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EUROPEAN SECURITY AND THE NUCLEAR THREAT SINCE 1945

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Some combination of nostalgia and a lingering respect for decaying power and social forms have often interfered with candid appraisals of European developments since World War II. The period has witnessed a cataclysmic shift in the structure of power reflecting in large measure the creation of powerful strategic nuclear capabilities and the latent or explicit employment of the nuclear threat. It has also witnessed the partial disintegration of the traditional nation-state system, and an alteration in the role assignable to this older form of social organization. Europe--whose initial attainment of international hegemony reflected the mobilization of energies through the agency of the nation-state--has suffered a power eclipse closely associated with the declining power-potential of the nation-state system. Until 1939 the center of world power, Europe became increasingly during World War II the principal target for external forces, a far less enviable position, but one which it continued to occupy through the main period of the Cold War. Since the Berlin crisis, there are signs of its ceasing to be the center of attention--and of its becoming a kind of political backwater, although

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admittedly a highly prosperous one. This less exhilarating status might, of course, be far more congenial than being the arena for the clash of external forces.

These are dramatic changes. Yet historians and sociologists have been loathe (perhaps out of politeness) to subject these changes to searching analysis. The goal of interdisciplinary work in the social sciences is to weave together history, sociology, and political economy to illuminate the fuller meaning of events in a way that the more specialized, individual disciplines cannot achieve.* In applying this interdisciplinary tool, no challenge appears greater than interpreting the revolutionary changes which have taken place in Europe's strategic configuration since the war.

In attempting this reassessment, even the most perceptive of the outstanding political sociologists--Marx and Weber--offer little guidance. Marx does provide something of a clue through his stress on the dominating importance of technology and material power. Yet both men, by being wedded to the assumptions of 19th century nationalism, remained restricted in their perceptions. The long period of peace after 1815 in which the traditional balance of power in some sense "worked" made them somewhat insensitive to the explosive force of national rivalries. In Marx's lifetime warfare was largely, as in Germany and Italy, a phase in the movement toward national unity, though Marx himself could see the promise of the proletarian revolution in such upheavals as the Parisian Commune. But national conflict plays surprisingly little

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*A number of the disciplines--most notably economics--increasingly have veered from such a goal and have tended to focus on internal methodological problems.

role in Marx's thought. In reading Das Kapital, for example, one is impressed by Marx's unconscious acceptance of the existing framework of national states.* To be sure, beneath the established framework, the international proletariat was preparing to rise, but the uprising would presumably be against the existing national order. Nations were one aspect of capitalist civilization--a part of the political superstructure reflecting specifically bourgeois requirements. Nations in themselves did not bear the seeds of their own destruction. Presumably they would survive unchanged until the entire order crumbled.

Similarly for Weber the interpretation of the modern world reflected total acceptance of the framework of the nation-state. A state properly possessed an internal monopoly of force; through control of its own resources any efficient state should be able to protect itself against external attack. Early a National Liberal and a supporter of Bismarck, for Weber it was only the shattering experience of the First World War and its aftermath that turned him away from the dominating national loyalties, and by that time the main body of his work had been completed.**

To understand the forces that shaped this century, one must go back to Hegel or forward to Lenin. In his idealization of the nation-state, Hegel both expressed and gave intellectual reinforcement to tendencies widespread in Europe after the impact of the Napoleonic wars. For him, nationalism was the progressive force, par excellence; its potentially destructive impulses eluded him. Both Marx and Weber reflected this

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*Examine, for example, Chapter X on "The Working Day."

**Cf. the Introduction to From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, edited by H. H. Gerth & C. Wright Mills, London, Kegan Paul, 1947, pp. 32-43.

intellectual tradition--the former quite directly--but its influence was widespread even outside Germany, as Bernard Bosanquet's The Philosophical Theory of the State bears so clear a witness. The latent energies of nationalism, which partially explain Europe's rise to power, also contributed in their destructive phase to its decline. And it is peculiarly the responsibility and tragedy of Germany, which in its neurotic quest for world domination, destroyed a very real European domination--a case of "gestern die ganze Welt" to invert a Hitlerian slogan. Even disregarding the exaggerations of allied propaganda in two World Wars, Hegel's apotheosis of the Prussian state does shed some light on the emotional roots of what culminated in these diseased and destructive tendencies.

