

Dr. Kissinger's Recent Article

Prime Minister

in Time magazine

I expect you have seen Dr. Kissinger's recent article but in case you missed it I attach a copy. It seems to me extremely interesting and important. The press appears to have concentrated on the negative criticisms in it and on the less acceptable proposals.

But the general demand for a greater European control over our own defence, and European direction of arms control where the continent of Europe is concerned is surely right.

You will be aware that I have been putting ideas of this sort to you at regular intervals since 1978. I must say Dr. K has put it with immense vigour and style. He told me he was thinking of something like this some months ago and I believe I mentioned it to you at the time.

Hugh Thomas
March 2 1984

A Plan to Reshape NATO

By HENRY KISSINGER

After 35 years of preserving peace in Western Europe, the Atlantic Alliance confronts new military, political and social realities. In this article, a former Secretary of State proposes dramatic—and in his view, vital—steps to help the alliance meet the challenges ahead. Among them: NATO's Supreme Allied Commander should be a European, not an American, as is now the case; Europe should have a decisive voice in certain nuclear arms-control talks and greater responsibility for its ground defense. If Europe refuses to accept that responsibility, the U.S. should withdraw up to half of its ground forces from Europe.

Lebanon and the Soviet succession have preoccupied us in recent weeks, but the Atlantic Alliance must remain the pivot of American policy. On its unity depends the security of free peoples. From its cohesion will flow whatever hopes the Soviet succession offers for a new dialogue. Unfortunately, just as storms recur in nature, crises recur in the Atlantic Alliance. Nearly every Administration for a generation has been involved in them. However, the present controversies in NATO are both unprecedented and unsettling.

In West Germany, Scandinavia, the Low Countries and even in Britain (though to a lesser extent), "peace" movements have been pulling governments in the general direction of their policies, even though those governments disagree with their premises. In addition, the main opposition parties in West Germany and Great Britain—which, in the nature of democratic politics, can be expected to get into office eventually—are advocating policies that amount to unilateral nuclear disarmament for their countries. Because these groups hold sway over key segments of public opinion, too many European leaders—even conservative ones—have yielded to the temptation to demonstrate their peaceful intentions the easy way, by pretending to be reining in a bellicose and insensitive U.S. through their ministrations. As a result, among those who shape public attitudes—and thereby set what become the limits of the politically possible—there is less intellectual or philosophical agreement than in any previous period.

This creates an exceedingly dangerous situation. An alliance cannot live by arms alone. To endure it requires some basic agreement on political aims that justify and give direction to the common defense. If military arrangements provide its only bond, it will sooner or later stagnate. It will surely prove unable to take advantage of diplomatic opportunities for an easing of tensions. That is the central issue before the Atlantic Alliance today. It requires a remedy that is fundamental, even radical—in the literal sense of going to the root.

Four problems in particular are gnawing at the alliance:

1) Lack of an agreed, credible strategy. The gap between NATO's formal strategy and what the public will support has widened dangerously. The so-called flexible response devised in the 1960s remains NATO's official doctrine. It contemplates a defense of Europe that begins with conventional weapons and then goes up the ladder of nuclear escalation—until it reaches whatever level is necessary to halt Soviet aggression. In today's circumstances this doctrine has a fatal weakness: neither existing nor projected NATO conventional ground forces are adequate to

repel a major Soviet conventional attack. Therefore, the doctrine would require a nuclear response at an early stage. Yet strategic nuclear parity deprives the threat of strategic nuclear war of much of its credibility; mutual suicide cannot be made to appear as a rational option. And no alternative nuclear strategy has been developed. Partly for this reason, public opinion, essentially unopposed by most NATO governments, is moving powerfully against any reliance on nuclear weapons—even tactical ones.

The alliance is thereby trapped in a precarious combination of (a) inadequate conventional forces leading to (b) reliance on nuclear weapons in (c) a strategic environment that makes the threat of their use, and therefore their deterrent value, less and less credible, and (d) a public climate of growing nuclear pacifism that undermines what credibility remains. Lack of a coherent defense policy leaves the alliance, possessing a huge stockpile of enormously destructive weapons, disarming itself psychologically.

