

*SILVESTRA*

Meeting

"REDUCTION OF FORCES IN EUROPE"

Rome, October 3, 1973

WORKING PAPER

The reduction of forces in Europe poses problems of equivalence, geographic limits, and of the quality of the armaments involved. The plan published by the Los Angeles Times indicated the major NATO lines of thinking: that each side cut its total ground forces in Central Europe to the same level of about 700,000 men. This would be accomplished in two separate phases. The USA and the USSR will cut their troops by 15% for each phase. That means 28,500 for the USA and 67,500 for the USSR in the first phase and respectively 24,000 and 54,000 in the second, arriving at a total cut of 52,500 American soldiers and 121,500 Soviet ones. Some air force men and about 25,000 western Europeans and 50,000 eastern Europeans should be added to these in order to reach the requested level of 700,000 soldiers to be left in Central Europe by each side. Of these the Americans will be about 140,000 and the Soviets about 310,000.

There is no indication as yet of the collateral measures requested by the Europeans. It is not known if the forces are to be disbanded or merely removed from Central Europe and what the future will be for the existing NATO stockpiling.

Undoubtly such an agreement means that progress has been made in the detente process. It could also contribute to easing the relations between the White House and the Senate on the Forward Based Systems issues. However it will only marginally con-

front the real security problems of the western Europeans. Many problems brought about by the future reduction of forces have been analyzed in many publications, and among them, above all, the Sipri Yearbook 1973, Strategic Survey 1972, and Military Balance 1973-74. Assuming that these analyses are widely known, we will not repeat them, but we will concentrate on the particular European positions.

The intimate relation between the European and the American strategic situation does not impede the development of different policies and different perceptions of threats and security. After the SALT and MBFR agreements the USA will maintain just the same, thanks to its military and global stance, a tremendous autonomy and capacity of reaction. Western Europe on the contrary will be limited and controlled according to agreements upon which it could have marginally influenced. The USA and perhaps even the USSR may consider the ongoing negotiations as only a part of an overall scheme. The European states on the contrary have to relate to them for their future security. That is why the guarantees and the compensations requested by the Europeans could be greater than those foreseen by the Americans.

A.J. Pierre in his recent article in Foreign Affairs (July 1973) affirms that in effect Europe's security can not be decoupled from America. It is easy to agree with his analysis, but it is also necessary to underline that such a coupling is based above all on the maintenance of the existing nuclear relations between tactical and strategic nuclear armaments and between conventional forces and nuclear deterrence. The negotiations on force reductions, on the other hand, are clearly divided on a conventional level (MBFR), in which nuclear armaments will not be directly treated with and on a nuclear strategic level, in which the Europeans will not participate. The Europeans have had two different policy reactions. The French

have completely rejected the negotiations and the NATO Europeans have agreed along with the Americans to keep nuclear tactical armaments outside SALT II. Their positions can be maintained on a short term basis, but certainly not for longer periods

- because of the Soviet intention to discuss American FBS (even if the recent technical MIRV advances may soften the Soviet position for some time);
- because of the American willingness to reexamine the tactical nuclear strategy and the flexible strategy (as was clearly underlined by Mr. Kissinger in a speech on the 23rd of April, 1973);
- because of the technological developments of conventional and nuclear armaments (Smart Bombs, mini-nukes, etc) that can easily change the actual strategies;
- because of the non-credibility of the autonomous French deterrents;
- because uncertainties in allied flexible strategy and reduction of forces in Central Europe may heighten the nuclear threshold of any European conflict.

The Europeans could choose three main different policies.

- a. They can accept the situation as it is, trusting the ever increasing Russian-American rapprochement. The main defect of this choice is the "regionalization" of European security that could cause a real decoupling between the USA and Western Europe and a slow worsening of the power balance.
- b. They could oppose these agreements backing the French position and hypothesizing nuclear European armaments or a nuclear Franco-British pool, intensified relations with China, etc. Against this alternative are the non-credibility of

European deterrents (especially if lacking American support), the political divisions between European states, the difficult situation in which the FGR would find itself, etc.

- c. They could try to influence the security agreements, asking for a direct participation at all levels. The weakness of this position is that the Europeans should renounce keeping a sizeable part of the American armaments in Europe outside of the negotiations. That might undermine the negotiative position, start new European quarrels, and even create new problems for the US-Europe relations.

However if the common European stand were reinforced the third alternative would be the more attractive. It would allow Western Europe to affirm its defensive identity, thanks to a policy of detente with the USSR. This would avoid the unpleasant reaction that a common European defense policy would otherwise provoke. At the same time this would reconfirm the strategic importance of the American tactical nuclear armaments for Europe, and their relations with the allied flexible strategy. American FBS should be claimed as a part of an integrated defense system of which the Europeans would share the burdens not only on financial but also on strategic and political terms. The burden-sharing and the non-proliferation would be related to a common European and American detente and security policy.

A tripartite negotiation that concerns also the tactical nuclear armaments would allow a series of agreements collateral to those on a conventional and strategic force levels. One could individuate the tasks and targets of the Soviets' I/MRBMs and medium bombers and could create a pool of European

strategic and American tactical nuclear forces internationally agreed as a counter balance of that Soviet capacity. Afterwards reductions would become possible. Obviously even a substantial reduction of the number of I/MRBM missiles would only partially reduce the Soviet capacity against Western Europe, for the USSR could always target some of its ICBM or submarine missiles on Western Europe. This confirms the necessity of a common strategic stand between the USA and Europe. It also allows at least for a transitional period the maintenance of some strategic European forces thus facilitating relations with France.