Lenin was the first to perceive and to grapple with the cataclysmic implications of the outbreak of war in 1914. For European socialists this event was just as shattering as it was for contemporary liberal thought. It led, not to the collapse of the capitalist order, but to the demise of the 2nd International. Lenin's diagnosis of imperialism as the final stage of capitalism stressed that the newly-created forces of technology and production could no longer be confined within the existing national political divisions. Yet, Lenin's diagnosis contributes little to understanding the major clashes that were to come--save perhaps for Japanese aspirations for the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere which led to war in 1941. While it was true that the existing national boundaries were becoming a barrier to the predictable evolution of productive forces, the subsequent conflicts were to reflect forces more primitive in a sense than the quest for assured

markets and sources of supply. Rather than ideology being a simple reflection of material conditions, material power was increasingly to become the instrument of ideology and the means by which conflicting social philosophies sought to provide self-protection.

Ultimately both Marxist and Leninist thought rested on a misunderstanding of the relationship between material forces and intellectual perceptions. Marx himself was always weak in his understanding of physical force, and it was never fully incorporated into his theoretical structure. Occasionally it is introduced as a deus ex machina--as, for example, in the famous "secret of primitive accumulation" in which the rise of capitalism is explained through expropriation of common lands and the like.* Force is introduced uniquely and exogenously--but logically, if force can determine social evolution at one point in history, it can at another. This logical deficiency is stressed by Schumpeter who points out that the emergence of feudal landlordism can only be explained on the basis of military leadership, yet this development fits in poorly in the Marxist schema.** In like manner, Lenin's expectation was incorrect that military conflicts would reflect the partially thwarted evolution of productive forces. The awesome military forces of the late 20th century are hard to reconcile with Marxist-Leninist doctrine, as is perhaps most revealingly indicated by the Soviet renunciation--and subsequent denunciation--of the inevitability of war with the capitalist world. The role of military force today is to limit the areas of domination by political systems socially and ideologically hostile to the major international social orders.

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*Das Kapital, Chs. XXVI-XXIX.

**J. A. Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy, 3d edition, Harper, 1950, p. 13.

II.

In 1945 the European continent lay shattered. Aside from Great Britain, the European nations were virtually powerless. But it was not expected that such a state of affairs would long continue. The European nations would rise out of the ashes, and resume their natural places in the international order. Indeed, in the case of Germany, special arrangements would have to be worked out to prevent her reassertion of power. These were the expectations of, not only the Europeans themselves, but the Russians and Americans as well. The Russians were hopeful that the security advantages conferred upon them by their westward advance, as great as in 1815, would not be eroded so rapidly as to permit Russia once again to be menaced from the West--as in 1854, 1914, and 1940. Spreading the Marxist gospel, per se, though inextricably bound up in the problem,* was essentially a secondary objective.

For the Americans, European revival and stabilization would complete a process reflected in the desire "to bring the boys home." It was only after a noticeable hiatus that the American government decided that this "natural" development would have to be fostered by American assistance. The Marshall Plan reflected the beliefs that European stability was being hindered by transitory economic problems and that economic support would speed the process of revival and permit the European states to resist the domestic inroads of Communism. After Korea, a second phase

*To establish regimes along the Western border, unwilling to be used as hostile bases against the Soviet motherland, was but a rightful exercise of Soviet power. By definition, the concept of imperialism, applicable to the capitalist nations, was not relevant. Moscow remained the Third Rome; her righteous cause both contributed to and justified the exercise of power.

developed. The perceived threat became primarily that of Soviet military inundation of Western Europe. United States policy shifted toward "mutual security." Through military assistance the European states were to be developed into a bulwark for the containment of Communism. The NATO Alliance, launched in 1949, was envisioned in a traditional way--the "grand alliance" to resist the threat of aggressive totalitarianism. American support, as on prior occasions, would supply only that margin of support that would enable the European nations to cope with their security problems primarily through their own efforts. The military incorporation of Germany itself into the Western security system after 1954 represented the culmination of this effort.