2) Intermediate-range weapons and arms control. The arrival of the new U.S. intermediate-range weapons in Europe late last year was properly hailed as a major success. For if public demonstrations and Soviet pressure had succeeded in blocking that deployment, the Soviet Union would in effect have achieved a veto over NATO's military dispositions. But unless the alliance clarifies the purpose of these missiles, the accomplishment is likely to be transitory, since the basic European attitude toward the missiles is that of a host toward a now unwanted guest whose invitation to dinner it would be too awkward to withdraw. Some prominent Europeans purport to see in the missiles' presence a hidden American design to confine a nuclear war to Europe. Others treat them as one of those peculiar American aberrations that periodically upset the alliance's equilibrium. Too few recognize, and even fewer are willing to admit, that in fact the missiles link the strategic nuclear defense of Europe and the U.S. Weapons capable of reaching Soviet territory stake the American homeland to the defense of Europe; they do not enable America to remain immune.

European ambivalence makes it excruciatingly difficult to define "progress" toward arms control, while the nearly desperate eagerness with which progress is pursued makes its attainment less likely. The Soviets have refused even to discuss any proposal balancing U.S. intermediate-range missiles in Europe against the Soviet arsenal at a lower level. They insist on total withdrawal of American missiles while retaining a large number of their own. The goal of leaving Europe vulnerable to Soviet nuclear blackmail is obvious. Yet significant segments of European opinion persist in blaming the U.S. for the deadlock. In Europe



and in the U.S., this attitude must in time erode the public support needed not only for missile deployment but also for coherent arms control.

3. East-West relations. Behind the sharp differences over defense strategy and arms control lies a parallel dispute over the alliance's posture toward the Soviet Union. Too many Europeans accept the caricature of a U.S. run by trigger-happy cowboys whose belligerence has provoked Soviet intransigence.

Many Americans, on the other hand, consider such European notions naive and believe that together with the pacifist and neutralist demonstrations, they reflect a trend toward appeasement that encourages Soviet intransigence.

4. Relations with the Third World. Most European leaders believe that they have a special opportunity to establish preferential relationships with Third World countries. In the flash points of the Middle East, Africa and Central America, they see U.S. approaches as hopelessly tainted by an obsession with Soviet ambitions; some hope to win favor in the Third World by an ostentatious dissociation from the U.S. More than a few Americans view such behavior as a free ride paid for by U.S. sacrifices or as a positive incitement to Third World radicalism.

These differences could be healthy if they led to compatible and constructive policies for the 1980s and '90s. So far this has not happened. Mutual recriminations have created opportunities for Soviet political warfare even during this period of stagnation in the Kremlin leadership. The Politburo is obviously convinced that the West has become so paralyzed concerning nuclear weapons that there is no urgency about nuclear arms control; the Soviets can simply wait for a while to harvest the fruits of Western anxieties. By contrast, there may be concern in Moscow that NATO will move to close the gap in conventional forces; hence the willingness to resume the talks, moribund for ten years, about limiting conventional arms. Does this reflect a genuine interest in arms control, or is it a means to thwart the desperately needed Western conventional buildup by creating the same conditions by which public opinion was mobilized on the missile question? And what is one to make of the almost deferential pleas by all major NATO countries for the resumption of a dialogue that the Soviets have interrupted? Or of the upgrading of all major European delegations except the French to the Andropov funeral, compared with the Brezhnev rites 15 months ago—especially as Andropov's rule was marked by the flagrant attempt to influence the German election, the walkout from arms-control talks and the shooting down of the Korean airliner, not to speak of Andropov's 15-year stewardship of the KGB?

Will the Soviets see Western pleas for dialogue as a demonstration of good will, or will they learn from the compulsion to demonstrate good intentions after months of harassment that intransigence pays because the West has weak nerves? Will we fail to relax tensions because the Soviets conclude that atmospherics can substitute for dealing with the real causes dividing the world? Europe is not moderating the U.S., and the U.S. is not stiffening Europe's spine, as the folklore on each side would have it. More likely, each is in danger of paralyzing and demoralizing the other. Western disunity is perhaps the principal obstacle to progress in East-West negotiations.

This state of affairs has deeper causes than particular policies on either side. The present NATO structure is simply not working, either in defining the threat or in finding methods to meet it.

