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Possible Implications of a Substantial Cutback of US Forces in Europe

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*Research
Memorandum*

REU-33, April 26, 1966

To : The Secretary
Through: S/S
From : INR - Thomas L. Hughes *Thomas L. Hughes*
Subject: Possible Implications of a Substantial Cutback of US Forces in Europe

This paper examines some of the possible implications for US relations with the other members of the Atlantic Alliance which could result from a significant reduction, in the context of the Vietnamese conflict, of the size of US ground and/or air forces stationed in Europe, primarily in the Federal Republic of Germany. This study does not deal specifically with the limited "temporary drawdown" of 15,000 US troops in Germany, for Vietnam-connected reasons, which was recently announced. However, it is not expected that the implications of this development will affect the conclusions drawn here in connection with a more substantial reduction.

ABSTRACT

The reactions of the other members of the Atlantic Alliance to a possible US decision to carry out a substantial reduction (50,000 troops or over) of its ground and air forces stationed in Western Europe (now totaling about 320,000 men), owing to demands on manpower imposed by the Vietnam conflict, would be conditioned by various previously formed outlooks, specifically, on 1) the extent of confidence in US leadership of the Atlantic Alliance, which, despite various challenges in recent years, is still welcomed and desired by every Alliance member except France; and 2) the lack of any real sense of involvement on the part of the European allies (except, in part, the UK) in the Far Eastern fighting and their concern over possibly adverse repercussions to their own national interests if the war in Vietnam should escalate to a still broader and more serious conflict from which they would wish increasingly to be dissociated. This latter attitude will cause them to view a US troop withdrawal

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in terms of narrower European rather than global considerations.

While the timing and deftness of handling of any major troop cutback would, of course, have much bearing on the reaction thus created in Europe, it does not seem, on the whole, that, if the present NATO crisis had not developed, a draw-down of forces would be likely to have a great and immediately damaging effect on US relations with any other member of the Alliance. At the same time, such a US move would possibly encourage certain trends, already evident in a number of NATO countries, toward adopting positions of greater political flexibility vis-a-vis the US within the Alliance.

To some degree, there would be a common reaction in all or almost all of the allied countries; in other respects, their responses would vary. Thus, it is most unlikely that any other country would attempt to build up its own armed forces to take up the slack left by a US reduction. Some, as noted below, would judge that, if the US felt safe in making substantial cutbacks, they themselves could also reduce their own smaller military contributions without undue risk. In addition, a US cutback would tend further to undermine the acceptability in Western Europe -- already small -- of US strategic concepts of limited or graduated response to an attack. This, however, may be of limited overall significance to the US or to most Europeans, since the latter either have taken little interest in discussions of strategy (because they did not rate the chance of a Soviet attack very highly) or would actually welcome a US return to so-called "massive retaliation" doctrine which would seem to be the logical consequence of a large US reduction.

However, the most serious general problem now likely to arise in connection with a US decision to reduce its forces in Europe would stem from its coincidence

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in time with the crisis created by the French "attack" on NATO. If the problems created by France had been settled satisfactorily by the time a cutback took place, the US would clearly have easier sailing in this move. If not, however, an active suspicion of a decline in US interest in European affairs, based on the apparent evidence of the reduction, would be likely to be fostered in the atmosphere of confusion created by French moves. It is, of course, possible to imagine a broad settlement of Alliance affairs whereby the French problem would be adjusted in one way or another without an absolute US break with France, whereby German security concerns would be fairly well satisfied in some manner, and whereby, in this context, a US cutback might be in consonance, rather than at odds, with other trends in the Alliance. Short of this, however, a major US cutback would weaken US arguments and leadership -- above all vis-a-vis the Federal Republic of Germany -- at the worst possible moment. Even then, it is not likely that the Alliance would collapse, but the double strain on its solidarity -- from France and from America -- would push even farther those trends, referred to above, which might have been advanced by a US cutback in any case.

