FORWARD-BASED NUCLEAR SYSTEMS IN NATO IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE LESSONS FOR SALT III

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PREFACE

"Reinventing the wheel" is often useful. Institutional memory banks are steadily depleted as busy people change jobs. When the new jobs are in important policymaking places in government, they need to be reeducated quickly.

> For muddle and uncertainty have marked not just the handling of energy matters, they have marked the Carter administration as a whole. They are not the same as indecision, of which the President is often unjustly accused. In fact, Mr. Carter makes decisions and, for the most part, sticks to them. But he does not understand how one affects another, just as he does not fully seem to understand the context in which he takes them. A sense of *history* is badly lacking in his administration, whether it is dealing with Russia or the Middle East or Europe or even just the men on Capitol Hill. And this lack contributes to the general incoherence that characterizes the Carter presidency. Even the well-disposed find few threads running through the pronouncements and policy statements coming from the White House these days.*

The current disputes about the rationale for deployment of American nuclear weapons in NATO Europe, highlighted by the currently proposed deployment of 572 medium-range ballistic and cruise missiles, can only be understood in historical terms. Such is my contention. Nobody invented a careful official rationale for tactical nuclear weapons, from which subsequent deployments logically followed. No, "like Topsy, they just grew," starting well before 1957. They have been the subject of many studies in depth, with much of that analytic effort being wasted precisely because the evolution of their deployment was not considered. It must be considered if we negotiate SALT III.

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*"Carter at Sea," *The Economist*, July 14, 1979. Italics added.

I. U.S. STRATEGIC DOCTRINE AND NATO, 1950-1961

INTRODUCTION

To document that "much analytic effort has been wasted," I must show why it was wasted. The major reason has been that political considerations were not taken adequately into account by the United States and its allies. To introduce such fearsome weapons, or new strategies, into the European theater abruptly, without careful consideration and full political consultation with our allies, has characterized American policy too often. The "Athens Guidelines" were not adopted until May 1962, years after nuclear weapons had been deployed in Europe: "Both the United Kingdom and the United States specifically committed themselves to consult with their allies, time and circumstances permitting, before releasing their weapons for use."* The decision "to establish two permanent bodies for nuclear planning, the Nuclear Defence Affairs Committee and the Nuclear Planning Group" was not taken until December 1966.† Notice how long it took. The Treaty was signed in April 1949.

The United States should have created these vital committees in the 1950s, to bring before the North Atlantic Council (NAC) a joint politico/military assessment of defense policies, especially at the Heads of Government annual NAC meetings in December. If they had done so, they might not have endorsed "massive retaliation" in December 1957, when the credibility of massive retaliation (as we shall see) had predictably come into acute question. Then the overdue American adoption of "flexible response" by President John F. Kennedy, in 1961, to replace "massive retaliation," would not have shocked our allies by so sudden and so major a change in nuclear strategy.

Later we shall contend, in contrast, that new nonnuclear weapon possibilities have not been taken fully into account in NATO military

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*NATO Information Service, *NATO Facts and Figures* (Brussels, 1978), pp. 106-107.

†Ibid, p. 278.

planning. In consequence, again, unnecessary political commotion has resulted. We should have learned a great deal about how to handle nuclear diplomacy, but it appears that we have not. So let us begin by disposing of the notion that nuclear weapons, because they were not used in Korea, will, by some magic, never be used anywhere.

THE MISLEADING KOREAN EXAMPLE

Today the thought of "general war" is so foreign that nobody even uses the term--unless, as an uncomfortable thought, the Russians do. But, strange as it seems to all but us oldsters, the concept of "general war" dominated hostilities so much in World War II that it carried over to U.S. planning until "flexible response" was adopted as a policy in 1961, and in NATO policy in 1967. How bizarre, you correctly think. But never discount the power of bureaucratic inertia, nor the "military mind." I do not use that term as an insult, as there is also such a thing as an "economist's mind" that facilitates intellectual discourse among economists. Both are useful, especially when they are considered in combination in military planning.

The Korean War is the exception that proves the rule. Very quietly, to be sure, some policy planners, led by Paul Nitze [then head of the Policy Planning Staff in the State Department] were thinking before March 22, 1950, about being ready for war, even--as utter heresy--limited war.* Then, in June 1950 came the North Korean attack: "From the very start of hostilities in Korea, President Truman intended to fight a limited engagement there . . . [and] he had the staunch and unwavering support of the State and Defense Departments and the Joint Chiefs of Staff."†

So why in the world should the JCS, oriented to "general war," agree so readily? To cut a long story very short, they never (1) lost

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*See Paul Hammond's account of NSC-68 in Schilling, Hammond, Snyder, *Strategy, Politics, and Defense Budgets*, Columbia Press, New York, 1962, esp. pp. 307-318. Also see Samuel F. Wells, "Sounding the Tocsin: NSC 68 and the Soviet Threat," *International Security* (Autumn 1979), and Paul Nitze's comment in their Spring issue.

†Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, Norton, New York, 1969, p. 416.

sight of the Soviet Union as the main enemy and Europe as the main theater, and (2) they knew how ill-prepared we were for any kind of war. Quaint as it now seems, our stock of nuclear weapons was very small. To expend even a few of them against a secondary threat was an intolerable thought. In the late spring of 1948 the United States had no more than 50 nuclear weapons.* The JCS told General MacArthur that "under no circumstances, however, will your forces cross the Manchurian or USSR borders of Korea. . . . In the event of the open or covert employment of major Soviet units south of the 38th parallel, you will assume the defense, make no move to aggravate the situation and report to Washington."†

But, General MacArthur being MacArthur, he started to exceed his orders, which "stunned the Pentagon . . . MacArthur's reports were schizophrenic."** He believed in prompt general war in Asia, and blunt Harry Truman carelessly answered a reporter's question about the military steps by saying "whatever steps [including] every weapon that we have . . . nuclear weapon?. . . . There has always been active consideration of its use."†† That brought the British Prime Minister flying in as quickly as possible, saying "please never" and so on, and he was told that MacArthur--as a mere field commander--had received no Presidential authorization to use the atom bomb. But how can you tell an Emperor that he is merely a field commander? Once I heard Dean Acheson remark, with SACEUR as much in mind as MacArthur, that "Something happens when you make a man a Supreme Allied Commander; he is no longer responsible to the President, he is responsible to God." President Truman put the MacArthur issue in earthier terms:

> General Bradley said at the time that that would be the wrong war at the wrong place, at the wrong time, and with the wrong enemy.***

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*David A. Rosenburg, "American Atomic Strategy and the Hydrogen Bomb Decision," *The Journal of American History* (June 1979).

†Acheson, op. cit., p. 453.

**Ibid., pp. 462-463.

††Ibid., p. 478.

***Merle, Miller, *Plain Speaking: An Oral Biography of Harry S. Truman*, Berkeley, 1973, p. 301.

So, a disobedient General had to be fired, because he maintained that "there is no substitute for victory," and only General Marshall asked to review the files first, knowing there would be hell to pay. Truman gave him a night to read and reflect, and got a forthright reply: "I spent most of the night on that file, Mr. President, and you should have fired the son-of-a-bitch two years ago."*

NATO DOCTRINE AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS

The President, the State Department, and the JCS were united in 1950: Gear your serious military effort toward Europe and NATO, and convert a Treaty into a real united military effort, in a hurry.† At Lisbon, in February 1952, compromise force goals for NATO Europe were hammered out; by May 1953, "The 1952 force goals had been pretty well achieved--in numbers if *not* in combat effectiveness, but it was clear that those planned for 1953 and 1954 would not be met."**

And then a famous Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR) became President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1953; and he, of course, believed in unlimited "general war" throughout two terms of office:

> Foreign policy cannot be so neatly isolated and pigeonholed. For instance, one often reads that President Eisenhower left foreign affairs entirely to John Foster Dulles. However, at the beginning of his administration, at least, it might have been more accurate to conclude that President Eisenhower left foreign affairs to the decisions of Secretary of the Treasury George Humphrey. It was the Humphrey policy of retrenchment for fiscal and economic reasons that led to drastic cuts in Army and Navy expenditures in the early Eisenhower years. These, in turn, rather than considerations of foreign policy or military strategy, led to the Dulles rationalization of necessity--the policy of massive

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*Ibid., pp. 303-304.

†1950-1954: NATO adopted a massive rearmament plan, with a grossly insufficient lead-time allowance of four years for completion. All presidents want to appear decisive, and tend to expect too much in a short period. President Carter has now glaringly made the same lead-time mistake on energy. On NATO, see Lord Ismay, *NATO: The First Five Years*, especially pp. 23-54. Lord Ismay was NATO's first Secretary General.

**Acheson, op. cit., pp. 622-627; p. 709. Italics added.

> nuclear retaliation to acts of Soviet aggression. As a policy it was unworkable, outmoded when uttered, and profoundly disturbing to our allies and to our relations with them.*

General Eisenhower was going to save a lot of money, as he cut defense budgets from their Korean War level of 13.5 percent of the Gross National Product (GNP) to 9.8 percent in two years; but thereafter, in his two terms, defense spending was fluctuating between 10.3 percent and a low (1966) of 8.9 percent.† Notice what a big spender he was: Secretary of Defense Harold Brown is only asking for 5 percent of the GNP, to be used in a much more flexible and sensible way than "Massive Retaliation."** President Eisenhower got the worst of both worlds, in short: big spending, and inflexible defense capabilities.

