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Strategic Nuclear Parity and NATO Defense Doctrine

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STRATEGIC NUCLEAR PARITY AND NATO DEFENSE DOCTRINE

by

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FOREWORD

In his concisely written analysis, LTC Burrell investigates the evolution of NATO's defense strategy as it responds to changes in the US-Soviet nuclear relationship. The rise of the Soviet Union to strategic parity has been the underlying cause of the fundamental reformulations of NATO doctrine over the past 25 years.

The monograph describes the movement of the defense doctrine of the Western Alliance as it changed from massive retaliation during the Eisenhower-Dulles period in the 1950's, to flexible response in the 1960's, into the current debate over deterrence and defense through conventional and tactical nuclear capability.

Students of NATO doctrine will find an extensive list of books and articles dealing with the evolution of NATO's defense strategy in the Endnotes section.

R. G. GARD, JR.
Lieutenant General, USA
President

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

LTC Raymond E. Burrell, USA, was commissioned in the Field Artillery following graduation from Stetson University in 1958. He has served in Artillery units in Alaska, Vietnam and Germany and commanded the 4th Battalion, 5th Field Artillery at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. He was a member of the US expeditionary force dispatched to the Dominican Republic in 1965 and has participated in one REFORGER Exercise in West Germany. While assigned to the Headquarters, United States Army, Europe in 1971-73, LTC Burrell worked closely with British, French, and West German military and civilian agencies concerned with Berlin contingency plans and exercises. LTC Burrell holds masters degrees from Wake Forest University (History), Auburn University (Political Science) and Boston University (International Relations) and is a 1977 graduate of the US Army War College Corresponding Studies Program.

INTRODUCTION

In its quest for deterrence and defense, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has developed a curious love-hate relationship with nuclear weapons. On the deterrence side, the threat of the use of nuclear weapons is indispensable, while on the defense side, the use of nuclear weapons is unthinkable.[1] The dilemma is a real one for NATO strategy. When the United States enjoyed clear-cut nuclear supremacy, it was decided to favor deterrence through the doctrine of massive retaliation. With the advent of strategic nuclear parity, however, the choice swung back toward defense, as manifested in the strategy of flexible response. That neither massive retaliation nor flexible response has been able to resolve the basic contradiction, the former for reasons of conceptual inadequacies (an incredible deterrent) and the latter for insufficient capacity (an incredible defense), is less important than the logic imposed upon the choice by the compelling reality of strategic nuclear parity. For indeed, the fact of parity has added new dimensions to what is an old problem for the Atlantic Alliance.

This paper will endeavor to measure the impact of strategic nuclear parity on NATO strategy. In recognition of the fact that NATO strategic doctrines have been dominated by US concepts, it will largely follow the American point of view.[2] Specifically, in a European context, I will compare massive retaliation with flexible response to determine alterations in the techniques employed for the threat of the use of force caused by strategic parity. Attention will be devoted to each component of NATO's military power—strategic nuclear forces, tactical nuclear weapons, and conventional forces. In addition, it will examine the dynamics of the contemporary environment so as to highlight actual and potential changes in the degree of reliance placed on each component for deterrence and defense. And finally, it will conclude with a brief speculative account of the probable outcomes of current trends in NATO strategic thought.

PRE-PARITY: MASSIVE RETALIATION

NATO was introduced to the doctrine of massive retaliation by the "New Look" of the Eisenhower Administration in 1953. Designed to take advantage of US strategic nuclear superiority (Table 1), the New Look was based on the assumption that the Soviet Union would not achieve strategic nuclear parity for at least another decade. Thus, to offset NATO's perceived inferiority in conventional forces, massive retaliation represented a threat to escalate any conflict, other than a simple border incident or brush fire, into a general nuclear war with strikes directed upon the Russian motherland itself. Openly proclaimed as an absolute US nuclear guarantee to Europe, it sought to dispel any doubts lingering from the Korean War experience concerning US willingness to answer Communist aggression by the use of nuclear weapons.[3] In short, with the United States invulnerable to a Soviet strategic attack, massive retaliation was a strategy of unilateral deterrence.[4]

Table 1: NATO Strength Relative to Warsaw Pact, 1950-1975

Military Component	1950	1955	1960	1965	1970	1975
Strategic Nuclear (U.S.)	Superiority →		Transition →		Parity →	
Tactical Nuclear (U.S.)	Superiority →		Transition →		Parity →	
Conventional	Inferiority →					

Although it was not officially sanctioned by the NATO Council of Ministers until December 1957, by late 1954 Alliance defense plans were being based on the principles of massive retaliation. NATO commanders were authorized to plan for the prompt first use of nuclear weapons to halt and repel a Soviet invasion. And with US tactical nuclear weapons starting to arrive in Europe in 1954, the arena for nuclear retaliation was expanded to include the battlefield.[5] In November of that year, Field Marshal Bernard

Montgomery, speaking as Deputy Supreme Allied Commander, clarified the new policy

> I want to make it absolutely clear that we at SHAPE are basing our operational planning on using atomic and thermonuclear weapons in our defense. With us it is no longer "they may possibly be used." It is very definitely "they will be used if we are attacked." In fact, we have reached the point of no return as regards the use of atomic and thermonuclear weapons in a hot war.[5]

Even if massive retaliation was the exclusive product of American thinking, it was nonetheless readily accepted by the European allies. Attractive on both sides of the Atlantic for its economy, the new doctrine promised NATO greater security at less cost. In particular, when the alternative was conventional rearmament on the scale proposed by the Lisbon Conference of the NATO Council of Ministers in February 1952, which had set a goal of 96 divisions by the end of 1954, the New Look offered welcome relief from the burden of raising and maintaining such large standing armies while still engaged in postwar economic recovery. As Harold von Riekhoff writes, "whatever strategic objections the allies might have put forward [to massive retaliation] offered no adequate counterweight to its overriding economic inducements."[6] There was general acceptance that massive retaliation could do what its best known proponent, US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, said it could, that is, provide "maximum deterrent at a bearable cost . . . by placing more reliance on deterrent power and less dependence on local defensive power."[6]

Even after the dramatic events of 1957, which saw the launching of Sputnik and the first successful test of a Soviet intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), had acted to raise concern that the Soviet Union might have achieved the ability to deliver nuclear armed missiles against the United States, the Eisenhower Administration stuck to the doctrine of massive retaliation. Summoning the NATO Council of Ministers to Paris in December 1957, the United States not only reconfirmed its commitment to massive retaliation, but won formal approval of the doctrine as Alliance strategy as well. Addressing the Council, Dulles proclaimed:

> The major deterrent to Soviet aggression against NATO is the maintenance of a retaliatory power of such capacity as to convince the Soviets that such aggression would result in their own destruction. This power rests in the United States Strategic Air Command and in other nuclear striking forces. In this respect we have *superiority* over the Soviet Union. As long-range missiles become available, they will play their part in maintaining that deterrent.[9] (Emphasis added)

