

# Undated: Drafts: NATO

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DRAFT

NATO

The most difficult thing for a human being to do is to change. The good idea of yesterday needs modifying today, and is hopelessly out-of-date tomorrow. But because habits set in so quickly and are so difficult to change, we tend to use yesterday's solutions for today's problems. Nations are no less easy to change than are individuals who comprise them. It is within this context that I want to discuss with you today our North Atlantic Treaty Organization commitments in Europe.

No student of modern history can fail to be moved by the record of events which took place in those dark and fearful days when our NATO Agreements were forged. The United States and the nations of Free Europe were sick of war and its privations; their countries had been ravaged by war. They yearned to return to peacetime occupations. Even before hostilities had eased, 50 nations had signed the Charter of the UN: There was to be no more war. So it was understandable that within one year after the armistice finally came, the American expeditionary force was reduced from 3 million to 400,000 men. With equal speed we rephased wartime industrial machines from military

to civilian production. By 1949 we had only 2 divisions in Western Europe and the conversion of our industrial machine was complete. Our Western allies had done the same. By 1949, there were but 12 divisions in all the nations of free Europe.

But such was not the course of the Soviet Union. Twenty-Six combat ready divisions confronted the Free World borders and the rest of her World War II armies intact, were deployed throughout her empire. Her military production continued at wartime levels. The defeat of Germany and Japan had created vast political and military vacuums to her east and to her west. With her strength, her location and her nationalistic ambitions, she had resolved to fill them. Her hold on the seven European states she occupied during the war continued. While the West celebrated the Armistice her armies moved into Manchuria and North Korea. Then in rapid succession came Soviet pressures on Greece, Iran and Turkey, the Czechoslovak coup of 1948, the 323 day Berlin Blockade, the 1949 explosion of the Soviet A-Bomb, and in 1950, the invasion of South Korea.

It was this fearful climate that the NATO agreements of mutual assistance and cooperation came into being. The fourteen members agreed to supply troops, to standardize equipment, to unify the

command and to work out the strategies of defense. It was necessary for the U. S. to assume the greatest burden, both in men and in equipment. We assumed that burden, and gladly. Western Europe was grateful for our courage and our generosity during those trying years.

But this grim picture stands in sharp contrast of the Europe of today. The recent revolt in Czechoslovakia is but the last of a series of cataclysmic up-risings in the Soviet bloc. With these changes have also come a dramatic reaffirmation of the ties which bind the European community into a whole. East-West Trade missions have become the new order of the day. The volume of trade increases. Italy intends to build a Fiat plant in Russia. France has promised to build Renaults in Bulgaria, West Germany engages in a thriving business with its eastern neighbors. In contrast to the anguished economics of 20 years ago, Western Europe is experiencing an unparalleled era of prosperity, opportunity and optimism. Since 1958, the gross national product of Western Europe has increased by 5% a year. As for harmony, Foreign Minister Gromeko has even paid a visit to Pope Paul in Vatican City.

It is in the light of these striking changes that I believe the time has come when we should re-examine our post-war NATO

commitments. What is the nature of the threat? What are our own national needs? How best should we proceed? First I think we must consider the European perception of the Soviet threat. Apparently it has been far different from our own. For though each member nation pledged its mutual support for the NATO defense, only the U. S. has consistently met its commitments. Not since the start of NATO has any other member maintained its commitments either in manpower or in material. Though the threat was greatest in the early 50's, one could examine their reniging at that time because of their domestic demands. But today's prosperity has not changed their reluctance to meet their quotas; rather, their reluctance has increased. And France, so ardent for NATO in the beginning has now ordered the NATO Headquarters to leave Paris, ordered American Air Force installations out of France, and pulled French units out of the NATO armies.

Of course not all our NATO allies have been as hostile as France. It is also true that this Nation has far-reaching interests in maintaining a Free Europe. Our ties with Europe are varied and complex. In many ways, as with the balance of payments problem, and with our efforts to reduce tariff walls between ourselves, there has been great recognition of the common bonds and problems which unite us and monumental cooperation. Our own de-

mands have not always been free of self interest any more than theirs. Nevertheless, the senior European Diplomat who has been quoted as saying, "You've already won the cold war; but you don't realize it yet," may have spoken wisely.

I believe these changes must be considered in the light of our own pressing national needs. Last year our balance of payments deficit was \$3.5 billion. Our total military expenditures in Europe for 1967 were \$1.6. Cash receipts from the sale of military equipment to Western nations was \$885 million, leaving a foreign exchange gap from military expenditures of \$712 million. Savings of this dimension would not of themselves correct our balance of payment deficit, but they would help and to my mind they are more justifiable than a proposal to place a tax on travel.

Moreover, we need these troops as strategic reserves at home and for Vietnam. Europe has shown little understanding of, or sympathy for our need to maintain our ties with Asia. It is understandable that she would not, but her lack of understanding should not be binding upon ourselves.

In these circumstances, I propose that we reduce our NATO force from the present 300,000 men to something in the vicinity of two divisions. NATO Headquarters should continue its coordinating and planning functions, but our fighting forces should be reduced to token proportions.

I realize that to many people the idea of a token force is a fearful proposition. But I must point out that our present total NATO force is only a token anyway. Free Europe has 24 NATO divisions to guard the border. Off-setting these are 24 Soviet divisions in Eastern Europe, 60 divisions in Western Russia, 10 divisions in Central Russia, 30 divisions in the south and 15 in the east--a total of about 1,700,000 men. Total ground forces of the U. S. are about 1,750,000 men but we are deployed. Unquestionably, the Soviet Union is the dominant military force in Europe. Under these circumstances, two divisions, or even a company of American soldiers is as effective a deterrent, as firm an indication of American commitment as are 6 divisions we now have stationed there.

But the odds are by no means this grim. We have a nuclear capability echeloned throughout Europe. In 19\_\_\_, the American Operation "Big Lift" effectively demonstrated that on short notice we can fly back-up troops stationed at home to staging areas in Europe. Hence, the real problem with any troop withdrawal is the psychological effect on Europe. The danger is that Europe might over react. That, it seems to me, is a calculated risk we are obliged to take. Our allies must realize that they cannot on the one hand argue that the absence of a Soviet threat frees

them from a need to sustain defenses, and on the other protest that our leaving Europe leaves them vulnerable. Surely, they must realize that after two World Wars, a Truman Doctrine, a Marshall Aid Plan, and 18 years of NATO support, that this Nation will never forsake Europe.

The world today is not the world of yesterday. Today this nation has needs and dreams of its own to fill. It is time both we, and the peoples of Western Europe update our thinking.