Did President Eisenhower really believe in "Massive Retaliation"? Of course he did. With so much at stake, a somewhat enlarged historical account is warranted. "A backward glance at the New Looks of 1953 and 1961 . . . supplies a starting point. Because the New Look of 1953 relied primarily but not exclusively (1) upon nuclear weapons, and (2) upon retaliation at places and time of our choosing, it removed the *rationale* by which military planners might otherwise have generated

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*Ibid., p. 735. (November 29, 1954) Secretary Dulles said: . . . We must have the capacity to respond at places and by means of our choosing.

Now you may ask does this mean that any local war would automatically be turned into a general war with atomic bombs being dropped all over the map?

The answer is no. P. V. Curl, ed., *Documents on American Foreign Relations* (New York: Harper, 1955), p. 18. President Eisenhower was the author of "Massive Retaliation," not Dulles, and Acheson's account is correct. President Eisenhower did defer to his Secretaries of the Treasury (George Humphrey, followed by Robert Anderson) on small defense budgets. See Emmet J. Hughes, *The Ordeal of Power: A Political Memoir of the Eisenhower Years* (New York: Atheneum, 1963), especially pp. 238-241.

†Samuel P. Huntington, *The Defense Establishment: Vested Interests and the Public Interest* (Harvard Center for International Affairs, 1969), p. 6. On better defense capabilities from a reduced budget, see pp. 7-8.

**DOD Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1981, p. 2.

large requirements for conventional capabilities at places and times of an enemy's choosing. . . . Only the Air Force stood ready to embrace "massive retaliation" wholeheartedly, and to *banish* sizable conventional capabilities beyond recall." With the 1961 McNamara revolution, "it was far quicker and cheaper to remove imbalances among capabilities than to replace wholly dissipated capabilities. *Restoring* racks to carry conventional bombs in airplanes, for example, was much easier than recreating a tactical Air Force."*

So President Eisenhower and his 1953 "New Look" had led to no racks for conventional weapons in tactical aircraft in Europe. It had led to the deployment in Europe of Jupiter, Thor, Matador, and Mace missiles. And, most important of all, this doctrine led to heavy dependence upon NATO forward bases in Europe and Africa for housing, or for "staging and refueling," the bombers of the U.S. Strategic Air Command (SAC). With those bombers in particular, aided by bombers from our Navy aircraft carriers, the United States had "strategic superiority" throughout President Eisenhower's eight years in office. Consider these SAC bomber numbers at their height, remembering that their quality and the talents of their crews far outmatched those of a Russia that never had a strategic air force of its own in World War II, or any operational experience thereafter:

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*M. Hoag, "What New Look in Defense," *World Politics* (October 1969), pp. 1-3, italics added. The U.S. "tactical" preferred aircraft was the F-84F, because it could carry more than 6000 pounds of bombs, which gave ample room for carrying nuclear bombs. Its range, with full payload, was over 2000 miles. Therefore, for a policy of "massive retaliation," it was ideal for forward-basing in Europe. See the *1957-1958 Aircraft Year Book* (Washington: American Aviation Publications), p. 303. The U.S. Air Force never wanted the "light" Fiat G-91, although it was a NATO "requirement" for the support of armies. See Robert R. James, *Standardization and Common Production of Weapons in NATO* (London: The Institute for Strategic Studies, July 1967), p. 11.

SAC Maximum Force

B-52		488	
B-47		1366	
RB-47		174	
	Bombers =	2028	
KC-97	(refueling)	745	
KC-135	(refueling)	322	
RB-57	(reconnaissance)	6	
C-124	(support)	50	
F-86	(fighters, Spain)	56	
	Support =	1179	
	Total SAC	3207	(December 1959)*

The B-58 and the FB-111, moreover, had not yet been phased into the operational SAC bomber force. And, of course, the tactical U.S. fighter/bombers based in Europe, and assigned to SACEUR, have to be added, with special import then.

That year (1959) SAC retired its last B-36 bomber--that long-range monster which Admiral Radford, of all people, had fought against ten years earlier because city-bombing was inferior to more civilized "tactical" aircraft![†] President Eisenhower installed a new group of Joint Chiefs in 1953 who were amenable to fiscal austerity, and reliance upon nuclear weapons, and they endorsed National Security Council (NSC)-162/2 directed to those ends.[**] Admiral Radford became famous as Chairman of the JCS, dedicated to nuclear war. He ardently supported the development of Polaris-carrying submarines in the late 1950s--a position that was inconsistent with his earlier objections to the B-36 on moral grounds.

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*USAF, *The Development of Strategic Air Command* (March 1976), p. 75. SAC now has only 345 old B-52s in operation, and no new bombers. Secretary Brown, *Annual Statement, FY 1981*, p. 19.

†R. F. Weighley, *The American Way of War* (New York: MacMillan, 1975, p. 377.

**Ibid., pp. 401-402.

The ICBMs, IRBMs, and SLBMs, were also in development as President Eisenhower left office; but SAC, for example, had deployed only four squadrons of Thor IRBMs in England, and had acquired only twelve Atlas ICBMs.* The Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff (JSTPS) was created by Secretary of Defense Thomas S. Gates, Jr., on August 16, 1960: "Composed of representatives of all branches of service, the JSTPS was charged with the task of preparing and maintaining a National Strategic Target List and a Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP) which would commit specific weapon systems to the various targets to be attacked in the event of war."† Please note (1) the lack of any qualifying adjective before the word "war"; and (2) the as-yet undecided "sizing" of the Minuteman and Polaris missiles as to procurement numbers. The SIOP was coordinated, then as now, with the nuclear strike plans of SACEUR in NATO Europe. But "modernization" of SACEUR's forces was a big issue at the time:

> Consequently, some thought has been given to the possibility of mounting IRBMs in Europe on mobile bases. The Draper Committee which examined the question of future American military aid to NATO for President Eisenhower early in 1959, favoured mounting them in railway cars and barges throughout the European rail and river systems. There is also considerable support for mounting them in small ships comparable to the merchant ships which daily throng the trade routes of the North Sea, the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean. (The true *Polaris* nuclear submarine is, of course, too expensive to be considered as an element in a NATO deterrent for Europe at this stage.)**

General Norstad, as SACEUR, wanted a Mobile Medium Range Ballistic Missile (MMRBM), as his first priority. As he was acutely aware of

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*United States Air Force, *Development of SAC*, op. cit., pp. 81.

†Ibid., p. 8.

**Alastair Buchan, *NATO in the 1960s* (London: Wiedenfeld and Nicolsm, 1960), p. 73.

the vulnerability of his air bases, he wanted a road-mobile MRBM, and the U.S. Air Force agreed with him.*

As the world knows now, but as only few intelligence analysts knew then, there was no "ICBM gap" at all in 1960. Candidate John F. Kennedy exploited the "missile gap" theme to weaken Candidate Richard Nixon in the 1960 elections; Henry Kissinger and even Buchan believed in the "gap"†; virtually everybody in Rand believed somewhat in it (save for the select few with special intelligence clearances who could not inform the rest of us). The facts were these:

> In this case, too, however, despite his obvious partiality toward the new strategic missile arm, Khrushchev was unable in practice to accomplish what he may have had in mind for this favored element of Soviet military power. The logic of his position called for exertions that would give *substance* to the image of preponderant Soviet missile power upon which he thought to trade politically. And yet, the Soviet Union under Khrushchev failed to convert its head start in missile technology into an operational inventory of superior size. . . .
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> From the time of the first test launching in the autumn of 1957 to mid-1961, only a *handful* of ICBMs had been deployed.**

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*Staff Report, Senate Subcommittee on European Affairs, *SALT and the NATO Allies* (Washington: GPO, 1979), pp. 1-2. At the 5 May 1962 NATO Council meeting, Secretary McNamara said, "although it is not committed to the procurement or deployment of an MRBM system, it is proceeding with the design of such a weapon," p. 25 of unclassified portions of his speech.

†Buchan, ibid., p. 6; Henry A. Kissinger, *The Necessity for Choice* (New York: Harper, 1960), p. 15: "There is no dispute about the missile gap as such. It is generally admitted that from 1961 until the end of 1964 the Soviet Union will possess more *missiles* than the United States."

**Thomas W. Wolfe, *Soviet Power and Europe: The Evolution of a Political-Military Posture, 1945-1964*, Rand RM-5838-PR (November 1968), pp. 240-241. Italics added.

However, "we regularly and greatly underestimated the number of *intermediate and medium range* ballistic missiles (IR/MRBM) that the Russians would deploy at the end of the 1950s and in the early 1960s." Albert Wohlstetter, "Racing Forward or Ambling Back?" in James R. Schlesinger, ed., *Defending America* (New York: Basic Books, 1977, p. 116). Europe was already, in a sense, "hostage" to Soviet IRBMs. Buchan, op. cit., put Soviet IRBM estimates "from a few hundreds to several thousands," p. 8 [!]. Remember, he wrote his book in 1959. Such gross misperceptions and misassessments are not uncommon. See Herbert Goldhamer, *Reality and Belief in Military Affairs*, Rand Report 2448-NA, February 1979.