Existing arrangements are unbalanced. When one country dominates the alliance on all major issues—when that one country chooses weapons and decides deployments, conducts the arms-control negotiations, sets the tone for East-West diplomacy and creates the framework for relations with the Third World—little incentive remains

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for a serious joint effort to redefine the requirements of security or to coordinate foreign policies. Such joint efforts entail sacrifices and carry political costs. Leaders are not likely to make the sacrifice or pay the cost unless they feel responsible for the results.

An imbalance such as the one now existing cannot be corrected by "consultation," however meticulous. In the long run, consultation works only when those being consulted have a capacity for independent action. Then each side

takes the other seriously; then each side knows that the other's consent has to be won. Otherwise consultation becomes "briefing." Agreement reflects not conviction but acquiescence for want of an alternative.

The present imbalance is not new. It has existed ever since World War II. But military dependence on another nation has a cumulative impact. When dependence no longer results from wartime destruction but from a policy choice, made under conditions of relative prosperity, it can breed guilt, self-hatred and a compulsion to display independence of the U.S. wherever doing so is safe, especially with regard to some Third World issues and certain aspects of East-West relations.

The problem has become even more acute because the generation of leaders that built NATO has virtually disappeared. Those who governed Europe during the early postwar years were still psychologically of the era when Europe bestrode the world. Global thinking came naturally. European leaders assumed responsibility for their own security policies and gave it up only reluctantly because of special circumstances. But nearly 40 years have passed since the end of World War II. The new leaders were reared in an era when the U.S. was pre-eminent; they find it politically convenient to delegate Europe's military defense to us. Too many seek to position themselves somewhere between the superpowers—the first step toward psychological neutralism. Thus Europe's schizophrenia: a fear that the U.S. might not be prepared to risk its own population on a nuclear defense of Europe, coupled with the anxiety that America might drag Europe into an unwanted conflict by clumsy handling of Third World issues or East-West relations.

The rush to condemn our actions in Grenada by so many of our European allies is a case in point. What could have been in the minds of their leaders? Even making allowance—especially in the case of Britain—for totally inadequate consultation, they could hardly have wanted us to fail. That would surely have affected our willingness to run risks in defense of other areas, ultimately including even Europe. Rather, they must have assumed that their actions were irrelevant and costless: that we would not be deterred, that we would exact no penalty and that therefore it was safe to use the incident to score points with "progressives" at home and with Third World radicals abroad.

The change in the nature of European leadership has been paralleled in the U.S. Our new elites do not reject NATO any more than do their European counterparts. But for them, too, the alliance is more a practical than an emotional necessity, more a military arrangement than a set of common political purposes.

On both sides of the Atlantic, we find ourselves threatened by the dominance of domestic politics over global political strategy. In Europe this leads in too many countries to a faintly disguised neutralism. In the U.S. it accelerates our already strong tendency toward unilateralism and isolationism.

U.S. leaders have too often adjusted foreign policies to political pressures, bureaucratic infighting or changing intellectual fashions. The history of the American attitude toward intermediate-range missiles in Europe is an example. These were proposed to the Europeans in 1957-58, in-

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stalled in Britain, Italy and Turkey by 1960 and withdrawn in 1963. They reappeared later in 1963 as part of a NATO multilateral force and were abandoned once again by 1965. They were put before NATO for the third time in 1978 and accepted once again in 1979. Not surprisingly, Europeans organizing to stop the current deployment are encouraged by the knowledge that previous American decisions have not proved immutable.

Similarly, our allies have had to adjust from passionate U.S. advocacy of SALT II to its rejection, and then to the fact that we have chosen to observe a treaty we refuse to ratify; from a strategic doctrine of massive retaliation to one of flexible response; from a policy of détente to one of confrontation and back to conciliation, not to speak of the gyrations in our Middle East policy—all in addition to the reassessments that occur whenever a new Administration comes into office. Each change of course leaves victims among European leaders who have staked their domestic positions on policies that the U.S. later abandons. Each lurch encourages a kind of neutralism, as Europeans seek to avoid being made hostage to sudden swings in American policy.