The other tactical nuclear armaments could be discussed by agreeing on common warning systems, on a common network for East-West communications in the case of crisis, on the elimination of some of the less flexible and selective weapon systems (as the nuclear mines).

Such a European initiative would impose upon the USSR the necessity to accept a common European defense policy and the Soviet reaction to that would permit a better understanding of Soviet intentions and of the limits existing on the European freedom of initiative.

As the situation is now, however, the absence of an explicit relation between SALT and MBFR complicates the discussions on guarantees and collateral measures. The necessity to discuss not only the military capacities but also political and strategic intentions is more evident.

It is necessary to underline how the internal freedom of actions of the two blocs will be greatly reduced after a MBFR accord. When the Soviets occupied Czechoslovakia NATO did not mobilize its reserve forces, but it limited itself to putting

the front lines into a state of alarm. A similar reaction would be inconceivable and extremely dangerous after a MBFR accord. The accord is a precarious unity of intentions and capacity. A substantial change of the general panorama in which it agreed upon is more than sufficient to suggest that the intentions are undergoing a change, even if the capacities are only marginally implied. Thus it is necessary to clearly outline in the MBFR talks what the intentions for the future and the sensitive points are. Thus, subsequently there would be no possibility for equivocal interpretations or reactions, surprising and risky for their excessive abruptness.

The MBFR negotiations might concentrate on the reinforcement and mobilization aspects seeking to guarantee a period of warning and mobilization in order to maintain a consistent equivalence of the conventional balance of forces in Europe. Some measures will concern the Atlantic Alliance and go from the increase of transport capacity to the establishment of almost automatic signals that cause operation "M" to go off. Such signals can be negotiated in the MBFR talks, so that it will be known that the accord is valid only if the military congestion of the internal transport lines of the Warsaw Pact is inferior at fixed levels of intensity, calculated according to the distance from the area of interest. A rapid increase of this intensity, not otherwise justified, could bring about preemptive measures. In order to avoid misunderstandings the preemptive measures could be communicated in advance to the Soviet command as a dissuasive measure.

A second use for the military alliances is more difficult to counter: it is the matter of the attack (that could or could not be very bloody) on a "neutral" state like Yugoslavia or Finland, or on a "brother" state like Romania. The second case is

militarily unavoidable. The first case, instead, could bring about military counter measures of various intensity, that go from counter occupation to the aero-naval guarantee of the resistance forces, the blockade, the establishment of enclaves, etc., up to general mobilization. These eventualities should be brought up at the MBFR talks so as to establish a series of "hot" points, whose violation would sign the end of the accord and on which it is obligatory to summon a crisis commission. In that case it might also be useful to revert the unilateral declarations not explicitly accepted by the other contracting powers, but officially made known in the agreement proceedings.

The lack of such kinds of evaluations could accentuate the divisions between the Europeans. The American Senate is assuming different positions in the Mediterranean than those in western Germany. In the Mediterranean it is even possible to forecast an increase of the American military presence. In addition, the naval forces have continually increased importance at least because they maintain the bulk of the nuclear strategic forces. A decreasing of the military presence in Central Europe may result in an increase of the tensions in the Mediterranean. The Soviet-American rapprochement worked differently in these two regions. The only sign of relief has been the partial freezing of the Arab-Israeli war. However, the clear Soviet shift from a moderate pan-Arab policy to a more classic research of spheres of influence have caused an uproar of suspicions and accusations by non-aligned countries against a Mediterranean Yalta, and that could hamper the positive effects of the rapprochement. The existence of the totalitarian and military regimes in Portugal, Spain, Greece and Turkey, could favour an American policy of increased military

presence unrelated to its European policy. The flexibility and mobility of naval armaments could be the instrument for rapid changes of the balance of forces.

The Italian position in that respect may assume importance. Yugoslavia and France both have chosen a policy that, although different in its basic principles and instruments, leads to positions of non-alignment vis-a-vis the military negotiations and the bloc policies. Italy which is more closely integrated in the Atlantic policy has also wanted to maintain an intermediate position, accepting only an observer status for the MBFR Conference, even if that would have meant keeping Hungary out of the reduction zone. This obviously contributes to sharpening the divisions between central and southern Europe, causing two different detente processes. This will slow down any common European defense initiative and may also negatively influence the western European foreign policy consultations.

Contrary to what happened in Helsinki the Europeans (the nine EEC countries) have not been able to agree on a common negotiative front for the MBFR talks. The common institutions in NATO, EC, WEU, or the consultation machinery between foreign ministries have not been able to overcome divisions. A coordinate foreign policy is only possible thanks to a common political will as that expressed by the European Summit of 1972. This Summit subsequently permitted the sectorial institutions and machinery to work out the common negotiative positions. Even today because of the lack of better and more consistent sources of legitimacy and political initiative (as the European Parliament should be), Summits are the only instrument left in order to continue the European integrative process. It is therefore possible that only a new Summit could give new unity and élan to the European diplomacy in the detente process.

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