What, in sum, were the strategic forces of NATO, FBS included, going to do in the 1950s in the event of outright Soviet aggression against Europe? They were going to hit those sluggish Soviet missiles and bombers hard with nuclear weapons; and, all in the name of "bonus" targets, they were concurrently going to destroy most of the Russian urban economy, and therefore kill a very sizable proportion of the Soviet population. Once your bombers, in particular, had paid the "admission price" of penetrating Soviet anti-aircraft defenses, by saturating those defenses by brute force of numbers plus "penetration aids," they were going to maximize damage to Soviet military and civilian targets. And the forward-based systems (FBS) in Europe were to play a key role, because they could get to Russia hours before any bomber from Omaha could, and before those early Soviet missiles could be fueled with their liquid propellants.

That, in short, is why President Kennedy inherited aircraft in Europe without any bomb-racks for nonnuclear war, and why he was immediately confronted with competing proposals for "modernizing" FBS forces so that they would not be acutely vulnerable on the ground to Soviet preemptive attack. He also inherited massive "strategic superiority,"; whose value, like youthful virility, is only appreciated deeply after you have lost it.

II. THE LAND BATTLE AND EARLY NATO DOCTRINE

We must conclude this cursory pre-1961 survey of NATO doctrine, and the role of airpower, by discussing the role of NATO armies. They, in brief, were to fight whatever "broken-back war" remained to be contested on the land. For this purpose, they were to expect prompt political authority to use nuclear weapons. They were *not* to assume that they were to fight a "tactical nuclear war," while the superpowers were to remain as untouched sanctuaries, so the worst fear of Western Europeans was overcome by the ruling concept.

Much confusion exists on this point because the original 1950 design of land forces for NATO had proceeded as if nuclear weapons were not to be battlefield weapons. That now quaint 1950 belief in nuclear "scarcity" led to an initial design for NATO armies, and of their infrastructure, as if they were to fight with World War II weapons. And the unrealistic force goals were to be met by 1954, which turned out to be much too short a period of time. So, in January 1954, General Gruenther (SACEUR) announced how the deficiencies in meeting the force goals were to be met: "If 70 divisions, for example, are needed to establish a conventional line of defense between the Alps and the Baltic, then 70 minus X divisions equipped with atomic weapons would be needed."* A welcome temporary excuse to fall short of army force goals was thus provided to members, which pleased all the Ministries of Finance, but not a new strategy. General Norstad later confirmed the old strategy even as he made clear that no mere border "incident" would trigger SAC:

> The hard core of the West's military strength is its retaliatory forces. Their most powerful single element is the United States Strategic Air Command. . . .

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*As quoted in A. Buchan and P. Windsor, *Arms and Stability in Europe*, Praeger, New York, 1963, p. 38. Buchan, *NATO in the 1960s*, op. cit., pp. 85-86, notes that "the NATO Council decided, in December 1954, to revise the Lisbon figure of forty-five first-line decisions down to thirty, but supported by tactical nuclear weapons." General Gruenther's "70 divisions" was merely a hypothetical illustration.

> If our line is being held in reasonable strength, and if the enemy knows this beyond doubt, then any inclination on his part to cross the line makes *him* face the terrible decision of detonating World War III, with a *sure* prospect of his own annihilation. The defensive forces deployed on our eastern boundary thus become an essential part of the deterrent.*

Now should General Gruenther have put his critical equation as he did, or should he have put it instead as "70 divisions *plus* X"? His predecessor as SACEUR, General Ridgway, had been pleased to add "tactical" nuclear weapons to the forces in Europe, but he had never endorsed any such equation. This equation was open to challenge both in "macro" and "micro" terms. The "macro" criticism is that any such formulation assumes that reduced spending upon Army divisions need not be accompanied by increased expenditures elsewhere in total forces. So great a continued reliance upon "strategic superiority," at a time when the Soviet Union was acquiring H-bombs and the beginnings of an intercontinental delivery force, might remain credible only if it were matched by a great increase in American "damage-limiting" strategic capabilities. Such an increase was probably infeasible.

Some of our soldiers, once freed to speak their minds, challenged the "micro" argument. Might not a two-sided nuclear battlefield so devastate NATO's armies as to lead to an increase, rather than to a decrease, in divisional "requirements?" Might it do so, in particular, because the early NATO infrastructure and related force elements had been designed for a World War II-like conventional battle? General Ridgway was of this opinion.†

Professor Weigley credits the "civilian strategists" for providing additional impetus to the growing consensus against "massive retaliation":

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*As quoted in M. W. Hoag, "NATO: Deterrent or Shield," *Foreign Affairs*, January 1958, p. 1. Italics added.

†R. E. Weighley, *The American Way of War*, op. cit., p. 417.

> The armed services' own operations research and analysis groups were generally too narrowly committed to a precise mathematical approach, and too far down the chain of command, to have involved themselves boldly in strategy and policy questions. Consequently the widening of operations research and analysis into systems analysis took place first mainly outside the services themselves, but in defense research organizations sponsored by the services yet established as private corporations or as parts of universities, most notably in the Air Force-sponsored RAND Corporation.*
>
> The writings of the civilian strategists, said General Maxwell Taylor of the Army, "represented the first public questioning of the validity of the New Look policy of Massive Retaliation and I welcomed them warmly."†

The U.S. Army leaders who favored "flexible response" felt compelled to retire in order to dissent:

> Ridgway followed up with a volume of memoirs published in 1956 . . . in which the last several chapters were given over to a more extended statement of his dissent from the doctrine of massive retaliation**. . . .
>
> General Taylor, who had begun his tour as Chief of Staff, feeling some optimism for the prospects of a strategy of flexible response, found himself fighting off the "Radford plan" of Admiral Arthur W. Radford, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, for more drastic cuts of the conventional forces than the administration had yet essayed and still more reliance on massive retaliation. . . .
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> Like Ridgway also, Taylor then wrote a book: *The Uncertain Trumpet*, arguing that American defense policy was like the trumpet in I Corinthians 14:8, "For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"††

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*Ibid., p. 410.

†Weigley, op. cit., pp. 417-418.

**Ibid., p. 419.

††Ibid., p. 421.

Before President Kennedy had assumed office, SACEUR General Norstad had also endorsed the need for stronger conventional forces in NATO:

> If such an act [Soviet attack] were to take place we must as a minimum, be able to force a pause. . . . A second mission is to defend the people and territory of the NATO countries. I believe that this is an attainable objective. . . . Thus I believe that our forces must have a substantial conventional capability. . . . Morever the threshold at which nuclear warheads are introduced into the battle should be a high one . . . [they] should be introduced into battle only after a particular decision to do so has resulted from the operation of an established decisionmaking process. This process will ensure that such a decision would, in all cases, be taken by an authority at a level higher than that of the basic combat unit.*

Some cynics might note that this advocacy by General Norstad was delivered after the 1960 American election results were known. Our theme that everything in NATO is political supports the cynics. However, I do not agree with them. This speech is consistent with the evolution of General Norstad's strategic views before the U.S. elections, notably in his 1957 advocacy of the "pause."†

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*General Norstad, "Address to the NATO Parliamentarian's Conference," Sixth Annual Conference, NATO Headquarters (Paris, November 1960), pp. 35, 36, 40.

†See *The NATO Letter*, December 1957, p. 27. Lt. General Edward L. Rowney (USA ret.), *Decision-Making Process in NATO* (Doctoral Dissertation, The American University, 1977), credits General Norstadt and his staff with inventing "flexible response" in 1957, four years before President Kennedy assumed office (pp. 178-190). I think, however, that President Kennedy's version was more strongly oriented to conventional defense than General Norstadt's version.

III. FORWARD BASING AND EUROPEAN POLITICS

As strategic debate intensified within America in the late 1950s, some acute European strategists paid close attention. Raymond Aron and others attribute the founding of the International Institute for Strategic Studies to the need for an extended trans-Atlantic "Grand Debate."* Otherwise, they correctly feared, a change in American Administrations might lead to changes in American strategy that would come as shocks to European opinion. The first Director of the IISS, Alastair Buchan, was apprehensive:

> The years immediately ahead bristle with difficult decisions for the Alliance--strategic, political and economic. . . .
>
> Certainly no system of government is less suited to the leadership of an alliance than the American. . . . But there is a basic ambivalence in the European attitude towards the United States as the largest and strongest member of NATO. On the one hand, if the United States reacts forcefully to any threat to the interests of NATO . . . there is an outcry of editorial protests against American bellicosity, or of comments on the readiness of the Pentagon to play Russian roulette with the future of the human race. On the other hand, if she manifests an interest for negotiations with the Soviet Union, it is suggested that the United States is prepared to sacrifice European interests or is approaching a more neutral attitude to the security of Europe as she herself becomes more vulnerable.†

He was as pessimistic about the prospects for easy détente with the Soviet Union as he was realistic about the shortcomings of American politics, and he appreciated the worth of strategic superiority. Consider how relevant his generation-old remarks remain:

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*Raymond Aron, "The 1978 Alastair Buchan Memorial Lecture," *Survival* (January/February, 1979), p. 2. See Aron's *The Great Debate* (New York: Doubleday, 1965).