Combined with a renewed US pledge that "an attack upon one is an attack upon all," this served to forge a direct linkage between the American presence in Europe and the commitment of US strategic nuclear forces to NATO; a commitment that was promised to continue into the missile age.[10] But it was President Eisenhower who gave the ultimate assurance, pledging to the Council "in the most solemn terms that the United States would come, at once and with all appropriate force, to the assistance of any NATO nation subjected to armed attack."[11]

Under the doctrine of massive retaliation, conventional forces were assigned a supporting role. Designed to confront only minor incursions against NATO territory without recourse to nuclear weapons, their primary function was to serve as a "tripwire" that, in the event of a Warsaw Pact invasion, automatically would trigger a response by the US nuclear deterrent. While this increased pressures from the other allies for the retention of a sizeable presence of American forces in forward positions in order to insure a direct US interest in the tripwire, superiority in conventional forces was conceded freely to the Soviet Union. In place of the Lisbon goal of 96 divisions, the Radford Plan was adopted, which trimmed the overall Alliance objective to 30 active divisions for the Central Front. Moreover, training and readiness of NATO's ground forces were deemphasized, as there were no plans for engaging in sustained combat in Europe. Defense clearly had given way to deterrence.[12]

At the same time, however, NATO's conventional forces were being augmented by the addition of tactical nuclear weapons. Convinced that "a mixed nuclear-conventional force is NATO's best posture," the Eisenhower Administration sought to strengthen the Alliance's "shield" by giving it an increasingly powerful nuclear capability.[13] The objective was to create a nuclear-equipped tripwire that would become an "integral part of the deterrent."[14] Even European weapons production was to be oriented toward the manufacture of "modern [i.e., nuclear] weapons delivery systems," including intermediate range ballistic missiles (IRBM), for which the United States would provide (and control!) the nuclear warheads.[15] In short, emphasis was placed on pushing as many nuclear weapons as possible into Western Europe for deterrence reasons. But lacking an employment doctrine for these new weapons, their numbers grew more as a function of US production capacity than as a firm military requirement derived from NATO war plans.[16] As one high placed defense planner testified later, the development and production of nuclear artillery shells during the 1950's merely "reflected the availability of U-235." And Alain Enthoven recalls that conditions in NATO during that period became "simply a race to equip everybody—even the infantry—with nuclear weapons."[17] The whole process, as Uwe Nerlich asserts, "emerged not exactly from strategic analysis but rather from the Administration's hope of saving money and manpower and from the Services' fear that unless they had a nuclear role the dominance of the Strategic Air Command would threaten their endowments."[18]

As a result, by the early 1960's the US nuclear arsenal in Europe had grown to awesome proportions. At the battlefield level, nuclear artillery, rockets, and missiles were possessed by the United States and under US custody and in support of allied ground and air forces as well. Also within the NATO command framework, there were US and allied nuclear capable aircraft and IRBM's, many of which were maintained on quick reaction alert (QRA) to strike interdiction and countervalue targets throughout the Warsaw Pact area. And finally, outside the NATO control structure, but

stationed in Europe for use against the Soviet Union, there were US Thor missiles in Britain, Jupiter missiles in Italy and Turkey, and some B-47 and B-57 strategic bombers operating from US bases in allied states. But even these forward based strategic systems had no rationale outside a European conflict.[19] All in all, this array of US nuclear power in Europe was regarded both as an added measure of deterrence and as a direct link to the full panoply of US strategic forces poised to strike at the first indication of Soviet aggression. At least, that was the theory behind massive retaliation.

Yet even under the conditions of US nuclear superiority which permitted it to flourish, massive retaliation was a mixed blessing for the Alliance. Coming to rest its dependence on the unilateral US deterrent, NATO turned away from its charter purpose of collective security. With the nuclear foundation of its strategy constituting a virtual American monopoly, the other allies in effect were demoted from "active participants to passive security consumers."[20] Moreover, massive retaliation, by its dictate for almost instant decisionmaking, as contrasted by a conventional defense environment in which decisions are not of the same urgency, tended further to centralize control of NATO's fate in US hands. Consequently, while continuing to look upon the presence of US forces in Europe as evidence of the credibility of the US nuclear guarantee, the other allies, lacking a finger on the nuclear trigger, could never be completely certain that the United States would resort to nuclear warfare in the defense of Europe, or even that nuclear weapons would be used in accordance with their priorities and in their best interests.[21] Charles Doran's model of bounded deterrence illustrates their problem, which became more acute as US strategic vulnerability increased. "Despite the attempt the [US] makes to bolster the credibility of the deterrence notion by dressing it in the costume of absolute commitment across extra-territorial objectives," Doran concludes, "recipients of such commitments have reason to doubt the universality of American resolve to defend them."[22]

But as a strategy for ensuring the security of Europe, massive retaliation did not fail from internal causes. Dependent on US strategic superiority and invulnerability, it simply could not

survive as a credible deterrent in an era of strategic nuclear parity and mutual US/Soviet vulnerability, which by the early 1960's was rapidly approaching reality. Under these conditions, as Henry Kissinger, an early critic of massive retaliation, pointed out, "the defense of Europe . . . [could] no longer rest on the threat of all-out war alone, for this threat might not be believed and thus tempt aggression." Or, more seriously, "it might encourage a pre-emptive attack."[23] At the same time, Kissinger noted, as the United States grew more vulnerable, the European allies had reason to fear that Washington would come to view fewer and fewer objectives as worth the risk of all-out war.[24] Nevertheless, the pressures on NATO to abandon massive retaliation came from Washington, and not from the capitals of Western Europe.

POST-PARITY: FLEXIBLE RESPONSE

In December 1967 the NATO Defense Planning Committee, following 6 years of prodding by the United States, formally endorsed the strategy of flexible response.[25] Born as the Kennedy Administration's answer to the emerging fact of mutual nuclear deterrence, it was designed to replace the all-or-nothing doctrine of massive retaliation with a strategy that offered the alliance a range of flexible options appropriate to the level of Warsaw Pact aggression. It was an effort "to strike the balance between the desire for posing the maximum threat and the need for a strategy which does not paralyze the will."[26] In short, it recognized that Soviet leaders probably would not believe that the United States, under conditions of strategic nuclear parity, would agree to run the risk of using nuclear weapons to counter a conventional aggression in Europe. Thus, flexible response was to fill this void in deterrence by placing greater reliance on conventional forces as a first line of defense against conventional attack.[27]

The meaning of flexible response is spelled out in NATO document 14/3, entitled "Overall Strategic Concept for the Defense of the NATO Area," dated 16 January 1968. Specifically, if deterrence should fail, there are three levels of response open to the allies under the 14/3 strategy. Assuming a conventional attack, the first level is direct defense at the border with NATO's

conventional forces. If this level of action should be insufficient to halt and repel the invasion, the second level is deliberate escalation employing tactical nuclear weapons. At this level the Alliance seeks to defeat the aggressor by raising "the scope and intensity of combat, making the cost and risk disproportionate to the aggressors objectives and the threat of nuclear response progressively more imminent." And the third level, if required, is the ultimate military response of a general nuclear strike by strategic forces "against the vital nuclear threat, other military targets and urban industrial targets."[28] That is, the last resort of flexible response was the first, and only, resort of massive retaliation. Of course, the aggressor could elect to initiate hostilities at levels two or three, but within each level NATO theoretically possesses a series of graduated responses under the 14/3 concept. Whatever the case, with flexible response, "even if one argues that any Soviet attack on Europe would ultimately lead to all-out war," as Kissinger reasons, "it does not necessarily follow that a defense of Europe should *begin* with such a strategy."[29] (Emphasis added)