A continuation of existing trends is bound to lead to the demoralization of the Western alliance. An explicit act of statesmanship is needed to give new meaning to Western unity and a new vitality to NATO. In my view such an effort must have three components: (a) a more significant role for Europe within NATO, (b) a reform of the NATO organization and (c) a reassessment of current NATO deployment.

A NEW ROLE FOR EUROPE

During the entire post-World War II period it has been an axiom of American policy that for all the temporary irritation it might cause us, a strong, united Europe was an essential component of the Atlantic partnership. We have applied that principle with dedication and imagination, insofar as it depended on American actions, in all areas except security. With respect to defense, the U.S. has been indifferent at best—at least since the failure of the European Defense Community—to any sort of Europeanization. Many in this country seemed to fear that a militarily unified Europe might give less emphasis to transatlantic relations or might botch its defense effort and thus weaken the common security. The opposite is almost certainly the case.

In the economic field, integration was bound to lead to transatlantic competition, even to some discrimination. What defines a Common Market, after all, is that its external barriers are higher than its internal ones. In the field of defense, by contrast, increased European responsibility and unity would promote closer cooperation with the U.S. A Europe analyzing its security needs in a responsible manner would be bound to find association with the U.S. essential. Greater unity in defense would also help to overcome the logistical nightmare caused by the attempt of every European nation to stretch already inadequate defense efforts across the whole panoply of weapons. For example, there are at least five kinds of battle tanks within NATO, different types of artillery and different standards for calculating the rate of consuming ammunition. In a major conflict it would be nearly impossible to keep this hodgepodge of forces supplied.

Thus the paradox: the vitality of the Atlantic Alliance requires Europe to develop greater identity and coherence in the field of defense. I am not talking about traditional "burden sharing," paying more for the existing effort. I have in mind something more structural—a more rational balance of responsibilities. The present allocation of responsibilities fails to bring the allies to reflect naturally about either security or political objectives. Everyone has been afraid to take the initiative in changing the present arrangement, lest doing so unravel the whole enterprise. But since drift will surely lead to unraveling—if more imperceptibly—statesmanship impels a new approach.

STRUCTURAL REFORM

Structural reform cannot substitute for a sense of purpose and clear doctrine. But if pursued with care and sensitivity, it can help catalyze the development of shared political purposes. These common objectives require that European judgments on security, East-West diplomacy and other matters emerge from Europe's own analysis. Mere acquiescence in American decisions, briefings and pressures provides a façade of unity; shared purposes require a deeper sense of participation. Specifically:

1) By 1990 Europe should assume the major responsibility for conventional ground defense. This is well within the capability of a group of countries with nearly one and one-half times the population and twice the G.N.P. of the Soviet Union. The Soviets, moreover, have to divide their forces on at least two fronts.

2) This requires that planning for Europe's defense become a more explicitly European task. Heretofore, the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) has been American. In the new arrangement a European officer should take that traditionally American place, probably with a U.S. deputy. Such a change is also likely to give a new perspective to allied strategic planning. The U.S. has generally achieved its military successes by the weight of the equipment that our vast industrial potential has made available. This has tended to tempt our military leaders to equate strategy with logistics. European nations have rarely enjoyed such a material margin; rather, they have had to rely on superior leadership, training, initiative and tactics—precisely what NATO needs in an age of nuclear parity and renewed emphasis on conventional defense.

3) Since the beginning of NATO, the Secretary-General, who is responsible for running the alliance's political machinery, has been European. In the new structure, with its greater emphasis on political coordination, it would make more sense for this official to be American—whenever the new Secretary-General, Lord Carrington, decides to retire. Meantime, no Western leader is better qualified for guiding NATO's transition than the wise and thoughtful Carrington.

4) Europe should take over those arms-control negotiations that deal with weapons stationed on European soil. The INF negotiations with the Soviets (for intermediate-range missiles) and the MBFR negotiations

(on conventional forces) have heretofore been conducted by American delegations. Both of these negotiations should be "Europeanized" as quickly as possible, with a European chairman, an American deputy and a mixed, though predominantly European, delegation.