†Alastair Buchan, *NATO in the 1960s*, op. cit., p. 44.

> . . . it must be remembered that the military aspect of a general policy of containment is nowadays wholly conditioned by the overall strategic balance at all levels.* . . . It is my own hope that no one will ever again dare to move another pawn on the international chess board. But that hope depends entirely on the position of the kings and queens.† Or, "Russia has a constant temptation to *humiliate* NATO."** . . . .
>
> There is a fear in Europe, how genuine it is hard to tell, that the dangers of nuclear blackmail are increasing.††

General Gruenther's announcement, in January 1954, of dependence upon nuclear weapons could be reasonably defended as a "stretch-out" of a four year build-up into an eight year build-up. But the December 1957 NATO Heads of Government Meeting was different in two respects. First, a deliberate dependence upon "massive retaliation" with nuclear weapons was adopted as NATO policy. Second, intermediate range missiles were to be deployed in NATO Europe.*** As for American policy, Secretary of Defense Wilson's budget reduced all American forces, including reduction of twenty wings from the Air Force.††† Finance Ministries were pleased.

But many defense officials were troubled, especially when NATO exercises in Europe simulated the damage to West Germany of a nuclear war. The Social Democratic opposition in the Federal Republic of Germany was especially upset. While no Thors or Jupiters had been deployed in their territory [only Britain, Italy, and Turkey had them] the deployment in Germany of the Matador cruise missile (the predecessor to deploying the MACE B version, with its range of 1380 statute miles that extended to the Soviet homeland) produced an uproar:

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*Ibid., p. 23.

†Ibid.

**Ibid., p. 25.

††Ibid., pp. 67-68.

***_NATO Facts and Figures_, p. 106. "The strategic concept of massive retaliation was further evolved, on the assumption that it would be necessary to use both strategic and tactical nuclear weapons."

†††Weighly, op. cit., p. 421.

> Twenty years ago excitement ran high concerning the introduction of *Matador* missiles into the Bundeswehr and their use in defence with atomic warheads, the latter remaining in American custody until required. Hundreds of thousands demonstrated in streets and squares against 'atomic death'. In the Bundestag on 22 March 1958 Helmut Schmidt--at that time the member for Hamburg and an up-and-coming expert on defence for the Social Democrats--deployed his heaviest artillery against the Government.*

Schmidt rethought his entire position, subsequently published his excellent book *Defense or Retaliation*,† and now regrets the withdrawal of the MACE-B in 1963. He thinks now that such mid-range missiles should have been modernized, not withdrawn.**

But the most important example, of course, was to come later. Consider de Gaulle's ejection of American forces from France in March 1966. France removed its forces from "integrated" NATO Command, although she remains a member of NATO. At one stroke the American vital Line of Communication and Supply (LOC), which ran between western ports and the eastern NATO front, was severed. If, however, America had been willing to remove all of our nuclear weapons from France, we might have succeeded in retaining that important LOC. To repeat our central theme, European political sensitivities should have been considered more carefully.

Or some political sensitivities may have been prematurely given too much weight. Here the most famous example is General Norstad's movement, in the spring of 1962, of the intended battle area east almost to the "Iron Curtain" border.†† That pleased the German Foreign Office very much. It horrified NATO's military commanders. It gave them a much longer front to defend, without giving them more resources to handle the bigger job. The American commanders were almost as upset as their British counterparts. Why? It moved the U.S. Army from under the anti-aircraft protection of our "belt" of Hawk air defense missiles

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*Theo Somner, "The Neutron Bomb: Nuclear War Without Tears," *Survival* (November/December, 1977), p. 263.

†London: Oliver and Boyd, 1962.

**_The Economist_ (London: 6-12 October, 1979), p. 49.

††McNamara, op. cit., endorsed this forward defense in May 5, 1962, p.18.

in mid-Germany. The movement forward of the intended place of battle left them with *no* anti-aircraft protection, as their World War II weapons had been removed. Does General Norstad dispute his military commanders? No, "I established the forward concept when we didn't have the military means and I was criticized by many military people for having done this."* Everything in NATO, to repeat, is political.

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*General Norstad, "Defending Europe Without France" *The Atlantic Community Quarterly* (Summer 1966), p. 180.

IV. THE WORTH OF STRATEGIC SUPERIORITY

AMERICAN DÉTENTE INITIATIVES

To return to the 1950s, it takes at least two powers to achieve a détente; and President Eisenhower was determined to bargain fairly, but realistically, with the Soviet Union about arms control measures. To do so, initially, he had to resort to his own "back channel." Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, in particular, and Congress in general, were to be kept largely in the dark, while they orated about "liberating" East Europe and other matters. Eisenhower enlisted his excellent speech writer, Emmet J. Hughes, who in turn enlisted an excellent and experienced Republican policy planner--Paul H. Nitze. They had a month to prepare his April 16, 1953 speech whose elements were: "(1) an appeal to the Soviet Union to look out for its own security elsewhere than in its own amassing of force, inevitably provoking counterforce by the West; (2) a specification of the cost of arms, in the waste of the goods and benefits of peace and prosperity; (3) a call for explicit Soviet signs of good faith on such matters as an Austrian peace treaty and a Korean armistice; (4) a set of five principles for disarmament, covering limitations upon conventional forces, production of strategic materials, atomic and other modern weapons of mass destruction; and (5) a look at the peaceful fruits to be gained from such disarmament."* The speech was a smashing success. But where was the vital "follow through"? The metaphor seems apt because the President went golfing the next day, and Vice-President Nixon presided over a Cabinet that turned its attention immediately to mundane election matters:

> There is one process in national government, as I came to realize, that works with some speed and remarkable thoroughness. This is the process that somehow contrives, almost always, the dissipation of much of the force behind the most bold thrusts of initiative. As

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*Hughes, op. cit., pp. 107-108.

> elusive as it is effective, this process seems, at various times, to assume different shapes and to suggest many images. It is the silent defense-in-depth against the new act. It is the curse of Sisyphus, newly designed for modern democracy: the mountain whose steep scaling assures the eventual, breathless exhaustion of the energy of--an idea. And, for the individual daring to defy it, it reserves a kind of slow anesthesia which deadens, at last, the exhilarating pain of vigorous and original thought.*

Paul Nitze, of course, was fired by Dulles. He was offered the job of Assistant Secretary of Defense for Foreign Affairs by Secretary Wilson, who found, as Nitze had warned him, that the Senate would not confirm an "Acheson-type", and that left Nitze free to school himself in all the nuances of strategy and arms control, so that he was superbly ready for ISA when President Kennedy was ready for him. "Ike," to his credit, was furiously angry about the treatment that Nitze received.†

And Hughes despaired too quickly. The Russians were listening, with all possible respect for a five-star victorious general who commanded both such views and such power. Nor was Eisenhower discouraged. He rallied from his sickbed to run again in 1956, against an Adlai Stevenson who ran as a McGovern-like dove, which practically handed the election to Eisenhower on a platter:

> The speech contained its direct retorts to the two key proposals thrown out by Stevenson: a unilateral suspension of nuclear testing and a curtailment of the military draft. The President emphasized the necessity for "explicit and supervised international agreements" on nuclear testing, and he dismissed the suggestion of unilateral action as a "theatrical national gesture. . . ." Sternly, the President told the nation: "We cannot, in short, face the future simply by walking into the past--backwards. We cannot salute the future with bold words--while we surrender it with feeble deeds." Beyond all this, the President--to the dismay and confusion of many members of the Republican National Committee--

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*Ibid., pp. 114-116.

†Ibid., pp. 120-121.

> refused to describe the world in terms of a *Pax Republicana*. Instead, he warned of the growth of "a number of grave problems" across the earth. There sounded here, in short, no trumpets to proclaim the attainment of world peace, but rather a warning roll of drums to give signal of coming perils.*

RUSSIAN RESPONSES

What, in brief, did this bargaining from strength yield to us? Well, it stopped a paranoid Stalin from ordering his Army to march to the Atlantic in say, 1947; or in 1950, after he had the nuclear bomb. George Kennan and some historians, of course, would not agree: "In George Frost Kennan, the Presbyterian elder wrestled with the Bismarckian geopolitician."† The father of "containment" did not think that Western arms were needed, even though he harbored the deepest suspicions of the Soviets.** But if you blame the start of the cold war on NATO, you have two tough questions to answer. Why, if the West is to blame, did we allow SAC and production of its atomic bombs to begin so late and remain so small until the Korean War? Second, if we tried the Kennan policy, and it failed, we lost the West. Could we afford to experiment with it?