By contrast to these expectations, consider the actual trends since 1949. The European states have achieved a level of prosperity, which provides at least the illusion of power, but this prosperity has been paralleled by an increasing military weakness relative to the U.S. or the Soviet Union.* The erosion of British military power has gone even further. Rather than being the weakest member of the "Big Three," it has sunk into the second tier, and is today in many respects militarily inferior to the Federal Republic. But such intermediate gradations are of secondary importance. All the formerly great powers of Western Europe remain dependent on the United States for protection. They are targeted by Soviet forces to which they themselves have no adequate counter. Both the NATO and the Warsaw Pact alliances are increasingly dominated militarily by their most powerful partners. How different

*A. W. Marshall, "NATO Defense Planning: The Political and Bureaucratic Constraints" in Stephen Enke (editor), Defense Management, Prentice Hall, 1967.

the reality is from the presuppositions of the late 40s and early 50s, and this difference is accounted for by the early and continuing failure to recognize the implications of the revolution in military power and technology.*

There has been a continuing restlessness with a relationship regarded somehow as "unnatural." The restlessness and the distrust has fluctuated over time in response to changing perceptions of the threat and of the feasibility of alternatives. Nonetheless, the dominant trend has been toward increasing military dependence. The underlying reasons for the trend, while understressed in public discussion, are too fundamental to be subject to alteration in the foreseeable future. Basic is the ultimate preference of the European states for enhanced safety over the pursuit of a risky and precarious independence that is authentic rather than synthetic. Combining with this preference has been the reality that the European powers have both been priced out of the market and have lagged at least one step behind in their potential for deploying adequately advanced strategic systems.

If we examine the strategic gap perennially confronting the European powers, the importance of this point becomes strikingly clear. The strategies for European defense have undergone a continuing evolution. Conceptually and very approximately, three of its major phases might be delineated as follows:

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*Cf. Warner R. Schilling, "The H-Bomb Decision," Political Science Quarterly, March 1961, pp. 26-27, and J. R. Schlesinger, "On Relating Non-technical Elements to Systems Studies," P-3545, The RAND Corporation, February 1967, pp. 5-6, 16-17.

1. 1945-54: Atomic Retaliation--plus the overwhelming dominance of the American mobilization base.

2. 1954-62: Massive Retaliation--increasingly supported by the possible employment of tactical nuclear weapons.

3. 1962- : Flexible Response--sophisticated U.S. targeting strategy designed to limit damage and reduce risk of city exchanges--reinforced by conventional and tactical nuclear capabilities in Europe.

As one examines the then-preferred strategic alternatives, it will be noticed that in each phase the European states were at least a step behind in their ability to acquire the then-dominant capabilities. They depended on their major ally to be somewhat ahead of the Soviets. In Phase 1, for example, European security depended upon the ability of the U.S. Air Force to deliver weapons against Soviet targets, plus Soviet perception of the potential power, not of the European states, but of the awesome U.S. industrial base. Toward the end of this phase, Britain was able to develop a minimal force that could threaten limited retaliation against Soviet targets--a catching-up process never to be repeated. In the mid-50s the Soviets had begun to develop a potentially crushing nuclear capability against Western Europe. The possibility of major conventional operations against Europe (then called "limited war") began to be taken seriously at least in the intellectual community, but the risks were assuaged, not only by the residual threat of massive retaliation, but temporarily by the American edge in delivery of tactical nuclear weapons against Soviet combat forces, which had limited ability to respond.