When reviewing individual country situations which could develop as a result of such US action, it is obvious that the FRG would be far and away the most important and critical case because 1) being least convinced of the detente with the USSR, it therefore remains the most sensitive of all to security problems in general and, consequently, is the most concerned about the military content of its alliance with the United States; and 2) the FRG is already the strongest military associate of the US on the European continent and will play an even more important role proportionately in the Alliance to the degree that France pulls out. A US force reduction would not drive the Federal Republic to

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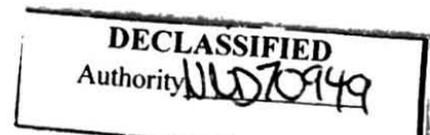
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"Rapallo," or to Paris, or into isolation, because even a diminished US military presence, backed up by American nuclear power, would be of prime importance to any responsible West German Government as a guarantee of its ultimate security. But, even with the most careful timing and handling, such US action would encourage the reexamination in Bonn and among public opinion leaders of West Germany's foreign policy direction -- particularly with reference to the reunification problem -- a development which, in any event, is slowly gaining impetus in the FRG. This trend could be even more pronounced if France, in the meantime, had broken with the Alliance, an act which the Germans would try to prevent if they could, within the constraints imposed by their basic commitment to the United States. The Germans would, no doubt, also seek reaffirmation of US security guarantees and, to give these guarantees further concrete form, might press once more for conclusion of a nuclear sharing agreement involving "hardware." The greater the US cooperation in this respect, the more muted their adverse reaction to the cutback would be. But, in any event, such US reduction, symbolizing a priority for US commitments in the Far East, could not but help to stimulate wider reconsideration of Germany's present foreign policy. To be sure, for the Germans to look for new courses of action does not mean that they would find them, but such a move by the US would help step up the pace of the search.

Unfortunately, measures that might mitigate German reaction to a US force reduction would have the opposite effect in a number of other countries. While they would all to some extent regret the US cutback because of its implications for European security, The Netherlands, Luxembourg, Norway, and Denmark would be more concerned, above all, because of the prospect of a further enhancement of the role of the FRG in Alliance and European affairs, beyond the increase

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already in prospect as the result of France's anti-NATO actions. For these countries as for others, the Alliance as such and US leadership of it are important because they provide a framework within which the Federal Republic can be both "satisfied" and "contained." Perhaps their strongest objection to de Gaulle's current policies is that he is tampering with the system which, for the time being, takes care of their German problem.

The UK would not be insensitive to these considerations either, but the immediate effect of a substantial US force withdrawal would be to increase domestic pressures for a similar cutback of British forces on the continent in order to save foreign exchange. Both because this military presence enhances Britain's role in Europe and because these troops can probably be maintained more cheaply in Germany than at home, the British government would not be likely to yield to the temptation to follow the American example, especially if the US objected strongly.

Belgium and Luxembourg would also be encouraged to consider cutbacks in their own armed forces. Indeed, it is more than likely anyway that the Belgians will in fact soon reduce their troop strength -- regardless of any US cutback moves.

The reactions of Italy, Canada, and the Netherlands would present no serious difficulties, except that the Dutch, as noted above, would be disturbed over the prospect of the increased German influence in Europe.

Among the Scandinavian members of NATO, Denmark and Norway would also be more worried about this German aspect of the situation than about the reduction of US troops, while Iceland, which, like Portugal, also makes no contribution of armed forces to the Alliance, would evince little interest in the whole matter.

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Greece and Turkey might well be noticeably concerned; they would tend to press even harder for broad US military assistance programs, while also reassessing the value of NATO and their Western alliance connections for dealing with the security threat still felt from nearby communist countries.