The essence of flexible response is that the defense of Europe should begin with conventional forces. Starting with the force structure inherited from the days of massive retaliation, this meant two things. First, NATO's conventional force posture had to be strengthened. No longer were conventional forces to act merely as a tripwire for nuclear retaliation. Now, under 14/3, they must be strong enough to defend NATO's territorial integrity with a high probability of success without recourse to nuclear weapons. The implication to Europeans was clear: with the United States vulnerable to strategic attack, NATO no longer could compensate for its inferiority in conventional forces by reliance on US nuclear superiority. The conditions which made such a strategy feasible and credible simply are no longer operable. And second, NATO's defense doctrine had to provide for a distinctive "firebreak" between nonnuclear and nuclear warfare, that is, a clear distinction between level one and level two response under 14/3. This called for an unscrambling of the mixed nuclear-conventional force posture of the massive retaliation era.[30]

But the reasoning underlying 14/3 has not gone unchallenged. From the moment of its inception, flexible response has been a cause of consternation among the European allies. Always more intent on deterrence than defense, they tend to regard US efforts to bolster the Alliance's conventional defenses and to reduce the linkage between forward defense and the use of nuclear weapons as moves motivated to insure that a war in Europe remains limited to the continent. Not only do they fear this may be precursory to a US disengagement from Europe (on the theory that a Europe capable of defending itself does not require US forces), but more important, even with the US security guarantee, many believe it weakens deterrence.[11] It was largely the issues of the permanence and reliability of the American nuclear commitment to Europe, raised in the debate over flexible response, that caused France to remove her forces from the Alliance's integrated military command and to proceed with her own program of nuclear development.[12] But even those states who acquiesced to the 14/3 strategy have been reluctant to make the military contributions required for a truly credible conventional defense option at level one. Preferring to put their faith in the notion that somehow US superiority in numbers of nuclear weapons would, as Walter Slocombe puts it, "give the United States a way of responding to a massive Soviet onslaught into Europe in a manner which would both insure against unacceptable Soviet retaliation and save the position in Europe," they have been slow to accept the alternative of flexible response.[13] And though strategic parity is acting to destroy once and for all the myth of US omnipotence, NATO has let a decade slip past by rendering lip service to defense and flexible response while still dreaming of ultimate deterrence and massive retaliation.[14]

The dilemma of defense or deterrence is most acute for the West Germans, who by the dictates of geography must face the brunt of a Warsaw Pact invasion. But given a choice, like the other European allies, they would opt for deterrence in the hope that there is less danger of the Soviet Union testing the credibility of the threat of an immediate tactical nuclear response to an incursion into Western Europe, a response which at any moment might

escalate into a nuclear attack on Russia herself, than there is of a massive Warsaw Pact attack against a NATO whose declaratory policy is conventional defense.[35] In either event, however, the West Germans profess to regard the consequences of failure to be approximately equal. For, according to Bundeswehr analysts, as reported in *Der Spiegel*, a 20-day conventional war would be as devastating as a 5-day war fought with tactical nuclear weapons. Either way, the loser would surely be the Federal Republic.[36]

Despite such strong undercurrents of opposition among the Europeans, the logic of the strategic nuclear equation is driving NATO toward greater emphasis on conventional defense. Former US Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger, a notable spokesman for the need to achieve conventional parity with the Warsaw Pact, gave a clear account of the motivating rationale. Attacking the logic of those who proposed a return to the tripwire role for NATO's ground forces, Schlesinger explained in 1973 that the loss of US strategic nuclear superiority had caused a fundamental change in the framework of deterrence in Western Europe. No longer, he declared, could NATO count on American nuclear predominance to offset the Warsaw Pact's edge in conventional forces. When strategic parity was reached in the 1960's, the credibility of a US nuclear response, whether strategic or tactical, to a Soviet conventional attack against NATO was seriously weakened. As a result, he noted, "the relative weight of NATO's nuclear forces in the balance of deterrence has diminished, thereby placing a higher value on NATO's conventional capability." Looking at the military aspect of the problem, Schlesinger continued,

> It is important for the United States and its allies to have options in responding to Soviet provocation. What we wish to ensure in our emphasis on NATO's conventional capability is that we have a range of options, a greater degree of flexibility in deterring and, if need be, in coping with a Warsaw Pact conventional attack. . . We want to avoid placing ourselves in a position where our only viable option in the event of a major Warsaw Pact conventional attack is an early recourse to the use of nuclear weapons.[37]

The *NATO Handbook* makes the same point in slightly different language, proclaiming that--

> in a situation of nuclear parity the very credibility of the ultimate nuclear deterrent depends on having adequate conventional forces which could be used to contain a conventional attack and provide the aggressor with tangible evidence that any gain he may wish to achieve could only succeed at an unacceptable price including the risk of escalation to total nuclear war.[38]

Other influential voices have expressed a similar theme. I. H. J. Gilmour, former British Minister of Defense, echoed Schlesinger's assessment that the advent of strategic nuclear parity has placed an additional emphasis on the deterrence role of conventional military forces.[39] And while at his post as NATO's Supreme Commander in Europe, General Andrew J. Goodpaster expanded on the necessity for a strong conventional capability. A tripwire strategy, Goodpaster argued, was a "high-risk, low-cost option which has been rejected by NATO on grounds that it lacks credibility." In short, it could not be relied upon to achieve either of NATO's two basic objectives of deterrence and defense. Instead, in an era of nuclear parity, Goodpaster asserted, "the conventional forces of Allied Command Europe have a vital role. These forces provide the heart of the deterrent, and must be able to deter or meet aggression with strength, mobility, and solidarity." Even so, it is significant that Goodpaster still looked to tactical nuclear weapons to "provide the additional firepower we *might* require." (Emphasis added) This was necessary, he added, because a "full conventional capability designed to deal with the full force that could be thrown against us without recourse to nuclear weapons goes well beyond what the nations have demonstrated they are prepared to provide."[40]

To be sure, there has been some movement toward force augmentation to match the rhetoric. The declining trend in NATO's conventional force posture, which appeared to be gaining momentum in the late 1960's when Washington's attention was diverted toward Vietnam, probably reached its nadir in 1968.[41] Since then,

however, the Atlantic Alliance largely has held its own, both quantitatively and qualitatively, with the Warsaw Pact, though NATO's relative inferiority remains (see Table 2).[42] Clearly, most of the impetus for increases in NATO's conventional capability has come from Washington, with the European allies grudgingly increasing their defense contributions lest the United States use their recalcitrance as justification for withdrawing American troops from NATO. And flexible response or not, the facts are, as Joseph Harned explains, that "for the European allies the presence of 310,000 American servicemen has a reassuring effect that goes far beyond the adequacy of the existing defense capabilities of NATO."[43] For in the final analysis, these American forces would presumably themselves be attacked in a Soviet invasion of Europe, which the other allies see as their greatest guarantee of deterrence.