In the late 50s and early 60s there was intense, if limited and premature, discussion of the inevitable waning of the credibility of the American deterrent, as the Russians developed an intercontinental

strike force capable of retaliating against American cities. The rhetorical question was raised: would the American President accept suicide in order to punish or limit a Soviet attack against Europe?--and the implied answer was "probably not." Though serious concern among Europeans was less extensive even in this period than was frequently supposed, it is apparent that European willingness to question the validity of the American commitment did then reach a peak. Europe's willingness to accept dependence on the United States exhibited at least a conceptual tendency to decline, and the European longing for independence was visibly strengthened. Moreover, in this period it became recognized that the major European states could put together forces which, vulnerability and penetration considerations aside, would be approximately as powerful as U.S. retaliatory capabilities in Phase 1. The European desire, more a dream than a reality, to acquire small but independent nuclear capabilities was given significant, if temporary, reinforcement.

Reviewing the trend in strategic concepts since, say, 1960, provides a startling insight into why it is infeasible for the European states seriously to aspire to acquire independent control over their own defenses. In this regard, it is most revealing that apprehension over the expected waning of the credibility of the American deterrent is rarely expressed today--outside of French official circles.* Simultaneously a number of the European states have looked at the nuclear

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*Even in this instance, the argument is somewhat disingenuous. It is designed to promote and support the supposed "French alternative" for Europe, however spurious that may be. Official French beliefs regarding American support are ambivalent, at the very least. For example, the deployment of the highly-vulnerable land-based missiles in Provence is sometimes justified on the grounds that any attack on metropolitan France would surely elicit an American response.

forces that are within their grasp and have concluded that such forces buy them very little in terms of protection against the Soviet Union. The two developments are not unconnected. In part, the growing disinclination to question the validity of the American commitment reflects the growing recognition that there is no serious alternative.* There is a willingness to repress apprehensions--in response to the very human tendency to view developments in the most favorable possible light. Examining why independent nuclear forces are now recognized as less satisfactory than reliance on the American guarantee goes to the heart of the problem of the faltering of the self-contained nation-state. To implement a serious nuclear strategy a nation requires sophisticated strategic forces, but such forces are available only to a few nations. The strategic gap between them and other nations is all-but-impossible for a responsible state to cross. For this reason full military independence--a prerequisite for the traditional nation-state concept--remains an unattainable goal for the nations of Europe.

The perception of the nature of deterrence has undergone a steady metamorphosis since the first, simplistic notions of retaliatory city-busting were expressed in the late 40s. Along with the changing concepts, the performance demanded of strategic forces has steadily grown. In the 50s it was recognized that in bilateral nuclear war only a second-strike force (one with substantial invulnerability) could adequately serve as a deterrent. Britain's abandonment in 1960 of the quest for a fully independent force reflected recognition that with

*French actions in recent years have seriously undermined whatever hope that has existed for the only <u>serious</u> alternative--a unified European force--however hypothetical such a force may be.

the advent of the accurate ICBM, it was difficult for her to obtain invulnerable basing. The technical problems of assuring system reliability and of penetrating against improving air defenses were also recognized. Nonetheless, a small city-busting capability did lie within the grasp of European powers in the 60s--relatively invulnerable, when employing submarine-based missiles, and likely-to-penetrate, until such time as ABM defenses were deployed by the Soviet Union. Why do such forces appear inadequate in the 60s when they appeared quite satisfactory in the 40s?

Briefly the answer is that city-busting is something that can be lightly threatened only on a more or less unilateral basis. Under bilateral conditions it can be credibly threatened only when very great issues are at stake, issues for which a nation might convincingly court suicide. Far more rational under almost any imaginable circumstances is to reserve one's forces--and thereby to create every incentive for the enemy to refrain from striking at one's own cities. This goal is embodied in the strategy of Flexible Response. In 1962 Secretary McNamara indicated that the United States was turning away from a city-busting strategy. In its place was indicated an intention that the United States would, if forced, strike initially at enemy military targets. The tremendous American capacity to destroy enemy cities would be reserved for the purpose of continuing to deter into the war period enemy strikes against our cities and those of our allies. Such a threat, while not lightly undertaken against a powerful foe, is at least more credible than a suicidal thrust--and holds out at least the possibility of minimizing damage to the social and economic fabric of

the belligerents. Implementation of such a strategy, however, requires an incredibly sophisticated strategic capability available in the West only to so powerful a nation as the United States.