France, of course, is a special case from several points of view. Whatever France's relation to the Alliance might be at the time such a US cutback took place, de Gaulle would obviously try to exploit it to support his argument that the US could not be depended on to defend Europe and was too engrossed in dangerous Far Eastern adventures. On balance, we believe that he would not be able to win much positive support for French policy itself with this line, but he could add to the negative reactions of other NATO countries to the US move. Indeed, as noted above, the double impact of the French military withdrawal from NATO and of a substantial reduction of US forces in Europe could cause most unfavorable consequences in the long run for the attainment of US policy objectives in Europe, even though the initial repercussions seemed fairly calm. And, of course, the ultimate depth of the damage would depend greatly on the degree to which the war in the Far East broadened further and seemed to presage a still further US diminution of its military presence in Europe.

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The Framework of the Problem

Any assessment of the reactions in Western Europe to a cutback of US forces stationed there would depend to a considerable extent on the size of the troop reduction, the form it took, the explanation for it, and, even more, on the circumstances of the international situation during which it occurred.

The evaluation which follows assumes a substantial cutback of 50,000 men or more of the US air and/or ground forces in Europe -- from the approximately 320,000 now present there (225,000 in West Germany) -- and considers the effect that such a move would have both on our allies and on the US policy position in Western Europe and in the Alliance as a whole.

While the attitudes of the other fourteen members of the Alliance are remarkably diverse, and must each be examined separately, some general remarks can be made at the beginning about the overall framework in which their reactions would develop. This framework may be divided into two parts: 1) the state of the North Atlantic Alliance in the light of de Gaulle's attack on it and of the consequent reaction to this attack, and 2) the general attitude of our NATO Allies toward the Vietnamese conflict. Against this background, it will be possible to assess more accurately the reactions to a major cut in US troop strength.

The State of the Alliance. The North Atlantic Alliance, tempted by the prospects of détente with the Soviet Union and troubled by the involvement of its most important member in a Southeast Asia conflict, has now been rudely buffeted by the formal notice given by French President de Gaulle of his intention to withdraw France from participation in the NATO military structure, even though not from the North Atlantic Treaty itself or from the North Atlantic Council. In the form of a 14-power declaration of principles issued March 18, 1966, the other fourteen member-states of the Alliance have reiterated their support of and loyalty to an integrated NATO. Although the Fourteen wish to continue NATO, even without France, they nevertheless do demonstrate some divergence of views among themselves. They still share the same mutual interests in West European political stability and the common concern for their security arising from a potential -- if no longer immediate -- Soviet threat, and all our allies, except France, have reiterated their full confidence in and reliance on the commitment to NATO of the United States, upon whose power North Atlantic security depends.

The insinuations by de Gaulle that the nuclear stand-off between the US and the USSR casts considerable doubt on the former's guarantee of Western Europe's security now that North America, too, is an attainable target of Soviet missiles have generally not found a responsive audience, although there are some nagging doubts in many countries. The continued US military presence in Europe has bolstered the faith and confidence in America which characterize the great weight of official and public opinion in Western Europe.

While the prospects of an East-West détente have been attractive to most Alliance members, they -- other than France -- have not been induced by this attraction to cast off their NATO obligations and responsibilities as no longer necessary. So far France has found no followers in this path.

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On the other hand, there has been a fear on the part of some members, particularly the Federal Republic of Germany, that a real détente might encourage the US and USSR to arrive at bilateral arrangements which might even disregard German interests; they therefore look upon the Alliance structure, which provides for mutual consultation, as an important safeguard against any such eventuality. Moreover, even those in Western Europe who do not share the general view that the détente itself owes a good deal to the existence of the Alliance as a bulwark to contain Soviet expansionism and to divert the USSR toward "peaceful coexistence," seem to understand that the Alliance provides a desirable and needed ready-made framework for the multiple political-military relationships that must exist between the two shores of the Atlantic.

Nor has Western Europe's burgeoning economic prosperity and consequently greater wish to stand on its own feet appreciably disturbed the foundation of the Alliance. It is true that some West Europeans -- and not only de Gaulle -- would like to be more "independent" of the United States; and, indeed, the North Atlantic Council has of late seen considerably freer expression of views on and even criticism of certain US policies. Nevertheless, few Europeans believe it possible for the Western European countries to assure their own defense without US assistance, and fewer still, despite their growing wealth, are willing to pay for it. The political unity which would be required to make such a common West European effort possible does not exist; nor, in the current atmosphere, will it come into being for sometime to come. Thus, despite this growing desire for "independence" and also certain nagging fears of possible involvement in various American ventures in other parts of the world, the Europeans, rather complacent in their prosperity, are still content to rely on the present military structure of the Alliance as the guarantee of their security.