Fair-minded current proponents of "Strategic Disengagement" concede the point:

> For the critical question in any proposal of disengagement is not its techniques and provisions, but rather our strategic concern for the objects at risk in the proposal. As long as we maintain this strategic concern, any scheme of disengagement will be vulnerable to objection on its own terms: It cannot ensure that we will not "lose" and our adversaries will not "gain."
>
> It was really on this point that George Kennan's scheme of disengagement in Central Europe in the late 1950s foundered. He argued for the avoidance of risk and tension, the extension of incentive and reassurance to the Soviets, the futility of defense through NATO, and the greater chance of healing the division of Europe. The problem was that

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*Ibid., pp. 180-181.

†Daniel Yergin, *Shattered Peace* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977), p. 28.

**George F. Kennan, *Memoirs, 1925-1950*, (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967), especially pp. 560-565.

> disengagement was represented as a *better* tactic to advance the interest of the United States in the wholeness, health, and safety of Europe. And for this it required a reciprocal move by our adversary, Russia. Thus, its opponents could demonstrate generally that the risks of this initiative were greater than the possible gains--always in terms of the conceded interest in the condition of Europe--and specifically that the risk of nonadherence by the Soviets to the reciprocal terms was too great and was irreducible. So Kennan's initiative evoked the critical antagonism of Henry Kissinger and the patrician disgust of Dean Acheson. And there is some justice in their reactions. For it is not a valid disengagement if we simply withdraw and continue to hope for the best.*

Our superiority provided an umbrella under which NATO could start to build ground forces in Europe, beginning with little about 1950, and therefore doomed to local inferiority for years to come. Above all, it enabled the West to stand firm over the many challenges to encircled Berlin, where local Western inferiority is always conceded.† Why debate fruitlessly about Cuba in 1962, when we had both crushing global strategic and local superiority, and try to measure, on some delicate scale, the worth of one relative superiority to the other?**

And U.S. strategic superiority not merely precluded the loss of Berlin; it produced two genuine détentes, with one to follow shortly in the early 1960s! Those fear-filled Berlin crises were met; and the way they were met taught us how to bargain with tough Bolsheviks

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*Earl C. Ravenal, *Strategic Disengagement and World Peace* (San Francisco: Cato Institute, 1979, p. 20). For a useful compilation of the various disengagement proposals of the mid-fifties, see Eugene Hinterhoff, *Disengagement* (London: Stevens & Sons, 1959).

†See the Research Institute of the German Society for Foreign Affairs, *Documents on Berlin 1943-1963* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1963).

**On Cuba, however, our pre-crisis intelligence was badly used. See Klauss Knorr, "Failures in National Intelligence Estimates--The Case of the Cuban Missiles," *World Politics* (October 1978).

who have nuclear weapons, if only we would remember.* Consider those détentes:

> The first positive Soviet response to existing Western offers of constructive negotiations came early in 1955. Shortly after the fall of Malenkov on February 9 of that year, Mr. Khrushchev and Marshal Bulganin opened the way to a high-level meeting between the leaders of the Soviet Union, the United States, Britain, and France by exchanges of conciliatory messages, by toning down anti-Western propaganda, and by agreeing to the withdrawal of troops from Austria and neutral State.†

Improved atmospherics and "linkage" are nice, but what about arms control?

> There is ample evidence that Soviet strategic weapons inferiority was a particular source of worry in Moscow in 1955. And a thorough reorganization of the Soviet Union was certainly at the back of some of the military demands for the adoption of a preemptive strike capability by the Soviet forces, and probably partly responsible for the 1955 changes in Soviet disarmament proposals. *These offered to accept observers at Soviet airfields, as well as at road and rail junctions, ports, and other places of military significance, in exchange for Soviet observers at American airfields.***

The problem that "on-site" inspection might look like espionage ruined the "surprise attack" Conference. Nonetheless, what better can one inspect thoroughly than actual reductions in military forces? Although other aspects of Soviet arms control proposals were not acceptable to the West, the Soviet-proposed force levels were more than reasonable:

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*See Fay D. Kohler (former U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union, who was deeply involved in these negotiations from 1946-1968, in various official positions), *SALT II: How Not to Negotiate With the Russians* (Miami: Advanced International Studies Institute, 1979). Also see George F. Kennan's famous "Excerpt From the United States and Russia" (Winter 1947), pp. 560-565 in Vol. I, Kennan's *Memoirs* (Little, Brown and Company, 1967).

†Malcolm Mackintosh, Chapter 5, "Three Détentes: 1955-1964," in E. L. Dulles and R. D. Crane, eds., *Détente: Cold War Strategies in Transition* (New York, Praeger, 1965). Italics added.

**Ibid., pp. 105-106.

United States:	1 million to 1.5 million men;
USSR:	1 million to 1.5 million men;
China:	1 million to 1.5 million men;
United Kingdom:	650,000 men;
France:	650,000 men.

[Source: U.S. Department of State, *Documents on Disarmament, 1945-1959*, Vol. I, *1945-1956*, p. 461.]

The brutal crushing of the unexpected Hungarian uprising in 1956 disillusioned wishful thinkers in the West, and the atmospherics went sour. But the Soviets proceeded unilaterally to reduce their armed forces, in part no doubt for domestic reasons. The armed forces were cut by 1,200,000 men in 1957, following a 640,000 man reduction in 1955.* And the wooing of the West was resumed, in the typical Soviet pattern of "doves" that alternate with "hawks."

The key, as it was so often, was Berlin. The Soviet design "to liquidate the occupation regime in Berlin" was announced on November 27, 1958, coupled with fierce threats: "But only madmen can go to the length of unleashing another world war over the preservation of privileges of occupiers in West Berlin."† Khrushchev gave the Western Powers a six-month deadline. But, when met by firmness, his demand was relinquished on March 19, 1959: "Yes, I believe that the United States, Britain, and France have lawful rights for their stay in Berlin."**

Thus began the second détente, of the "Camp David spirit," which continued until the U-2 was shot down over Soviet territory in 1960. That aborted another summit meeting. But an ominous note had been struck earlier:

> Thus, in 1959 when Mr. Khrushchev returned from his talks with President Eisenhower at Camp David, ideas which had apparently been forming in his mind received what he interpreted as firm confirmation from the American side. He

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*Ibid., pp. 638-639.

†*Documents on Berlin*, op. cit., pp. 180-196.

**Ibid., p. 248.

> left Camp David convinced not only that the President was prepared to make political concessions to the Soviet Union, but that the increasing destructiveness of nuclear weapons, the mounting stockpiles held by both the Soviet Union and the United States, and the Soviet "lead" in long-range missiles, had led Eisenhower to abandon any ideas he or his predecessor might have had of using America's nuclear strength to destroy the Soviet Union by launching a preventive war.*

NATO then entered a new era, with its greatest chance ever for arms control reason to prevail as one Presidential term yielded to another:

> As soon as SAC acquires an effective "alert" status, the U.S. will be able to carry out a decisive attack even if surprised. *This could be the best time to negotiate from strength, since the U.S. military position vis-à-vis Russia might never be as strong again.*†

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*MacIntosh, op. cit., p. 107.

†Appendix A: Timetable, Period A, of NSC 5724, "The Gaither Report," *Deterrence and Survival in the Nuclear Age* (November 7, 1957). [Of the sections declassified on 10 January 1973.] Italics added.

V. ANY LESSONS FROM HISTORY?

The United States, beginning before the 1970s, forgot this generation-old history, and sought to achieve ambitious arms control measures while it neglected its strategic forces.* But a bolder goal for SALT, mixed with a still greater neglect of our strength, began in 1977.† As our subject is NATO Europe, however, we can move immediately to smaller matters. The United States was unwise enough to proclaim loudly that the "neutron bomb" [Enhanced Radiation Weapon] had great merit and was to be deployed in Europe, and then to change its mind. The "neutron bomb" possibilities are likewise old, not new.** So why did our government make it a big new issue?

> The United States [on the neutron bomb] displayed a surprising and profound lack of sensitivity to the political problems caused for nonnuclear allies (particularly Germany) by insisting that they take a more active part in Alliance nuclear decisions . . . [and] might insist on applying a similar procedure for future decisions directly bearing on Europe's nuclear link to the U.S. deterrence forces. This boded ill for the problem of deciding on an Alliance response to deployment of modernized Soviet medium-range nuclear systems like the SS-20 missile and the Backfire bomber.††

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*My guess is that the neglect began before Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara's speech on ABMs in San Francisco, September 18, 1967. See J. Newhouse, *Cold Dawn: The Story of SALT* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973), Chapter 2. That gives us between 12 to 18 years of neglect, spread over four Presidents.

†See Thomas W. Wolfe, *The SALT Experience* (Cambridge: Collinger, 1979) as the best general reference. See Lt. General's Edward L. Rowny's review of Strobe Talbott's *Endgame: The Inside Story of SALT II* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979) in *Strategic Review* (Winter, 1980), pp. 64-67. Wolfe's book, in my opinion, is much better than Talbott's book.