The key is the ability to implement a number of options--in addition to the option of striking at cities.* It requires at the outset a very large force, so that numerous vehicles and weapons can be allocated to strikes at the extended forces of the foe. It requires a hyper-protected force for intra-war deterrence, with long endurance and excellent communications and control. It requires, in the counterforce stage, the ability to assess damage--and to reassign vehicles--thereby compounding the requirements for the command, control, and communications system. It requires knowledge of the deployment of opponent forces. It requires a lengthy period to create such a force. The force is extraordinarily complex, expensive, and costly in time.

The upshot is to put the quietus to any serious impulse toward independence on the part of the European states. They have been hopelessly priced out of the game. While it is not certain that they could acquire secure second-strike forces, it is clear that the requirements for counterforce, damage-limiting, and effective command, control, and communications systems lie beyond them. Thus, in Phase 3 the United States and the Soviet Union have swept on--to something beyond the reach of the European states. In this lies the fundamental

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*For both the strategic concept and the onerous requirements to implement it, see Malcolm W. Hoag, "Nuclear Strategic Options and European Force Participation" in R. N. Rosecrance (editor), The Dispersion of Nuclear Weapons, Columbia University Press, 1964.

explanation of why the Europeans are less inclined to challenge the validity of the American commitment.*

A limited and independent city-busting capability could inflict some damage on the Soviet Union, but it would leave any small, concentrated, vulnerable European state open to Soviet retaliation, which could mean the end for that society. To threaten mutual homicide--as in the original conception of the balance of terror--may be a feasible strategy under certain circumstances. To suicidally court liquidation after administering limited damage to so powerful a foe as the Soviet Union is not so much a strategy as a tragic farce. The European states would be risking too much and threatening too little to be taken seriously--if we correctly ascribe to them prudence and a desire for self-preservation. Given a better alternative, "demographic targeting"--to use the declared objective of the Frence force de dissuasion--becomes an absurdity. The United States would be right to seek to disassociate itself from such a reckless threat and even more reckless action. What is more, it is clearly in the interest of the European states similarly to disassociate themselves.

European nations--whatever their public professions--recognize the logic of nuclear force. They can no longer aspire to be militarily

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*An additional, though possibly a transitory, explanation lies in the spreading belief in Europe that there is at present only one superpower: the United States. Such a view is hardly consistent with the prior belief that the United States would be unconditionally deterred by Soviet forces.

The current euphoria may be a passing phase. If the Soviets expand their strategic forces and adopt a more menacing tone, there could easily be some recrudescence of European doubts regarding the American guarantee.

independent nations in the traditional sense. Since the war they have continually been faced with the choice between equity and safety--of striving for national independence or accepting American protection. Whatever the longing for complete independence, they have invariably opted for the latter: safety. They recognize that the United States with its powerful forces and its long head start can do more for their security than they can do themselves. Being prudent men, their leaders suppress their longings and their nostalgia, and recognize that they prefer safety to a precarious independence. Contrary to a frequent interpretation, French behavior and policy represent a confirmation rather than a denial of this reality. Were it not for the complete security and the policy isolation provided France by the American umbrella over Europe, the flamboyant but synthetic independence currently professed by France would be rapidly curtailed.

III.

Some of the nuclear-age implications for nationalism remain to be spelled out. Traditionally a full-fledged nation-state has been presumed both to have control over the forces necessary for its own protection* and to possess a monopoly of force within its boundaries.

*In the past probably fewer than ten powers have fully qualified as nation-states in this sense. Within Europe, the Low Countries and the Balkans represented classes of states that could not protect themselves, and whose rights were normally respected or disregarded respectively. The extent of the nation-state system was always a matter of degree. But the recent change in degree amounts to a change in kind. The number of powers fully capable of self-defense has now shrunk to no more than two--a bitter pill for some formerly great nations. On the other hand, the unending creation of new "nations" in former colonial areas, wholly devoid of the means of self-protection and lacking even internal control over their own resources, underscores in a sense the erosion of the nation-state concept. The foundation on which the United Nations rested has been undermined through erosion of the original base and through watering-down by additions.