Table 2: The Balance of Forces in Northern and Central Europe, 1970 and 1976

Component	NATO			Warsaw Pact		
	1970	1976	% Change	1970	1976	% Change
Combat and direct support troops (000)	580	635	9	900	910	1
Tanks (number deployed with units)	5,500	7,000	27	4,000	19,000	35
Tactical aircraft	2,200	2,100	-5	3,940	4,200	6
Tactical nuclear warheads	7,000	7,000	0	3,500	3,500	0

Source: Barry M. Blechman, "The Balance of Conventional Forces and the U.S. Role in Assuring Regional Stability," in *Proceedings of the National Security Affairs Conference - 1977* (Washington: National Defense University, 1977), p. 56. Data do *not* include France.

If the European allies are ambivalent as to the purpose of NATO's conventional forces, the Americans exhibit equally mixed feelings about tactical nuclear weapons. Officially, the United States claims to maintain a theater nuclear capability to "help

deter enemy use of nuclear weapons and hedge against a failure of conventional forces."[44] But with a force posture in Europe that can be characterized as "combining the worst features of massive retaliation and local defense—too strong for a tripwire and too weak to resist a major Soviet attack,"[45] the nuclear threshold for the latter purpose seems uncomfortably low in American eyes. To the Europeans, on the other hand, this is desirable, for they see it as forging a link to the US strategic nuclear deterrent, thus reinforcing NATO's overall deterrent posture. The idea is that the first use of tactical nuclear weapons by either side will escalate rapidly to a strategic nuclear exchange between the superpowers. Knowing this possibility exists, the theory postulates, the Soviet Union will be deterred from launching a conventional attack.[46] The prevalent American view, however, is that while recognizing, as Thomas Etzold shows, that the likelihood of nonescalation can never be reduced to zero, significant steps can be taken to minimize the linkage between tactical nuclear weapons and strategic nuclear warfare.[47] And the most effective way to do this is to reduce the probability that tactical weapons will have to be used to redeem failure at level one conflict. Looking at the issue against the shifting strategic nuclear balance, former US Deputy Secretary of Defense David Packard stated:

> One argument for tactical nuclear weapons is that they provide a coupling from conventional forces to strategic forces and are therefore an important element of conventional force deterrence. If ever this were the case it is less so now, and a conventional force will be a more realistic deterrent if it can be adequate to control a confrontation without the need for tactical nuclear weapons.[48]

There is no doubt that American efforts toward weakening, if not destroying, the linkage between conventional and strategic nuclear warfare through the emphasis since 1973 on limited nuclear options were engendered as a reaction to the emergence of US strategic vulnerability. Whereas in the years of a one-sided strategic relationship with the Soviet Union this idea of linkage was

another way of demonstrating the extraterritorial extension of the US nuclear umbrella to cover NATO, after parity it presented a demonstrable risk to the United States. That it has not been definitively severed can be traced to the extreme sensitivity of the European allies to any such moves on Washington's part.[49]

Nevertheless, the United States has taken significant and tangible steps in the direction of reducing the linkage between tactical and strategic nuclear warfare since the advent of strategic nuclear parity. All US controlled land-based strategic systems (Thors, Jupiters, bombers, etc.) have been removed from Europe since the mid-1960's. Moreover, substantial reductions have been made in the NATO controlled nuclear strike forces, which are largely supported (all except British RAF "V" bombers) with US nuclear warheads.[50] Thus far the United States has kept its remaining forward based nuclear systems in Europe from the the purview of SALT negotiations,[51] but also has included a nuclear warhead package (1,000 warheads) in NATO's Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) offer to the Warsaw Pact, much to the displeasure of the other allies.[52] Meanwhile, continuing debate in the United States over the purpose of NATO's QRA forces, and whether or not their vulnerability changes in the US nuclear arsenal in Europe in the direction of greater stability, which reduces the probability of early use, may be forthcoming.[53] All such changes serve to reinforce arguments for an enhanced conventional defense posture.

The very idea that tactical nuclear weapons can deter a conventional attack is under serious question in the United States. In perhaps the most comprehensive study yet on theater nuclear forces and the doctrine for their employment, Philip Hughes reasons they can have but one valid purpose—to deter Soviet first use. To advocate a theater nuclear warfighting capability, he believes, is to ignore the corollary that "if US nuclear forces deter Soviet first use, why should not the reverse be true?"[54] It is equally specious, he maintains, to think that theater nuclear forces can deter a Soviet conventional attack by the threat of escalation, for it is not clear "precisely how NATO execution of limited tactical nuclear attacks would save NATO forces from defeat by an

overwhelming conventional attack without provoking devastating Soviet nuclear retaliation."[55] Addressing the issue of nuclear first use in a European perspective, Hughes concludes:

> At the time these theater nuclear weapons were assembled, their use in a European conflict might well have permitted NATO to defeat a Warsaw Pact attack without serious destruction of NATO territory. The USSR then lacked both an offensive tactical nuclear capability and a major intercontinental strategic capability. However, with the Soviet acquisition of both tactical and strategic nuclear delivery capabilities in the late 1950's and early 1960's, NATO's relative immunity to nuclear retaliation faded, and with it the credibility of a threat of first use of nuclear weapons.[56]

Therefore, Hughes contends, under the existing nuclear balance only conventional forces can offer a credible deterrent to conventional aggression; that any substitution of theater nuclear weapons for conventional forces only lowers the conventional deterrent threshold.[57] Taking this argument a step further, Jeffrey Record postulates that any manifestation of a nuclear first use posture by NATO may have the unwanted effect of inviting Soviet pre-emption.[58] Thus, the credibility of level two combat under flexible response now is open to serious doubt in US circles.

Defining a role for US strategic nuclear forces in NATO strategy under conditions of parity has been no less plaguing. At first the problem largely was ignored, for while Robert S. McNamara, during his tenure as Secretary of Defense in the 1960's, talked of mutual vulnerability, in fact, the United States still enjoyed a considerable margin of strategic superiority. Thus, the threat of escalation to general nuclear war under the 14/3 strategy continued to have a credible ring, even in the absence of a convincing NATO conventional defense. But as the Soviet Union closed the gap in strategic nuclear delivery capability more rapidly and to a greater extent than anticipated, by the early 1970's the prospect of mutual assured destruction took on a new meaning for the United States, causing Washington to reexamine NATO's demand for strategic nuclear initiatives at level three of flexible response.[59] "With the

present nuclear balance," David Packard warned the allies in 1973, "the United States would not use its nuclear force against the Soviet Union short of a direct threat to the survival of the United States."[60]

Schlesinger's doctrine of "flexibility in response," announced the following year, was an effort to refashion a credible role for US strategic nuclear forces in a NATO context while reducing the risks entailed by involvement in a European war.[61] But the limited nuclear options it offered were less than reassuring to the other allies. Colin Gray pointed to its most significant shortcoming as a deterrent to Soviet aggressions.