**S. T. Cohen, The Rand Corporation, P-3510, *The Peaceful Neutron Bomb: A New Twist on Controlled Nuclear Fusion*, 1967: Around *1960* revelations were made on a nuclear 'Death Ray' project, the so-called Neutron Bomb." Italics added. Others trace the idea to the 1950s, e.g., Jane M.O. Sharp, "Is European Security Negotiable?", in D. Leebaert, ed., *European Security: Prospects for the 1980s*, op. cit., p. 282.

††The International Institute for Strategic Studies, *Strategic Survey*, 1978 (London, 1979), p. 107.

The same reasons that led many of us to oppose the "neutron bomb" in 1960 still apply: If you promote it as a "tank-killer," Europeans will be led to think that the very same "nuclear warfare only for Europeans in Europe" is America's intent. The promotional neutron bomb campaign, *predictably*, aroused the very European fears that worry Schmidt and others the most.* Given the mounting evidence that we have compiled in our preceding sections, what should the United States have done in 1977 about the "neutron bomb"? What should we have done in 1979 about FBS? What, above all, should we do in 1981, when everyone will know who the president of the United States will be between 1981 and 1984? Let us provide answers to these questions in turn, when anyone can offer an alternative answer to the period that lies before us. On our third question, where hindsight is impossible, let the critics fire away. We need a well-considered debate, within the NPG of NATO and beyond it, to clarify the issues of choice even if, as yet, we cannot answer them categorically.

First, even without the evidence of hindsight, consider the easy question of the "neutron bomb." Remember, we have had 20 years to consider its specific merits; or, more generally, to consider the merits of the "mini-nukes." We should, in 1977, have done exactly what we did in the 1960s, which was, after due consideration, to decide not to deploy more "mini-nukes." At best they offered small marginal military gains, at considerable cost in money terms and high cost in political terms. I argued against them in December 1958, for two reasons that remain relevant:

> Consequently those who argue for reliance upon limited employment of nuclear weapons seek a type of limitation that still allows us nuclear superiority. Broadly speaking, the means of doing this is to use weapons that in pure nuclear engineering terms are inefficient, that is, weapons with reduced military effects per unit of fissionable material. The obvious example is weapons whose yield is very small. But if we succeed in thus subordinating nuclear efficiency in a pattern of weapon usage that is advantageous to us, we face a tremendous problem in getting the Soviets to agree to the same limitations. If we accept the political onus attached to initiating widespread usage of nuclear weapons, with only

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*Sharp, op. cit., p. 283.

> sophisticated observors being aware of the great price we have paid in nuclear inefficiency in order to reduce damage, we are vulnerable to the counter of Soviet employment of weapons that are less compromised in their ability to inflict damage. In sum, if our nuclear advantage does not disappear anyway, it may not be translated into military advantage not only because of limitations upon numbers of weapons, but because we are forced to accept a greater penalty in weapon effectiveness than the Soviets. . . .
>
> Of more general technological interest, the great improvements in guidance make missiles not only feasible in conventional warfare, but perhaps revolutionary. One main function of nuclear missile warheads is simply to compensate for inaccuracy. But to the extent that we make our weapons more accurate, the advantage of nuclear warheads declines. An anti-tank missile gains little advantage from a nuclear warhead if we have a high probability of hitting the tank, as recent developments may promise.*

Many others at that time made the same two points, and, in my opinion, Thomas C. Schelling did the best job of it.† You may think that somebody else expounded these points even better. The crucial point *today* is that the guided non-nuclear weapons (PGMs) have not only been greatly improved, but that they have proven their worth in actual battle, both in Vietnam and in the Mid-East. And the technical improvements recently in PGMs promise even better results. As this is a paper about alliance nuclear politics, not technology, we need merely cite some excellent technical comparisons in cost-effectiveness.**

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*M. W. Hoag, "The Place of Limited War in NATO Strategy," P-1566, The Rand Corporation, December 4, 1958. Published in Klaus Knorr, *NATO and American Security* (Princeton Press, 1959), pp. 118-119, 122-123.

†Thomas C. Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (Harvard Press, 1960), especially pp. 257-266.

**See, in particular, Cecil I. Hudson and Peter H. Hass, "New Technologies: The Prospects"; Erik Klippenberg, "New Technologies: Some Requirements"; and James Digby, "Precision Weapons: Lowering the Risks with Aimed Shots and Aimed Tactics," in John J. Holst and Uwe Nerlich, *Beyond Nuclear Deterrence, New Aims, New Arms* (New York: Crane, Russak and Company, 1977). Also see Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering William Perry on the non-nuclear "Assault Breaker" for destroying enemy tanks, as quoted in, *inter alia,* Juan Cameron, *Fortune* (10 March 1980), p. 63.

We now have all that we need to answer the "neutron bomb" question. We should never have considered deploying it in Europe in 1977, because we have more political, economic, and technical experience to reinforce the sound conclusion of 20 years ago. If you choose to ignore the lessons of history about that generation-old issue, you are free to do the worst thing. And that, incredibly, was what the United States did. We (1) found some minor technical and cost-effective applications of the "neutron bomb" (true); (2) we magnified those relatively trivial merits into appearing to be major merits; (3) we promised deployment; and (4) then the United States changed its mind, and decided not to deploy them after all, but to downplay their merits!

But the Europeans can by no means blame us for everything: "The Europeans, and particularly West Germany, appeared to want to have their cake and eat it."* Yet, the Dutch parliament ". . . voted in March against the deployment of the [neutron] weapon and the French government too, has been opposed to it . . . [also] Norway and Denmark."†

The political import cuts deeper. Raymond Aron speaks of SALT II under the heading of "American Surrender"; justly blames both Republicans and Democrats for "the intellectual error--seeking an equilibrium limited to one category of weapons; . . . [and states that] the Europeans should rethink their security."** That's bad enough. But when the NATO Secretary-General, Joseph Luns, exceeds his official responsibility to the Alliance by hoping "that the British would not drop out of the nuclear club . . . [and] emphasized the vital importance of retaining an independent European nuclear deterrent,"†† matters have gotten out of hand. And the United States cannot meet this test of confidence in its nuclear guarantees if, in SALT II and III, it acts as it did before: "while both the United States and the Soviet Union adhered to the letter of SALT I, the United States went further and acted in the spirit of the Treaty."***

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*The International Institute for Strategic Studies, *Strategic Survey, 1978* (London, 1979), p. 107.

†*Atlantic Community News*, May 1978, p. 2.

**_L'Express_, January 20, 1979. He is correct. It has been an intellectual error.

††*Atlantic Community News*, March 1979, italics added.

***ISS, *Strategic Survey*, 1978, p. 120.

But if a mere "neutron bomb," and the early misleading discussion of SALT II in Europe, had emphasized the ever-present ambivalence in NATO Europe toward the United States, the currently proposed forward deployment of 572 missiles (FBS) that could reach Soviet soil predictably raised havoc. Note how closely this situation resembles the momentous North Atlantic Council Decisions of December 1957, and the subsequent deployment of Thors, Jupiters, and--in Germany--the Matador cruise missile that phased into a MACE-B modernized version. To the Soviets, the proposed new deployments of the Pershing II ballistic missiles, and the Ground-Launched cruise missiles, are as objectionable in range as their predecessors were a generation ago. There is one big difference. Now it is the Soviets who bargain from strategic strength, and who cite a SALT II treaty that is to their liking.

And, squarely in the limelight, stands the same Helmut Schmidt, as Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany. As a statesman/strategist of distinction, he deserved to deliver the second Alastair Buchan Memorial Lecture. He faced the implications of codified strategic superpower "parity," and repeated the need in NATO for a sound conventional defense, in keeping with his excellent 1962 book. But then he advocated the need for NATO Europe to increase its nuclear long-range capability to offset the menacing growth of those Soviet SS-20 missiles, and the Backfire bombers, that had been excluded from the "counting" of strategic vehicles in SALT II. His match lit a bonfire: "Was Schmidt, by advocating a nuclear build-up in Western Europe, proposing action that would 'de-couple' the American deterrent by making it redundant?"*

Schmidt has clarified his position, and hosts of others have rushed in to clarify or obfuscate his position. It is best that we listen to him:

> If SALT-2 was not ratified as it stands, it could--and this would be my apprehension--create a broad feeling of uncertainty. This treaty has been negotiated by three American Presidents. . . . How could you in the future depend on a policy carried out by an American President? . . . of course

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*Staff Report, Senate Subcommittee on European Affairs (October 1979), *SALT and the NATO Allies*, p. ix.

> the Americans, whether it's the Administration or the Senate, can embed a treaty which they ratify into an environment of other things which they do at the same time . . . there were western medium-range ballistic missiles and intra-range weaponry in the late 1950s, but they were dismantled by 1963, which I think from hindsight was a wrong step. *They should have been modernized rather than dismantled.**

Further, Schmidt also faces a crucial election in 1980, and he must conciliate a radical faction in his own party:

> Having hitched its electoral fortunes to *Ostpolitik* and reconciliation, the SPD is condemned to demonstrate forever the viability of détente, for the sake of its survival in power. 1980 is an election year which will pit Schmidt against the leader of the Christian Social Union, Franz Josef Strauss, who may well turn out to be West Germany's answer to the 'Committee on the Present Danger' . . . .†

When one notes that the North Atlantic Council itself, on 29 June, 1979, endorsed the Treaty, because it "responds to the *hope* of the Allies for a reduction in nuclear arsenals, and thus offers a broader aspect for détente,"** the European desire is clear. But is not this understandable desire founded upon wishful thinking, and a misleading analysis of SALT II, and SALT III to come, given Soviet behavior? That is my opinion. Let us consider NATO desires more closely.