A major state function has been to protect its own citizens. By inference a state would presumably not court destruction of its own citizens in order to protect non-citizens. Such concepts are implicit, for example, in Weber--even though his writings are of little help in explaining the relations between states.

In relation to such traditional norms, we are in this age confronted by a number of seeming paradoxes. Nations do not control the forces for their own protection. Some nations have found it appropriate to risk sizable portions of their own citizens and societies to offer protection to third parties. Other nations have sought protection against presumed foes by threatening the destruction, not of the foe himself, but of non-citizens and societies presumably of lesser value to him. All live under the nuclear threat. No society can have complete confidence in its ability to protect its citizens. Protection is available only in its secondary form of persuading a potential foe that it is not in his interest to do that which he is capable of doing. The threats of employing nuclear forces are used continually, though normally only implicitly, to extract compliant behavior across national lines. Yet despite the latent threat of massive nuclear terror, most of us manage, not only to live comfortably, but to feel comfortable.

Some of these paradoxes are reflected in the NATO alliance. In its inception its orientation was traditional; an alliance for mutual <u>military</u> support between sovereign and (juridically) equal nations. The reality has become the overwhelming dominance by a single major partner--though to maintain the customary fiction, a number of charades continue to be performed. The distribution of risks, burdens, and benefits is totally

unlike that which could be predicted by a traditionalist who views states as blind monsters pursuing their self-centered interests.

Once again, a review of how the strategic situation in Europe has evolved provides an insight into some of the ironies. In retrospect, it seems clear that both the Soviet Union and the West have regularly misinterpreted each others' intentions. For example, the United States has long recognized that SAC was the main military impediment to possible Soviet movements against NATO. In the 50s it began to fear that the Soviets, perceiving the United States as the main opponent, would launch a war by attacking our strategic forces--and possibly our cities as well. There was, of course, every reason to protect ourselves and to diminish any incentive for or premium on a Soviet first-strike by strengthening our second-strike posture. Nonetheless, all too many Americans deceived themselves into regarding a Soviet "bolt from the blue" as a relatively probable event.

This tendency may have been strengthened by some underlying "Pearl Harbor complex" reflecting that traumatic event in recent American history. Nevertheless, it now seems quite evident that the Soviets themselves never planned a strategic build-up satisfactory for an initial attack on U.S. forces. The "bomber gap" and "missile gap" controversies bear witness to the American tendency to overstate both the actual and planned Soviet forces for the intercontinental strike mission. It may be noted that our lack of information regarding Soviet strength and Soviet plans may have been quite costly to the Soviets by spurring on the build-up of our own forces.

Actual Soviet behavior and inferrable Soviet objectives seem to have been quite different from what we were inclined to attribute to them. After World War II the Soviets felt themselves to be weak relative to the United States. They had no intention of deliberately precipitating any war with the United States. Their ambitions and fears lay elsewhere. Without having recourse to metaphysics regarding the Russian soul, it is apparent that Russian experience has been dominated by devastating incursions from Western Europe. The Soviets continued to fear an attack from Western Europe--this time abetted by the United States. They have consequently tended to exaggerate and to fear the potential power of the West European states. Their perceptions and their defensive arrangements were directed against the presumed threat. Their images of the world and their obsessions ("invasion by aggressive West European states")--reinforced by strong bureaucratic tendencies reflecting routinized functions and outlooks--all contributed to the Soviet military orientation toward Western Europe.

It is easy and tempting to rationalize after the event--and to ascribe logic and foresight to behavior that reflected only habit and instinct. When, after 1960, it became evident that contrary to our expectations the Soviets had deployed only skimpy intercontinental strike forces, yet at the same time had deployed some thousands of shorter-ranged missiles and bombers against Western Europe, there was an attempt to uncover the presumably careful calculations that accounted for this Soviet deployment. It was suggested that the Soviets had recognized that they could deter a U.S. attack by holding Western Europe "hostage"--and that the Soviets had consciously selected this

posture as their preferred deterrent. Such an interpretation ignores, of course, the non-rational elements--the role of past images, bureaucratic lethargy and the like. In addition, it ignores certain technical considerations that may have strongly influenced the Soviet decision, notably, the greater ease of such a deployment for a nation with limited resources and with limited experience in advance R&D.