He reasoned that a Soviet Union on the verge of capturing such a prize as Western Europe "would hardly be a Soviet Union at all likely to be willing to return meekly to the territorial *status quo ante* as a consequence either of the receipt of an American threat to resort to limited strategic options, or of the actual execution of such options."[62] The facts are, he continues, that "given the inability of the United States to limit damage to herself by direct military means, any intervention in a theater conflict by American strategic forces is likely to be too little, too late, and too easily countered in kind."[63] Consequently, level three conflict in a NATO context has become as questionable as level two.

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

The point is that NATO defense doctrine has *not* been adjusted to harmonize with the dictates of strategic nuclear parity. Massive retaliation in its old form has been rendered obsolete, but flexible response has been found wanting too. NATO lacks confidence in its ability to respond at level one, while the United States is uncertain of the consequence of escalation to level two and has practically negated a response at level three. Thus, the question is. Where does NATO go from here? In answering this I will examine three of the current issues to sample the range of alternatives. Specifically, we will look at the debate over conventional versus tactical nuclear warfare, the impact of MBFR on NATO's options, and the probable effect of technology on defense doctrine. Want of space will preclude discussion of two

equally important issues, namely, the creation of an independent European nuclear force as a replacement for the US nuclear guarantee, and the conflicting assessments of the Soviet military threat to Western Europe

Conventional Defense versus Tactical Nuclear Warfare

The real question is whether it is possible or not to conduct a conventional defense of Central Europe in the nuclear era And if it is possible, is it also practical? An evolving opinion toward the affirmative among senior US Army generals is indicative of growing confidence, at least in American quarters, in NATO's conventional defense potential For instance, General James H Polk, Commander of the US Army, Europe during its poorest days of the Vietnam War era, writing in 1973, stressed the need for tactical nuclear weapons to support deterrence under the strategy of flexible response "We need to get over the 'firebreak' mentality," Polk asserted, by counting on the use of nuclear weapons in "numerous options and multiple plans so that the Soviet planner is faced with a serious dilemma in forecasting events and is thereby deterred "[84] But his successor, General Davison, who commanded during a period of growing NATO strength in Central Europe, writing 15 months later, spoke of defense first, claiming that "our conventional defense is a 'brick wall' capable of defending against an attack from the East", a brick wall which, combined with the flexibility of a nuclear response, provided "a highly credible deterrent."[85]

The most positive case for conventional defense, however, has come from Lieutenant General Arthur S. Collins, Davison's Deputy during the mid-1970's Writing in 1976, Collins contends that a purely conventional defense is possible, "provided the Europeans make the effort, and the United States continues to do its part to defend the Alliance." More importantly, Collins claims "there is no believable doctrine for tactical nuclear warfare for the reason that tactical nuclear warfare is not a rational form of warfare." NATO has nothing to gain, he asserts, "by breaking the nuclear barrier in land warfare in its own territory." On the contrary, considering "the price we will have to pay when they are

used against us—even the small ones—the tactical nuclear defense of NATO would be a disaster for Western Europe and under the present ground rules would result in no great loss to the USSR."[66] Collins maintains the West has not thought through the problem in a military sense, we have not been "as honest and realistic about what nuclear weapons can do *to* us as we are in proclaiming what they can do *for* us."[67] (Emphasis in original)

Contrary to the popular opinion that tactical nuclear weapons can be used as a substitute for manpower, Collins pictures conditions of mass casualties on the nuclear battlefield, a battlefield which will consume more, not fewer, men if the West is to maintain a relative numerical balance with the Warsaw Pact in a war lasting more than a day or two. And unlike those who see tactical nuclear weapons being used with clearly discernible purpose under close control to minimize the chance of escalation, he postulates their use, even in limited numbers, will create a chaotic situation that exceeds human ability for rational management.[68] "Tactical nuclear weapons," he claims, "solve budget problems, they only give the semblance of solving security and survival problems."[69] Collins recommends that NATO's ground forces give up their nuclear weapons, thus freeing large numbers of soldiers to augment the conventional defense forces, and turn the mission of theater nuclear deterrence over to the air forces and navies.[70] "It would be tragic," he concludes, "if NATO so configured its defense forces, or so ordered its strategy that a tactical nuclear war was the result of its planning."[71]

Others have elaborated on the same theme. The high priest of the conventional defense option, Alain Enthoven, proposes to withdraw 6,000 of the 7,000 US tactical nuclear weapons from Europe, confine the remaining 1,000 to invulnerable delivery systems for deterrence of Soviet first use, and apply the 30,000 US military men relieved thereby from nuclear duties to bolster NATO's conventional posture. The problem with NATO's defense in the past, he believes, has not been a lack of manpower, but rather faulty organization and poor cooperation among the allies in rationalizing their individual defense efforts to fit NATO's needs.[72] Following this line of reasoning, other American advocates of

conventional defense, men such as Robert Komer, Steven Canby, and Senator Sam Nunn, have been conspicuous throughout the 1970's for their efforts to fashion a credible forward defense posture and doctrine for the Alliance which could deter Soviet conventional power.[73] The obstacles have not been taken lightly. Confronting NATO's disarray after nearly three decades of vacillation between deterrence and defense, Komer has estimated "it could take 20 years to create an ideal coalition structure from the present mess."[74]

This whole process of reexamination, as Michael Brenner illustrates, arises from serious concern "about the ramifying political effects of parity with the Soviet Union."[75] The search for a credible conventional war option, he maintains, is a reflection of the need to (1) raise the nuclear threshold associated with NATO's defense, which has been dangerously lowered even under flexible response because of the Alliance's perceived conventional inferiority; and (2), to break the linkage between the eventual use of tactical nuclear weapons as a last resort and escalation to general nuclear war.[76] He would follow Collins' and Enthoven's proposals by redeploying tactical nuclear weapons away from the front lines and disassociate their use from NATO's orthodox warfighting plans. The deployment of NATO forces, he believes, "should be such as to permit the maximum extension of the conventional war phase."[77]

More extreme proposals in favor of the conventional defense option have been offered. Philip W. Dyer dismisses the deterrence value of tactical nuclear weapons altogether. Finding that they probably will not be used in the defense of Europe, for reasons of European as well as American fears about Soviet counteruse, he concludes that these "weapons have no conceivable role in future ground warfare."[78] Since the Soviets entered the missile age, Dyer believes the US attitude toward NATO has been that it is "a military alliance whose purpose is to defend Europe on the ground without recourse to strategic war."[79] Although the Europeans have generally leaned the other way in theory, he thinks that in a crisis they would opt not to employ nuclear weapons to defend their homelands for the same reason the United States seeks to avoid strategic nuclear war.[80]

There is evidence to support Dyer's conclusion, for those who look seriously at the consequences of theater nuclear warfare agree with West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt that "the use of tactical nuclear weapons will not defend Europe, but destroy it."[61] Cities would be left in ruins, the countryside contaminated, and untold millions would be killed. The magnitude of damage occurring in days would dwarf that experienced over a 6-year period in World War II. In one NATO exercise, weapons theoretically exploded on West Germany in 48 hours alone would have killed an estimated 1.5 to 1.7 million and injured another 35 million.[62] Another study suggests that "even under the most favorable assumptions 2 to 20 million Europeans would be killed with a high risk of 100 million dead if the war escalated to attacks on cities."[63] And with 600 medium range ballistic missiles, each carrying a one megaton warhead, pointed at Western Europe from their launching pads in the western portion of the Soviet Union, Moscow can allocate at least four missiles to every city of over 200,000 population west of the Iron Curtain. In addition, the Soviets are believed to possess at least 3,500 nuclear warheads, ranging in yield from a few kilotons to several megatons, for their other theater and battlefield delivery systems.[64] Projecting the release of these weapons on Western Europe, thoughtful persons ask: "Would there be anything left worth fighting for?"