The structure that I am proposing would enable Europeans to confront—on their own initiative and in their own context—issues that have been evaded for at least two decades: the precise definition of an adequate conventional defense; the nature of the so-called nuclear threshold—the point where there is no choice except conventional defeat or nuclear escalation; the relationship between strategy and arms control. Since nuclear weapons would presumably be used only if conventional defense failed, Europe would be responsible for setting the nuclear threshold by its own efforts; it could relieve its nuclear anxieties by the simple expedient of augmenting its conventional defenses.

By the same token, European leadership in the MBFR and INF negotiations would place final responsibility for both conventional force levels and intermediate-range missile deployment in Europe with the leaders whose countries will have to bear the brunt—for good or ill—of the outcome of these negotiations. This is especially important with respect to the American intermediate-range missiles in Europe. That deployment makes sense only if the allies genuinely believe that the prospect of a nuclear blow from Europe



on Soviet territory will help deter a Soviet conventional attack or nuclear blackmail. If our principal allies do not share this conviction, the psychological basis for the deployment will evaporate.

European chairmanship of the INF talks would oblige Europe's leaders to face the issue head-on; their domestic critics would no longer be able to argue (as they do now) that U.S. intransigence is the principal obstacle to arms control.

As for the U.S., it would of course participate in these deliberations—in a less dominant position—through its continued membership in the integrated command, its responsibility for nuclear defense, and its ground, naval and air forces in Europe.

REDEPLOYMENT

The issue of redeploying American forces touches raw European nerves like no other. The slightest hint of altering present arrangements jangles sensibilities; it evokes fears of American withdrawal and prospects of European neutralism. But if present trends continue, it is certain to become a central issue in the alliance relationship. Before dealing with it in the context of a program of NATO reform, a few facts must be noted:

1) The present NATO deployment of five American divisions and supporting air and naval forces evolved in the 1950s, when NATO's doctrine was massive retaliation—to react to aggression with an immediate and overwhelming nuclear blow against Soviet territory. Massive retaliation paradoxically required that the total forces on the Continent be kept below the level required for conventional defense. NATO did not wish to tempt Soviet conventional aggression by doing anything to suggest that a Western response would be limited to nonnuclear means. Hence the American conventional deployment in Europe reflected political, not military, criteria: it was intended to give us no choice about nuclear retaliation and to leave the Soviets no doubt that this would be the consequence of even a conventional war. European conventional forces represented a similar political decision: they too were conceived as a trip wire for our nuclear riposte. From the birth of NATO a full conventional defense has been part neither of its strategy nor of its efforts.

2) This situation became anomalous when the growth of Soviet strategic forces deprived general nuclear war of much of its credibility. Yet NATO deployment has been essentially unaffected by the change. NATO has improved its conventional defenses but has not closed the gap in such forces. As the current NATO commander made clear recently, even counting the five American divisions that have remained in Europe, the alliance is still unprepared to withstand a major Soviet ground attack for more than a few days. European ambivalence continues 35 years after NATO's creation. Our allies remain unwilling to develop forces strong enough to provide an alternative to nuclear weapons—and yet much of their public opinion shies away from even thinking about nuclear deterrence.

3) Were we to start all over again, we would therefore hardly repeat the decision of the '50s in today's circumstances. Let us assume a group of wise men and women from both sides of the Atlantic came together to plan a global strategy unconstrained by the past. Assume further that it started from the premise that ultimately the defense of the West is indivisible and that European security should be viewed under the aspect of the defense of the West in Europe—as a thoughtful French observer, Francois de Rose, put it. Such a group would almost surely conclude that the sensible division of responsibilities would be for Europe, with economic resources and manpower exceeding those of the Soviet Union, to concentrate on the conventional defense of the Continent. To maintain the global balance of power—by definition as essential for Europe as for

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America—the U.S. would emphasize highly mobile conventional forces capable of backing up Europe and contributing to the defense of, for example, the Middle East, Asia or the Western Hemisphere.

Such a division of responsibilities would also enable our military establishment to shift some of its intellectual energies and scientific research from a hypothetical esoteric war in an area where we have major allies to the defense of regions where conflict is much

more likely. In such regions our allies are less prone to see their interests immediately engaged; and the countries being threatened are in a worse position to assist in the defense effort.