The interesting point is that, however small the conscious element, the Soviet posture of deterrence did in considerable measure work out this way. It was regularly said in the 50s--not without ample exaggeration--that "the only thing the Soviets need to reach the channel is shoes." Hyperbole aside, however, the United States was continually aware in the 50s of Western Europe's vulnerabilities and was reluctant to take actions that might goad or entice the Soviets into hostile moves. While this was manifestly a dominant worry during the Korean period, it has never disappeared as a source of American concern. The notion that the ability to move against Europe was the "trump card" through which the Soviets deterred an attack on their homeland clearly represents an overstatement.* Yet, there is little doubt that this retaliatory capability did serve to deter many lesser American moves.

It is noteworthy how different the real conditions were from those suggested by the strategic similes and metaphors of the period--

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*In the era of Khrushchev, the rattling of missiles and warheads was not infrequent, not only in specific circumstances like the Suez crisis, but more generally in the form of "it would only take 5 or 10 thermonuclear bombs to destroy...England,...West Germany,...etc." Originally this may have been intended as propaganda directed primarily against the Europeans themselves. In later years, when the Soviets perceived that many in the West took the "hostage thesis" seriously, appropriate comments occasionally were made to exploit this belief for what it was worth.

the two scorpions in the bottle, and the like. Some touch of the melodramatic may have been involved in the contention that the American sting would be fatal--particularly so, before the last years of the decade. More important, the view that a Soviet attack could be fatal--in the sense in which the word was employed in the discussion--represented the triumph of poetry over reality. Soviet capabilities were very limited, and it is questionable whether a major strike at the highly vulnerable SAC was feasible. The use of the dramatic images reflected a widespread tendency both to overstate the nuclear terror and the extent of Soviet strength.

Even though the real conditions were very different, the prevailing images were not without strategic consequences. Because it was assumed that the Soviets were rapidly deploying an intercontinental capability that could deter our retaliatory strike, it was feared that the Soviets would feel free to attack Western Europe. A direct effect was that we redoubled our efforts and pulled far ahead in the strategic field. On the other hand, the Soviets feared an attack from Western Europe. Consequently they developed intra-European capabilities that deterred, not an attack on their homeland, but lesser moves by the West.

Two kinds of inferences may be drawn from this experience. First, the balance of terror may be somewhat more stable and less "delicate" than is frequently feared.* Despite the imbalance of both the strategic forces and of the ground forces within Europe, a rough overall

*Compare Albert Wohlstetter's classic treatment of the problem in "The Delicate Balance of Terror," Foreign Affairs, January 1959, pp. 211-234.

balance was attained. Overall deterrence in this context, and hopefully in other contexts, arose from a rather heterogeneous collection of forces, fears, and commitments that discouraged either side from making very bold moves. To analyze deterrence in terms of the logic of a single set of forces--like strategic capabilities--may lead to excessively pessimistic conclusions. The "delicacy" of the balance of terror may be more logical than psychological.

Second, in terms of the conventional "reasons of state" the calculations and the behavior of the participants has been astonishing. To protect Western Europe the United States has been willing to risk casualties among its own civilians equal to half the European population. At times the Soviet Union may have hoped to deter the United States from certain actions by its destructive potential against the cities and people of Western Europe. The latter remain at least a partial hostage, even though they are not the direct responsibilities of the United States Government. American actions at distant points--like Cuba or Vietnam--may cause the Europeans to fear for their own security, even though they are no party to the dispute. Whatever the disagreements over interpretation, all can agree that self-centered nationalism sheds little light on these phenomena.

IV.

The inability of nations in the nuclear era independently to provide protection for their populations against external terror saps at nationalism in two ways. First, quite obviously most nations begin to perceive the inadequacy of their internal resources and their

ultimate dependence on external support. Second, with the overwhelming majority of nations wholly incapable of protecting themselves against an external nuclear threat, the pressure is on the really powerful states, the United States and the Soviet Union, to guarantee protection to third parties under circumstances of risk to their own citizens so great that by past conceptions of self-contained states the commitments should not be undertaken.