The specter of such widespread destruction has led some to advocate a US pledge of no first use of tactical nuclear weapons in order to reduce the likelihood of a Soviet first strike to disarm NATO's nuclear forces.[65] And going further, others have proposed the complete withdrawal of nuclear weapons from Europe.[66] But in the mainstream, advocates of the unconventional defense option continue to see a need for a theater nuclear force in Europe that is both invulnerable and strong enough to deter Soviet first use.[67]

Proponents of a tactical nuclear warfighting capability, on the other hand, start from a different premise. Basically, they follow General T. R. Milton's assumption that "the main idea, after all, is to deter a war, not fight it." If deterrence should fail, however, they recognize that NATO, as Milton puts it, "will go with what we have, and what we have cannot stand long attrition."[68] From this point, however, two schools of thought have emerged. One faction is comfortable with flexible response, provided NATO retains the option to escalate from conventional to tactical nuclear warfare if

necessary to stem a major Warsaw Pact invasion. This group resists pressures to rationalize in advance the conditions under which NATO would resort to theater nuclear warfare. Generals Milton and Polk typify this school. "So long as NATO's strategy has an element of the unknown, even the irrational, in it," Milton claims, "the Soviets must ponder the odds on any military adventure when they don't have all the facts." This is what he calls "the mystique of NATO's nukes," from which he infers the Soviets are deterred from launching a conventional attack against Europe.[89]

By contrast, the second school prefers to be more definitive. Stewart Menaul, for example, advocates open avowal of a tactical nuclear warfighting intention, which would be manifested in a mixed conventional-nuclear force posture reminiscent of the massive retaliation era. He believes the idea "that there must always be a recognizable and measurable gap between conventional and nuclear fire power—the coupling theory—is outdated." NATO must build its defense around tactical nuclear weapons, in his opinion, because "Europe will never match in mass of conventional arms those now available to the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact, and it is simply playing at childish war games to suggest that Europe can be defended by purely conventional means."[90] Minimizing the effect of Soviet counteruse, Menaul believes the West has the technological lead to fashion a tactical nuclear force that would be demonstrably superior, thus enhancing its deterrent role.[91]

Along the same lines, Colin Gray has attempted to demonstrate that the results of superpower parity have worked in favor of reducing the dangers of escalation inherent in the use of tactical nuclear weapons. And "the less dire the probable consequences to the American homeland," he submits, "the more willing should Americans be to release battlefield nuclear weapons."[92] Under the assumption that the Soviet Union has nothing to gain by escalating theater nuclear warfare to attacks on cities (why destroy the prize it seeks to capture?), he proposes an inflexible tactical nuclear response to any attack across NATO's borders; a response which by maximizing defense offers a credible deterrent. This is necessary, in Gray's view, because:

> only nuclear weapons can blunt and repel an armored blitzkrieg;

only if the response is preprogrammed (with weapons deployed and authority to use predelegated) can we be sure that these weapons will be used in time;

only such an inflexible response can leave Warsaw Pact planners in no doubt whatsoever that any military foray westwards will promptly be met with weapons most destructive of forces deployed in the field.[93]

Quite clearly, the debate between advocates of conventional defense and proponents of tactical nuclear warfare presents a dilemma for NATO's strategists. While in theory, strategic parity should have worked to reinforce the case for assigning a higher priority to conventional forces, the logic of that argument has not yet prevailed to overcome European predilections for a strategy oriented more towar : deterrence than defense. To date the allies have seemed intent on avoiding the choice, clinging to an outdated force posture that satisfies neither faction. On the other hand, in view of the Alliance's ponderous decisionmaking process, that reaction should lag the advent of nuclear parity is not surprising; however, many believe resolution of the problems it presents for the security of Western Europe is long past due.[94] For in the meantime, as Wynfred Joshua explains, the failure to define clearly a strategy to confront the conditions of parity "makes it extremely difficult to gauge the political and military utility of the various components of the American and other allied forces that are supposed to support the strategy."[95]

Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR)

Somewhat surprisingly, since it was initiated ostensibly to reduce costs in military manpower and materiel, thus far the MBFR process has worked in favor of NATO's conventional defense posture by focusing the Alliance's attention on the conventional balance in Central Europe. More precisely, MBFR has served to disparage Western hopes that with the appearance of strategic nuclear parity the Soviet Union might be inclined to dispossess itself of the idea of holding Western Europe to ransom by the threat of invasion. In fact, to the contrary, the Russians have been no more amenable to reductions in their conventional force advantage in Central Europe than they were before the advent of nuclear parity, raising fears among the NATO allies that Moscow may have the

notion of exploiting its conventional superiority, which has been assiduously maintained, for political advantages now that mutual nuclear deterrence is a reality.[96] After all, the Soviet Union's major means of exerting influence beyond its area of political control has always been by military power; an influence that was not entirely impotent over certain NATO governments even in the era of US nuclear supremacy. Thus, for NATO to accept an MBFR agreement that codified its inferiority in conventional forces in an era of nuclear parity, many contend, would reduce rather than increase security for the West European states. The consensus has been that any MBFR agreement must ensure conventional parity in order to prevent the Kremlin from undertaking endeavors designed to make European governments take certain decisions which they otherwise would not have taken. In short, MBFR has raised the old specter of Finlandization in new garb, where the West would be unwilling to exercise the nuclear deterrent, and unable to take effective action with inferior conventional forces; imbalance and a lack of self-confidence might undermine Western determination to protect its interests when they are actually under challenge.[97]

By putting a premium on its conventional forces, however, NATO's MBFR negotiators are confronted with the paradox of irreducible force thresholds. This means, to cite Albert Willot, "that NATO cannot reasonably allow itself to make any reductions, particularly in connection with conventional land or air forces."[98] What then does NATO offer as the *quid pro quo* for the Soviet force reductions it desires? The only NATO package to date included 29,000 American troops, which by coincidence matches the number of combat spaces added to the US Army, Europe through the "tooth for tail" exchange required by the Nunn Amendment in 1974.[99] But more significantly to the conventional versus tactical nuclear warfare debate, it also offered 1,000 tactical nuclear warheads, along with 54 nuclear-capable F-4 aircraft and 36 nuclear-armed Pershing missiles.[100] This would tend to reinforce the case for the conventional defense option.