As all too typical a remark, the Honorable Paul Thyness of Norway said that "apart from the tiny minority that specializes in the somewhat arcane world of strategic theory . . . most Europeans are content to study the treaty in its broadest terms."†† Well, let's consider the German view. F. L. Slauffenberg's query received this answer. The formal reply of the German Government in the Bundestag was: "There is no reason whatsoever to link the loyalty of members of NATO,

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*_The Economist_ (October 6-12, 1979), p. 49. Italics added.

†Joseph Jaffe, "Why Germans Support SALT," _Survival_ (September/October 1979), p. 212.

**_The Atlantic Community News_, September 1979, p. 2. Italics added.

††_SALT and the NATO Allies_, op. cit., p. 41.

and especially the Federal Republic of Germany, to the SALT ratification process."* The "shadow" CDU Minister of Defense, Manfred Wörner, has a devastating critique of SALT II in *The Strategic Review* (Summer 1979), pp. 9-15; even as he sorrowfully notes (p. 9) that "Placed before the choice of endorsing the position of the U.S. Government or that of its opposition, a European government, obviously feels compelled to opt for the former." He also notes that even "Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger justifiably criticized the Protocol for creating an 'illusionary impression of temporariness' elaborating that 'I don't know of any such protocol that has expired.'"† The German official White Paper on Defense states that "the assurance of the military balance is an indispensable prerequisite for durable détente . . . nothing could be further from the aim of the Federal Government than to create a European nuclear force . . . the solution of the grey area problem, primarily the elimination of the growing disparity between the medium-range potentials, is one of the most important tasks of the Alliance in the field of security policy."**

Next, at the Assembly of Western European Union, November 1978, the Committee on the "Limitation of Strategic Arms," *unanimously* adopted a Report that was critical of SALT II.†† Pertinent extracts are these.

> *(i) SALT II is liable to sanction a certain shift in the strategic balance to the advantage of the Soviet Union.*
>
> This difference has *serious consequences for Europe.****
>
> *(ii) Limiting American capability in Western Europe.*
>
> It would therefore appear that the United States has *traded in a weapons system of direct interest to Europe* (cruise missiles) in *exchange for Soviet concessions* in the field of intercontinental missiles which are a *direct threat to American territory.*

**The Washington Post*, October 21, 1979, p. 23.

†*The Economist*, February 3, 1979, p. 21.

***Survival* (November/December 1979), pp. 273-277.

††Assembly of Western European Union, *Proceedings*, 24th Ordinary Session, Second Part, Paris, 1978, p. 129.

***Ibid., pp. 142-143.

> Such attitudes *can but weaken the nuclear protection of Europe.**

Now why turn to the Western European Community to find such unanimity, and not cite the many contrary statements by Europeans in a NATO context? I do so because virtually nobody in a NATO forum dares to repudiate the history of three American presidents, no matter how badly he thinks that we have negotiated on behalf of the West. To replace our nuclear umbrella they have nothing. Do you think that France gladly offers a substitute; or, if she did, that it would not be perceived to be a very small and leaky umbrella? Yet, General Bries, Mr. Sanguinetti, and others are promoting the notion.†

But they have their answer: As President Valery Giscard d'Estaing has said (Reuthers, 18 September 1979): "I exclude categorically any French move toward the creation of a nuclear armament in West Germany . . . This is in the interest of neither France, nor of West Germany, nor of Europe, nor of détente."

As SALT II is thus being misrepresented as "necessary" to preserve NATO, what about the strategic force implications of the ratio in the following text:

> The easiest part [?] of the TNF decision deals with numbers. Within the HLG (High Level Group) a consensus had emerged that NATO need not--indeed should not--seek to match every new Soviet warhead with one of its own capable of reaching the USSR. While the Warsaw Pact's long-range, Soviet-based capability (just in SS-20s and Backfire bombers) could well top 1500 warheads by the mid-1980s, NATO planners see only a need to procure and deploy launchers capable of carrying between 200 and 600 warheads. To put a great many more such weapons into the European theater, they believe, could create an impression that the United States is "decoupling" from Europe's defense by putting it on its own nuclear feet. To install fewer would make each system extremely costly to to produce and would make little deterrent sense.**

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*Ibid., pp. 143-144. Italics added.

†*The Economist*, 25-31 August 1979, p. 35.

**_SALT and the NATO Allies_, p. 21-22.

At last we find precision, of a sort. The 572 missile deployment would fall slightly below the 40 percent maximum. In fact, it would fall much more. Can the Soviets keep a few of their 590 old SS-4s and SS-5s, or new ones? How about their 500-mile range SS-12 Scaleboards?* And does anyone think that the Soviets have neglected the development of cruise missiles? At sea, their SS-N-3 Shaddock, with a range of 450 miles, has been around since 1962.† Can Soviet ALCMs and GLCMs be far behind?**

What, in short, does the inter-allied numerical determination imply? It seeks so marked an inferiority in theater capability as to call, logically, for a significant U.S. strategic bipolar *superiority* to redress the overall balance! But the Western proponents of SALT II sought parity, but, in my opinion, got less. Further, the new NATO deployments of Pershing II and Ground-Launched Cruise missiles must face survivability tests. How are they to be based? Helmut Schmidt might be right about modernizing the MACE-B in Germany in 1963, instead of withdrawing it; but, if memory serves, it was a German decision to deploy the MACE-B in a markedly vulnerable mode, even if their supply reflected a joint American/German decision. The MACE-B stayed longer in Okinawa, in good part because it was less vulnerably deployed.

Finally, for the most comprehensive survey of the "gray area" problem, see Uwe Nerlich's article.†† Unfortunately, his article

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*IISS, *The Strategic Balance, 1979-1980*, p. 87

†Ibid.

**Secretary Brown, *FY81 Report*, op. cit., p. 92, expects "three follow-on missiles--the SS-21 for the Frog launchers, the SS-X-23 for the SCUD launchers, and the SS-22 for the Scaleboard launchers."

More generally, Brown says (p. 7) "We do not plan to match the Soviet [theater] program system by system or warhead by warhead, which might be construed as an attempt to create a *European* nuclear balance separate from the overall strategic relationship--and thus as risking 'decoupling'."

††"Theater Nuclear Forces in Europe: Is NATO running out of Options?" *The Washington Quarterly* (Winter, 1980).

went to press before the "High Level Group" in NATO had published their position, so that he must reconsider his views. Nerlich looks for an explicit rationale or sensible plan for introducing tactical nuclear weapons into NATO, and all he correctly finds (p. 103) is "more than twenty years of blind incrementalism." I agree with him on this point, and on his strong criticism (p. 111) of SALT.

I have elsewhere criticized Nerlich's underassessment of the continuing relevance of U.S. strategic force options in technical terms.* In political terms, the striking feature of his analysis is that he never mentions the strong left wing faction in the FRG government (p. 120). Yet surely Nerlich knows that the major German obstacle to his views is the "detente" appeal posed by *Ostpolitik*, as personified, for example, by Egon Bahr and Herbert Wehner. And why does he ask America for solutions to theater nuclear modernization problems, and stronger conventional force designs, and propose no German solutions?

How much more evidence does the reader need? European legitimate fears and concerns do *not* drive us to accept a SALT agreement that cannot stand on its own merits. On the contrary, our shared concerns must better be taken into account either in SALT bargaining, in a "3d forum" negotiation, or in an enlarged MBFR context. And we must provide military strength from which to bargain, not military weakness. Why us? The perennial answer is that, unwelcome as the burdens may be, there is no other superpower to oppose Russian hegemony. And, if ever we find the burdens to be too heavy, any honorable retreat will have to leave behind us some real European (which European?) nuclear power for self-defense. That could only be done well with our help. For over thirty years, our American pledge has been that our strategic forces will *not* be "decoupled" from theater defense, and its advocacy should never be put in "decoupling" terms.

Now if America had (a) logically argued for bipolar strategic "superiority," when account is taken of intermediate range missiles

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*M. W. Hoag, *Counterforce, Conventional Arms, and Confusion: A Comment on the Brussels Conference*, The Rand Corporation, P-6485, May 1980.

to yield "parity" globally; and if (b) we had achieved it, we could have avoided a lot of disruption in NATO by acquiring more strategic arms external to the theater, and forgetting about the 572 missiles to Europe. That was McNamara's solution in the 1960s, and it worked.*

But given our assent to bad SALT I and SALT II agreements, we have driven ourselves to compensate for strategic force inadequacies wherever we can. And the 572 missiles will help towards restoring the global balance, and support of their deployment in Europe will prove that our allies will not put all of the nuclear burden upon us. That is why I favor the 572 missile deployment as a "second best" solution to a SALT-constrained problem that rules out the best solution. The sophisticated European observers who dislike SALT II, like Lord Chalfont, join with those who favor SALT II, like Christoph Bertram in two salient respects:†

(1) they dislike the growth of Soviet strategic power relative to American power; and

(2) they worry very much about the implications for SALT III.