Even if we were to start all over again, an irrefutable case would exist for maintaining considerable American ground forces in Europe. This would be essential to keep our allies from feeling abandoned and to eliminate any Soviet misunderstanding that the defense of Europe no longer reflects a vital American interest. In a new division of responsibilities we should also preserve and preferably strengthen existing U.S. land-based airpower on the Continent. And we should continue our responsibility for both strategic and tactical nuclear defense, assuming that we and the Europeans could agree on a strategy for the latter. American intermediate-range missiles should remain in Europe to "couple" the nuclear defenses of both sides of the Atlantic so long as European leaders desired them. No change in naval deployments would be involved.

Why then is such a division of responsibilities not realized? The principal obstacle is psychological. For all their criticisms of American policy, Europeans dread a return to isolationism in the U.S. Americans fear that any tinkering with deployment would drive Europe into explicit neutralism. And some in the Pentagon would rather maintain our troops in Europe in a less than rational deployment than return a portion to the U.S., where they are more exposed to congressional budget cutters.

In my view, persisting in a deployment that is losing its rationale accelerates these attitudes. Pacifism and neutralism are on the march in Europe even under the present setup; isolationism in America is not yet so vocal but is being powerfully encouraged by endless allied disputes. An alliance that cannot agree on its political premises cannot sustain itself by clinging to military arrangements decided a generation ago in totally different circumstances. With current trends the issue of the rationale for the NATO deployment will become unavoidable. If it arises not as an integral component in a comprehensive design but as a single question of whether to continue stationing American troops in Europe, unilateral changes will be arbitrarily imposed by the potentially most destructive means—the American budgetary process. Then indeed we might see in America a psychological wrench away from Europe and in Europe a panicky resentment against the U.S. A change in deployment without a positive political and strategic purpose, withdrawal for its own sake, might shock our allies into neutralism; it could mislead our adversary and tempt aggression.

There is an urgent need for a serious and rapid re-examination of NATO doctrine, deployment and policies, conducted by men and women known for their dedication to Western unity. The group—to be formed immediately after our elections—must begin with one of the most divisive issues before the alliance: an agreement on the nature and scope of the threat.

The group must avoid the tendency of previous such efforts, which set unrealistic goals and thereby magnified the problem. A deadline for completion should be set—certainly no longer than two years.

Theoretically, such a study could lead to one of three outcomes: 1) The group could come to the same conclusions about the optimum division of responsibilities in an agreed global strategy outlined above. Given the dis-

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agreements about the nature of the interests involved in regions outside of Europe and the domestic priorities of most European countries. Such a conclusion, however rational, is extremely improbable. 2) The group could agree that the strategic interests of the West require a full conventional defense, but that for practical and psychological reasons, Europe can undertake the required effort only if the present American ground deployment in Europe is maintained intact. 3) The group could decide that the realities of European domestic politics preclude more than the current gradualistic, marginal improvement of defense efforts.

I hope very much that Europe would choose the second option. If Europe should agree to build a full conventional defense and were prepared to express that commitment in unambiguous yearly obligations to increase its forces, the U.S. should accept the judgment that its present ground forces in Europe are an indispensable component. Such a decision might in fact invigorate the conventional arms-reduction talks and in time lead to stability at a lower level. But if Europe should opt for a perpetuation of the present ambivalence or for only a token improvement, then the U.S. will owe it to the overall requirements of global defense to draw certain conclusions. If Europe by its own decision condemns itself to permanent conventional inferiority, we will have no choice but to opt for a deployment of U.S. forces in Europe that makes strategic and political sense. If nuclear weapons remain the ultimate deterrent to even conventional attack, a gradual withdrawal of a substantial portion, perhaps up to half, of our present ground forces would be a logical result. To provide time for necessary adjustments, that withdrawal could be extended over five years. To ease the transition further, we could, if Europe agreed, keep the excess ground forces in Europe for a time afterward in a new status analogous to that of the French forces, prepared for use in Europe but also available for use in emergencies outside it. Any withdrawal would make sense only if the redeployed forces were added to our strategic reserve; if they were disbanded, the effect would be to weaken the overall defense.