Moreover, there is a growing realization in the West that if conventional parity cannot be achieved in terms of total numbers through an agreement with the Warsaw Pact, then it can be accomplished unilaterally in terms of capability by placing reliance on the West's technological superiority, improved readiness, redeployment of forces within West Germany (e.g., the location of

US manueuver units in Northern Germany), and the building of a comprehensive antitank defense.[101] The objective would be to pit NATO's defense against the Pact's offensive, which negates the requirement for straight numerical symmetry while still presenting a credible conventional deterrent. It would be a new doctrine based on a flexible definition of conventional parity not unlike the current concept of "rough equivalence" in strategic weaponry, but which demands an adequacy to deter through a capability to defend against a Pact conventional offensive. In fact, there are some who now argue that numerical parity alone without a new doctrine for defense would not suffice to offset Soviet superiority and may even diminish NATO's security because of maldeployment patterns along the West German frontier.[102] The essence of approximate conventional parity, therefore, must be equal security, not equal numbers.

But already there are warning signs that the West may not hold to its present strength in Central Europe, which could skew NATO back toward greater nuclear dependence. The French are withdrawing 10,000 troops from West Germany this year and the British are theatening to make further reductions in their Rhine Army.[103] These moves could offset the gains realized through the MBFR process over the past 7 years (see Table 2).

The Effects of Technology

Looking to the future, each camp in the conventional versus tactical nuclear warfare debate puts great stock in the West's technological superiority. In particular, the new precision guided munition (PGM) technology with its associated battlefield surveillance, target acquisition, and command and control systems appears to offer revolutionary potential for both strategies.[104] Properly applied in a nonnuclear mode, advocates of the conventional option suggest that PGM's might perform many of the roles presently foreseen for tactical nuclear weapons in defending against invasion, thus giving NATO a truly credible conventional defense posture even while continuing to suffer numerical inferiority. And representing a technology that can be developed and employed directly by the European states, nonnuclear PGM's would restore a measure of balance in Alliance councils between the United States and the European allies. For unlike tactical nuclear weapons, which are likely to remain under unilateral US control for the foreseeable future, PGM's will be

available, as Albert Wohlstetter suggests, "when they are most needed, before the aggressor has smashed defending forces and perhaps reached densely populated territory in the invaded country."[105] This would significantly raise the nuclear threshold by safely reserving tactical nuclear weapons for the role of deterring Soviet first use.

But PGM's have an equal or greater promise in a nuclear mode. Married to low yield tactical nuclear warheads, they offer the precision required to insure against unacceptable damage to civilian life and property in the proximity of military targets. Advocates of the tactical nuclear war-fighting posture believe this gives PGM's an efficiency potential that will be served best with nuclear warheads. Whatever missions PGM's can accomplish in a nonnuclear mode, Colin Gray maintains, "could be performed in a more definitive fashion by nuclear munitions." Furthermore, Gray argues, this would compensate for NATO's numerical inferiority in a way that conventionally armed PGM's, which he assumes "are almost certain to be deployed too thinly to be able to stem a Warsaw Pact armored advance," could not.[106] While at the same time, because the new family of tactical nuclear weapons, such as the neutron bomb, are more likely to be employed when delivered by PGM's, this increases the credibility of NATO's tactical nuclear deterrent. But the other side of deterrence is still use, and by blurring the distinction between conventional and nuclear warfare, nuclear-armed PGM's would almost surely lower the nuclear threshold, thus sharpening the prospect that any war in Central Europe would escalate rapidly beyond the mere application of nuclear warheads on the battlefield.[107]

In one respect, however, no matter which primary direction PGM development takes, i.e., toward nuclear or conventional emphasis, both sides in the tactical nuclear warfighting versus conventional defense debate will come away with a problem. Clearly, if the decision is to go nuclear, the conventional adherents lose at least that portion of NATO's efforts that could otherwise go to improving the conventional force capability. Whereas if the decision is to concentrate on conventional warheads, the tactical nuclear advocates lose access to the technology that lends their strategy credence. Yet, for the tactical nuclear advocates, arming PGM's with low yield nuclear warheads will represent a significant step toward preparing to fight at a lower level of violence, albeit

still nuclear violence, which raises the value of denial strategy while discounting the one thing they value most—deterrence.[108] For the conventional defense advocates, on the other hand, not to arm at least some PGM's with nuclear warheads is equally damaging to the deterrent value they must have in NATO's tactical nuclear stockpile to insure against Soviet first use. So at best, PGM's represent a sort of "Hobson's choice" for NATO. The technology must be developed if for no other reason than to keep from falling behind the Warsaw Pact. But for the immediate future, at least, it is unlikely that the United States or any other NATO power will attempt to force a choice between conventional or nuclear application. In all probability, the Alliance will continue to hedge its bets, allowing PGM development to follow both courses without rationalizing a modified strategic concept or force structure around the new technology.[109] This argues ill for those who advocate reaching conventional parity through an equivalance of defense capability by exloiting technology. Yet, in the long run, it may be unwise to assume that NATO could maintain the commanding technological lead required to make this a viable strategy. After all, massive retaliation was built on a similar assumption.

CONCLUSIONS

Although it is normally poor form to introduce new element's in one's concluding argument, in this case it is necessary. For the debate within NATO, while centering on real and important questions of strategic choice, conceivably could be less urgent for the immediate security of the Alliance than is generally assumed. That is, thus far we have illustrated the force options against the background of the strategic nuclear equation, but we have not examined the necessity of choice against the even broader issues of war and peace in the contemporary world. In other words, while the rationalization of NATO strategy may loom as an imperative task from a military viewpoint, it may be largely an esoteric drill in the overall context of US-Soviet and East-West relations. The new elements that must be introduced before passing judgment, therefore, are such as Louis J. Halle's question, "Does war have a future?," and Michael Howard's search for "the relevance of traditional strategy."[110] For if indeed war does have a future in the NATO-Warsaw Pact environment, and if traditional strategy is relevant to the conduct of such a conflict, then the choice of strategy for NATO in

an era of strategic nuclear parity is obviously a paramount consideration. Otherwise, it could be of only peripheral interest and further delay of choice may not be detrimental to the Alliance's future security interests.

The difficulty, of course, is that it is easier to ask such all-encompassing questions than it is to answer them with any degree of assurance. Thus, Halle may conclude tentatively that "the day of general wars, directly involving great powers on both sides, may . . . be past,"[11] but no responsible man willingly would forego insurance against an error in judgment on an issue of such magnitude. Moreover, even if he were correct, what measure of US military commitment must be maintained in Europe and what contributions must the European allies continue to make in order to preserve the conditions of his conclusion? The answers may become less urgent if he is right, but no less essential to the ultimate purposes of the Alliance. Similarly, Howard's assertion that strategic objectives in the era of nuclear parity are likely "to be achieved less by manipulation of actual forces than by manipulation of risks,"[12] leaves the force planner with no greater margin for error than before. In short, the answers to the cosmic questions do *not* serve to resolve the issues surrounding NATO's strategic doctrine. As a result, these issues must be faced on their own merits and not from such higher vantages as the future of war or the relevance of traditional strategy.