As Bertram concludes (p. 573):

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*McNamara, op. cit., p. 26, put the MRBM specifications as follows:

Range	-	2000 n. miles
CEP [Accuracy]	-	About 1000 feet (land based) at 1000 n. miles
Missile Gross Weight	-	12,000 lbs.
Cost for 250 missiles	-	About $2 b.
Availability	-	1966 or later

SOURCE: Defense Secretary McNamara, Speech to the NATO Ministerial Meeting (5 May 1962), p. 26. He canceled the MRBM development in 1964.

†Christoph Bertram, Director of the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London, favors SALT II in "SALT II and the Dynamics of Arms Control," in *International Affairs* (October 1979). Lord Chalfont, formerly the Military Correspondent of the *Times*, argues against SALT II in the same issue, "SALT II and America's European Allies," pp. 559-564. Lord Chalfont was Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office from 1964 to 1970.

> Above all it will be vitally important for the United States and the Alliance, as they prepare to enter the next round, that they know roughly where it is that they want to arrive at the end. The old dictum--if you don't know where you're going, every way will lead you there--simply does not apply to the sensitive effort of seeking security through constraints on military power.

If, as we have seen, NATO governments do not preclude SALT bargaining that produces better results for Western strength, we and they are entitled to ask that every American Administration take better care of our mutual security and our special political anxieties. They understand domestic American political turmoil, much as they deplore it. We understand their domestic politics also, especially when their hypersensitivity about any nuclear weapon issue is at stake. Schmidt faces a 1980 election also, and the left wing of his party is giving him great difficulty on the nuclear missile issue. The even greater delicacy of the issues for the Netherlands is apparent. But surely Schmidt's electoral difficulties at home give him no mandate whatsoever for lobbying on behalf of SALT II in the United States.

But we must remember, at all times, that the rationale for sending nuclear weapons to NATO Europe was derived from a "general war" concept, corresponding to President Eisenhower's tenure of office. President Truman turned on the nuclear "tap" in 1950, and President Eisenhower kept it on, with the predictable result that we got "first a trickle, then a flow, and then a flood." As President Kennedy inherited the flood, the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons to Europe inevitably rose in the first years of his administration. But then, roughly speaking, the number of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe stabilized. Old ones went out as better ones came in, and the aggregate stayed much the same.

If, on the contrary, a new rationale had been adopted for "tactical warfare" *confined* to Europe, the number of deployed nuclear weapons would have soared far beyond 7000. And, which would have been both very costly and very divisive, NATO's entire structure of "soft" installations--reflecting the foundations that were laid

in 1950 to 1954 for World War II like conventional war--would have had to be rebuilt from the ground up in "hard" and "mobile" configurations. That has never been done. Accordingly, some phrase-maker, someplace, thought of using the magic word of a "Triad," without the vulnerability reducing substance that lies behind use of that word for our strategic retaliatory forces, to supply a rationale for nuclear weapons in Europe. It sounds better than it is. And, in agreement, Secretary Brown now uses the term "tripod."* That is a much more reasonable term, long overdue.

Accordingly, our strategic retaliatory forces now necessarily remain "coupled" to NATO defense.† Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski, speaking informally to the Atlantic Treaty Organization used exactly the right words in parts of his speech:

> Entering its fourth decade, NATO now confronts a challenge and a choice as critical as any in its past. The challenge comes from a resolute, increasingly powerful Soviet Union. Let me speak about both. . . . The American commitment, nuclear and conventional, to the defense of Europe is an integral part of our own defense posture. There are no conceivable circumstances in which we would not react to a security threat directed at our Allies in Europe. The danger we could face in the eighties will not be American decoupling from Western Europe; rather, the danger will derive from Soviet miscalculation--that is, from the belief that the Alliance, through failure to keep pace with a changing strategic environment, has decoupled from its traditional purpose.**

Unfortunately, the headline writers may zero in on the following paragraph, which will become appropriate only if, as, and when a NATO

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*Secretary Brown, FY81 Report, p. 91.

†Why Henry Kissinger's speech in Brussels on September 1, 1979, failed to mention major American "Limited Nuclear Options (LNOs)" as the credible means of "coupling," baffles me. Why McGeorge Bundy finds one LNO that is unsatisfactory to him is not baffling. You can tailor your strategic forces for different LNOs; provided, of course, that you have bought strategic forces that are large enough, and versatile enough, to yield a rich menu of choice.

General Andrew J. Goodpaster could not be clearer about this matter. See his book, *For the Common Defense* (Lexington, 1977), pp. 45-57. See also P-6485, op. cit.

**A transcription of informal remarks, October 19, 1979, at the Department of State, pp. 3, 5.

consensus develops about a transformed posture that extends far beyond 572 missiles:

> The challenge we now confront is not only a military one. I believe that we have far more to fear from the possibility of political intimidation. Should NATO be viewed as unwilling or unable to respond to threats of *nuclear warfare confined to the European area*--as the lack of any effective theater forces would almost certainly make it appear to be--the opportunity for Soviet political pressures would be correspondingly enlarged.*

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*Ibid., p. 5. Italics added.

VI. PREDICTION AND SPECULATION

As we move to our unknown future, beginning with the inauguration of an American President in January 1981, what refutable predictions, and what advice, does our historical evidence lead to?

First, I predict that the SALT II Treaty will be repudiated by the American Congress. This prediction is not based merely upon a perception of the anger about American hostages held in Iran, or the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. First of all, a fundamental shift had started earlier:

> Few things are more striking in American politics during the past five years than the shift to the Right. . . .
>
> First, and probably prerequisite to the other changes in mass opinion, is the public's perception of the decline of U.S. influence and power in the world, particularly in comparison with the Soviet Union. . . .
>
> Second, the general public is clearly unhappy with this decline.
>
> Third, there is renewed support for the military forces and related instruments necessary to support a firmer stand against the Soviets.*

Second, the American Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, in its "markup" decisions about SALT II, has already adopted amendments, owing mainly to our senior military delegate to SALT II negotiations, Lt. General E. Rowny (USA, ret.).** These amendments, in the eyes of the Soviets, are "killer" amendments.

Third, as regards FBS, we should not assume that we can deploy them until (1) the American people have discovered that they are to pay $5 billion for 572 missiles (95% of the cost) and (2) after our allies have made their

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*Samuel P. Huntington, "American Foreign Policy: The Changing Political Universe", (*The Washington Quarterly*, Autumn, 1979), pp. 32-35.

**Hearings, *The SALT II Treaty*, October 15-November 9, 1979.

desires very clear for or against deployment. In particular, we should ask the German government to be less ambivalent and coy about the matter, as suggested by the German Director of the International Institute for Strategic Studies.*

Finally, where should we deploy Ground Launch Cruise Missiles (GLCMs) and Sea-Launched Cruise Missiles (SLCMs) if our allies desire deployment? My conjecture is that the sea-based systems will be preferred in Central Europe. That was Buchan's choice, and it was Schmidt's choice.† The obvious first place to put them is in NATO's Standing Naval Force Atlantic, whose mixed manning by eight nations is what is left of the old Multilateral Force idea. The political symbolism of solidarity should thus be magnified. Next, the SLCMs should go aboard on virtually every NATO naval vessel. If Turkey and South Korea will be amenable to GLCMs on their soil, thus opening many axes of possible retaliatory strikes against the Soviet Union, let's put them there.

We can only conjecture about the total deployed numbers, as the nuclear ones may vary from zero to many thousands. Moreover, many nonnuclear cruise missiles are obviously needed in any modern defense. Where do we find a source of supply for mass production in the near future? If SALT II is reopened for new, and much better negotiations, the logical first sources of supply are the makers of target drones. They already are cruise guided missiles, so one need merely change the payload, with a tradeoff between fuel and the altered payload weight.

Unlike a "racetrack MX", we can get such cruise missiles in large numbers before a decade has passed, during which time the Soviets otherwise will be strategically superior by any reasonable measure of

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*Christoph Bertram, "European Security and the German Problem," *International Security* (Winter, 1979/1980), pp. 105-116.

†Schmidt, op. cit., p. 90.

the term. Let us close that "strategic superiority" gap as best we can by a mixture of means, while, to repeat (1) we do an extensive "systems analysis" in depth of alternatives to the "racetrack,"* and (2) proceed *together* with our allies to negotiate a better SALT III. Never again should the United States negotiate bad SALT agreements without consulting our own negotiators, let alone our allies, as was done in SALT I and in SALT II.

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*General Rowny agrees and suggests other alternatives to the "racetrack" as quick fixes. (*Wall Street Journal*, 21 March 1980.) Although Secretary Brown has already modified the "racetrack" plan, the modifications do not, in my opinion, suffice to overcome the objections posed by Desmond Ball. See his article "The MX Basing Decision," *Survival* (March/April, 1980), pp. 58-64.