The dominant reality in international conflict has become the contingent recourse to strategic nuclear power. Thus, there has been a change in the material conditions of power that brings into question prior social forms. Despite the deficiencies in the Marxist analysis of physical force, by an extension of the Marxist logic one would expect that these "new forces" would be bursting through the dry social husks or motley national fetters to bring a new social order into being. But contrary to Marxist conceptions, the older social forms regularly demonstrate an uncanny persistency. The "superstructure"--for all classes--continues to contain numerous traditional elements inexplicable in terms of current material conditions. For non-Marxists this should not be surprising: the "new day" never arrives completely. We are perennially faced with what Pareto called the "social residues." Without questioning the elements of value embodied in these residues, they do inevitably imply frustration for the logicians who would introduce greater efficiency into social arrangements.

Take the case of NATO. From the first there have been those who hoped that the alliance would turn into something more than an alliance. President Kennedy spoke of the "Atlantic Partnership." At a less

dramatic level, military systems analysts have repeatedly hoped that the allies would treat military allocations as part of a common pool and strive for the highly effective defense arrangements available through specialization among the allies. Much of this has fallen under the heading of "integration," and it is no secret that particularly as a result of General de Gaulle's actions the integration concept has now fallen on parlous times. Undoubtedly, there was some element of naiveté in the systems approach which ignored the abiding strength of the nation-state structure--and the continuing desire to invest resources in either traditional or narrowly national goals.

Yet, despite the persistence of the national fetters, one should be under no illusions regarding the underlying force for supranationalism. In Europe, at least, there are strong emotions pointing in this direction, and even the Gaullist party in France has been forced to give lip service to supranationalism while avoiding a forthright statement of the nationalist ideology of its leader.* Much of what has been said about resurgent nationalism reflects a kind of froth on the surface of a more fundamental international structure.

Europe itself has failed to break out of the chrysallis of the Community institutions and remains fettered by the forms of nationalism. As far as international power is concerned, this has left Europe half-doomed to weakness. It remains the hostage of one superpower, the protectorate of the other. Needless to say, the Europeans now have far less ability to influence events than if the movement for European unification had been successful. The sharp curtailment of

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*Nathan Leites, The "Europe" of the French, The RAND Corporation, RM-4584-ISA, June 1965, especially pp. 13-28.

the influence of the European states has resulted in a loss of elan--particularly since 1956. This damage to self-confidence has reflected itself in two ways: either passive acceptance or a well-advertised, if nominal, independence.

Surface manifestations of the latter type should not mislead anyone. Within the NATO alliance itself, influence will continue to be roughly proportional to contribution. Who pays the piper will continue to have some control over the tune. In this respect, the contrast between France and the Federal Republic is instructive. Despite its posture of independence, France's impact on events have been limited to those circumstances in which its supranational commitments have given her the rights of veto. By contrast the growing role of Germany--feared by many Europeans--reflects her increasingly large relative contribution to NATO and her willingness to play the role of a responsible member of the Alliance.

The ultimate strategic dominance of the United States and the Soviet Union does not mean, of course, that they are in a position to control all the developments taking place outside their frontiers. In the Middle Ages the barons might remain secure in their castles, while the countryside seethed with unrest (which the barons lacked the means or the inclination to suppress). In the existing structure of international politics, it is the interest of the weaker states not to create conditions in which the superpowers retired to their own fiefs and ceased their attempts to preserve stability outside. Within Europe, conditions that might cause disturbance include such phenomena as nuclear spread, the egregious pursuit of national advantage, and the

persistent tweaking of the eagle's feathers or the bear's tail. For the third world a similar list could be compiled. The naive view has been proved wrong that the nation-states having lost their vital impulse, would quickly fade away. Yet, it might be even more misleading to exaggerate the potential strength of the former great powers of Europe. The maintenance of stability in Europe, as well as outside, will depend on the United States and the Soviet Union continuing to play active and generous roles.