But this returns us squarely to the dimensions that have proven least amenable to resolution for want of consensus over the role of tactical nuclear weapons. If one might speculate for a moment, it would appear that NATO's strategic choices in a world of strategic nuclear and conventional forces would be simple. Here the love-hate relationship with nuclear weapons could be easily compartmentalized, the more so under conditions of strategic parity, with rather easily distinguishable deterrent and defense roles for the two force components. With the introduction of tactical nuclear weapons, however, the love-hate relationship becomes a trauma that is irreconcilable. The only saving grace may be that in a condition of strategic nuclear parity, balances at lesser levels of violence may be important but not critical in an environment of rational actors. The logic of mutual assured destruction alone may suffice to sustain stability in an area as critical to both sides as Central Europe. And conversely, if the West were to suffer loss of

strategic nuclear parity, balances at the lower levels would become meaningless. In this sense, choice between conventional defense and tactical nuclear warfighting becomes more a matter of efficiency and economy than of military necessity; a choice shaped more by internal than external factors.

Given NATO's history, this means there is little likelihood of rationalizing Alliance forces in accordance with a new strategic doctrine. Rather, NATO's force structure will continue to be driven by politically and economically sustainable manpower and budget levels. The future will be like the past. And in the final analysis one might be justified in concluding that the most characteristic difference between massive retaliation and flexible response is the rhetoric of description and not the objective elements of power. For as Michael Howard asserts, under conditions of strategic nuclear parity, "the strategic nuclear element . . . is present from the very beginning of hostilities as an inescapable dimension affecting the calculations of both adversaries."[113] Scenario permutations of Great Power conflicts below that level may be but exercises in pure logic.

ENDNOTES

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25 See Robert S McNamara, *The Essence of Security. Reflections in Office* (New York Harper and Row, 1968), p 37

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27 For a discussion of the premises underlying flexible response, see William W Kaufman, *The McNamara Strategy* (New York Harper and Row, 1964), pp 51-52 The theoretical foundation for flexible response predated the Kennedy Administration, having been outlined in such seminal works as Kissinger's *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy* and *The Necessity for Choice*, both cited earlier, and General Maxwell D Taylor's *The Uncertain Trumpet* (New York Harper and Brothers, 1960).

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80. See Ibid., pp. 224-225.

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82 See Edward B. Atkeson, "Precision Guided Munitions: Implications for Detente," in *National Security and Detente* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1976), p. 133.

83. Enthoven and Smith, *How Much Is Enough*, p. 128

84. See Herbert F. York, "The Nuclear 'Balance of Terror' in Europe," *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 32 (May 1976): 11, 16.

85 For one example, see Richard H. Ullman, "No First Use of Nuclear Weapons," *Foreign Affairs* 50 (July 1972): 669-683

86. See Jorma K. Miettinen, "Time for Europeans To Debate the Presence of Tactical Nukes," *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 32 (May 1976): 18-22

87. For the US Defense Department's position on "no first use," see Rumsfeld, *Defense Department Report*, p. 80.

88. T. R. Milton, "Tac Nukes and Deterrence," *Air Force*, 59 (August 1976): 25.

89. T. R. Milton, "The Mystique of NATO's Nukes," *Air Force* 58 (January 1975): 27. Also see Polk, "The Realities," p. 443.

90 Steward Menaul, "The Use of Nuclear Weapons in the European Theater," *NATO's Fifteen Nations* 20 (April/May 1975) p 34

91 See Ibid , pp 33-35

92 Colin S Gray, "Deterrence and Defence in Europe Revising NATO's Theatre Nuclear Posture," *Strategic Review* 3 (Spring 1975): 66

93 Colin S Gray, "Deterrence and Defence in Europe. Revising NATO's Theatre Nuclear Posture," *Strategic Review* 3 (Spring 1975): 65, ©1975 by USSI Used by Permission.

94 See R C Richardson, "Can NATO Fashion a New Strategy," *Orbis* 17 (Summer 1973) 416-417 According to Richardson, "historically, military definition and acceptance of a significant change in NATO strategy has taken an average of two years Political approval has taken an additional one to two years " Considering strategic parity was achieved not later than 1970, NATO's reaction has exceeded these figures.

95 Joshua, *Nuclear Weapons*, p. 21, also see *Christian Science Monitor*, 23 February 1977, p 23

96 See Peter Nailor, et al, *Prospects for European Security Conference and Mutual Balanced Force Reductions* (London Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, 1973), pp 8-10

97 For a discussion of Soviet use of military power for political influence, see R J Vincent, *Military Power and Political Influence: The Soviet Union and Western Europe*. Adelphi Papers Number 119 (London The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1975)

98 Albert Willot, "Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions in Europe," *NATO Review* 21 (January 1973) 9

99 See US, Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Armed Services, *Hearings on Military Posture and H R. 3689 Part 1*, 94th Congress, 1st Session (Washington Government Printing Office, 1975), pp. 618-619; and General George S Brown, *United States Military Posture for FY 1978* (Washington Government Printing Office, 1977), p. 37

100 See *The Military Balance, 1976-1977* (London. The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1976), p. 105.

101 See Adelbert Weinstein, "Interview with General Franz-Jozeph Schulze," *Franfurt Allgemeine*, 20 July 1977, p. 6, as translated in *Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Western Europe Edition* 7 (22 July 1977): C1-C5, and Kenneth Hunt, *The Alliance and Europe*, pp. 14-18

102 See Steven L. Canby, "MBFR. A Military Perspective of Its Underpinnings," Unpublished Paper delivered at American Political Science Association meeting in Washington, DC, 1-3 September 1977.

103 See "Leber Agrees to French Withdrawing 10,000 Troops," and "Government Spokesman Comments on Rhine Army Issue," in *Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Western Europe Edition* 7 (28 October 1976): J3-J4.

104. For a detailed discussion, see Atkeson, "Precision Guided Munitions," pp. 131-152. Also see *Astronautics and Aeronautics* 14 (May 1976), p. 8.

105. Albert Wohlstetter, "Threats and Promises of Peace: Europe and American in the New Era," *Orbis* 17 (Winter 1974), 1123.

106. Gray, "Deterrence and Defence in Europe: Revising NATO's Theater Nuclear Posture," p. 66. For another proposed strategy of nuclear defense, see W. S. Bennett, R. R. Sandoval, and R. G. Shreffler, "A Credible Nuclear-Emphasis Defense for NATO," *Orbis* 17 (Summer 1973), 463-479.

107. See *New York Times*, 30 September 1977, p. 1, and *Manchester Guardian*, 24 July 1977, p. 7.

108. Of course, this argument cuts two ways. It could also be argued that by increasing the likelihood of nuclear war, this increases deterrence. In context here, however, the idea is to make tactical nuclear war more "thinkable" which is a move toward warfighting and away from deterrence. See Wohlstetter, "Threats and Promises of Peace," pp. 1127-1129.

109. See Atkeson, "Precision Guided Munitions," p. 148.

110. See Louis J. Halle, "Does War Have A Future," *Foreign Affairs* 52 (October 1975): 20-34, and Michael Howard, "The Relevance of Traditional Strategy," *Foreign Affairs* 51 (January 1973), 253-266.

111. Halle, "Does War Have A Future," p. 33.

112. Howard, "Relevance of Traditional Strategy," p. 264.

113. Ibid., p. 261.

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