated by any tendency to rely upon it. Modest conventional capabilities are viewed by them as counter-productive. Given the doctrinal dilemma, a compromise might produce the worst of all worlds: enough stress on conventional arms to convince the enemy that a war would be non-nuclear, while capabilities would be inadequate to fight such a war if it came. Clearly, cost considerations apart, the most desirable state of affairs is a capability high enough to meet any kind of threat. Then deterrence cannot be impaired. But costs are high, so the policy dilemma remains.

The debate then shifts to where we are along a scale of capability, and whether NATO doctrine should change. In 1957

General Norstad publicly introduced the idea of the "pause." Forces would have to be adequate to stop the enemy, and to force him to make a conscious decision to desist or risk NATO implementation of its declared policy for nuclear retaliation. Such a "pause" concept complicates life crucially for NATO field commanders. Previously, they had been told that nuclear weapons were to be used from the outset. Now, though their forces may be in an exposed position, they are told that they may have to wait through this "pause"--of short, but undetermined length--for word to proceed which can only come from the highest authority.

How much conventional capability, then, is enough? What is the threshold of action beyond which nuclear weapons would be used? Some planners say they would like to have forces capable of meeting not the maximum possible threat, but lesser "likely" possibilities, but this doesn't answer the questions about what is "likely" or what will keep these threats low. Nonetheless, these planners note that sizable conventional capabilities will at least drive the enemy to a high and unmistakable attack, which in turn reinforces the credibility of nuclear retaliation. Conventional arms thus, in their view, reinforce rather than depreciate nuclear deterrence, so that there is no policy dilemma. Even if this view is accepted, "how much" remains as one question; and "what kind of nuclear response?" if needed, is another.

In 1959 there was to be a reappraisal by all members to see how the alliance should meet the changed environment of its second decade. However, the outgoing Eisenhower administration chose not to alter its basic position on strategy beyond introducing

the idea of a MLF. A new study was made when President Kennedy took office, and modifications in NATO strategy and policy desired by the United States were determined early in 1961. Beginning systematically in 1962, after the interruption of the Berlin 1961 crisis, there has been an attempt to gain a new alliance consensus on what these changes should be. Clearly there is no consensus yet.