The proposed redeployment would leave intact air and naval forces, as well as intermediate-range missiles, so long as Europe wants them. A useful byproduct of the process would be a systematic re-evaluation of the existing inventory of very short-range tactical nuclear weapons, a legacy of three decades of *ad hoc* decisions; these weapons now represent at one and the same time an increment to deterrence and the greatest danger of unintended nuclear war because, being deployed so far forward, they are unusually subject to the exigencies of battle.

In this scheme, withdrawal would be not an end in itself—as it will if frustrations on both sides of the Atlantic go much further—but one component of an adaptation to new circumstances extending over some eight years that rededicates the U.S. to the alliance for the indefinite future.

Psychology is immensely important in international relations, especially when policies turn not only on cold, professional assessments of the national interest by trained political leaders, but on public opinion. I would like to believe that restructuring the alliance to give Europeans greater responsibility for their own defense, while important American forces remain in Europe, will be seen not as an abandonment but as an embrace of Europe. It is a means of enlisting Europeans as full partners in the process of decision on which their safety as well as ours depends. For a son of Europe reared on the existing NATO orthodoxy, the very idea of even a partial redeployment is painful—all the more so after Lebanon. But we will not be fulfilling our obligations to the West if we fail to put forward an initiative to forestall the crisis that will otherwise confront us in much worse circumstances.

POLITICAL OBJECTIVES

By themselves, neither organizational nor doctrinal adaptations can remedy the political incoherence rendering NATO. This article has emphasized security issues. However, a few general observations on the alliance's political problems are necessary.

1) Those leaders on either side of the Atlantic who value the alliance, with all its failings, as the ultimate guardian of Western freedom must seek urgently to end political disputes over East-West relations and North-South policy, especially Western conduct in the flash points of conflict in the Third World. The tendency to grandstand before domestic audiences, the growing self-righteousness, will in time make a mockery of the key assumption of the Atlantic Alliance: that we share a common approach to security. Defense requires after all some agreed political purpose in the name of which it is conducted. The Atlantic Alliance must urgently develop a grand strategy for East-West problems and Third World relations applicable for the rest of this century. Otherwise, it will tempt constant pressures and crises.

2) The U.S. cannot lead the alliance or even contribute to its cohesion if we do not restore bipartisanship to our foreign policy. Ever since the Viet Nam War, we have disquieted our friends and confused, where we have not emboldened, our adversaries by periodic wide swings on essential elements of our policies. But the national interest does not change every four or eight years. At

some point the national interest must be accepted by our public as clearly recognizable and constant. Otherwise, we shall become a source of dangerous instability, still relevant for our power but irrelevant for our ideas. A presidential election year is probably not an ideal time to forge a bipartisan consensus. But whoever wins the presidential election faces no more important and urgent challenge than to restore the element of bipartisanship to our foreign policy.

3) European governments must meet head-on the disturbing trends toward pacifism and neutralism in their countries. These movements are led by people of conviction; they cannot be defused by accommodation. They can only be resisted with a compelling vision of a new future. If European governments continue to humor those who profess to see the danger to the peace in a bellicose America, not an intransigent Soviet Union, they will find themselves making concession after concession and will become hostages of their critics.

The current condition of the alliance cries out for a rethinking of its structure, its doctrine and its unifying purposes. The creativity and courage with which we approach this challenge will determine whether the alliance enters a new and dynamic period or gradually withers.

I have outlined proposals to reinvigorate allied cohesion by defining clear responsibilities for each side of the Atlantic, to be implemented over a period of years. On that basis European leaders could defend cooperation with the U.S. as something they sought as a matter of their own conviction and in their own national interest. American leaders would have a rational, understandable policy to defend and would benefit from dealing with a more equal partner. A new era of allied creativity and American dedication could give inspiration to the generation that has come to maturity since World War II and since the postwar crises that infused NATO's founders with their sense of common purpose.

We must not let our future pass by default to the neutralists, pacifists and neoisolationists who systematically seek to undermine all joint efforts. The nations bordering the North Atlantic need above all faith in themselves and the will to resist the siren calls of those who use fear and panic as instruments of policy or domestic debate. In the end we must fulfill our trust: to preserve and strengthen a North Atlantic alliance that represents the hope of human dignity and decency in our world. ■