A further function of NATO, of considerable importance to its European members, is the framework it provides in which the growing power of the German Federal Republic can be harnessed in a manner consonant both with Germany's newly-won importance and with the sensibilities of Germany's residually suspicious neighbors. Recently, Germany's efforts to acquire a greater role in Alliance nuclear defense arrangements -- currently in the form of participation in an Atlantic Nuclear Force -- have created something of a problem for its NATO allies. This problem has become less acute for the moment in light of the studies on the question of nuclear sharing and planning being pursued by the "McNamara" Special Committee of Defense Ministers in NATO, although the Bonn Government still maintains its support for a "hardware" rather than a "consultative" solution of this nuclear issue. In view of the less than enthusiastic response of most of their allies to the Federal Republic's desires with respect to nuclear sharing, the Germans have for some months been quite restrained in their pressure in this connection. Because of their concerns in regard to Berlin, to reunification, and to their own security, the Germans would prefer to avoid pressing the contentious nuclear question just now, if that might cause disruption in the Alliance.

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De Gaulle's formal challenge to NATO has inspired West European fears that the ensuing adjustment will find the Federal Republic, and particularly the German military organization, assuming a more independent stance. This factor, in addition to his policy of estrangement from the United States, has frightened away those West European whom de Gaulle had hoped to lead to "European independence"; and his arrogant methods have perhaps helped to thwart his own policies even more than have the controversial goals which he claims to be seeking. Indeed, it can be argued that de Gaulle's actions have actually tended to consolidate US leadership by seeming to offer in replacement for it only the less attractive alternative of French hegemony.

It is, of course, true, under present conditions in Europe, that the "state of the Alliance" is an uneasy one in which its members, except for France, though determined to preserve both the Treaty and its organizational-military structure, are uncertain as to the future. Yet beneath all, except France, stands a common Alliance platform of shared basic principles and objectives.

Attitudes of the Allies Toward Vietnam. West European attitudes toward the Vietnam situation are not entirely homogeneous; there are substantial national differences. At one end the French government is openly antagonistic to US policy. The Norwegian and, perhaps, the Danish governments are not much more sympathetic, but their motives are, in a sense, more disinterested than de Gaulle's. At the other extreme, the British and, even more, the German governments show some sensitivity to the US argument that the value of commitments given in one part of the world is conditioned by the extent to which the US carries them out elsewhere. But even in those two countries, the sentiment of the public is tolerant rather than positively favorable toward US policy in Vietnam.

In broad terms it is probably safe to say that no European government sees an analogy between its own situation and that of South Vietnam. Few West Europeans feel that there is any immediate threat of direct aggression by the Soviet Union against Western Europe (though the Germans of course do feel a special sensitivity in relation to Berlin), and none feel themselves threatened by Communist China. On the contrary, European concerns in this context are over the possibility that the Soviet Union may be induced by Chinese and North Vietnamese pressures to harass the US rear by renewing cold war moves in Europe, particularly in regard to Berlin, or, generally, by abandoning the prevailing atmosphere of hard-won détente.

All this reinforces the view of most West Europeans that the conflict in Vietnam is someone else's war. However, this someone else also happens to be the leader of their own political-military security grouping and this causes a strain on otherwise strongly pro-American orientations. To be sure, they hope that the US will emerge from the conflict with its prestige and power still intact, but within these limits, they would prefer the US to restrict its military commitments in the Far East rather than expand them. They are less concerned that South Vietnam fall under the control of Hanoi than that the conflict might escalate into world war; or that it might ultimately reverse the downward course of Sino-Soviet relations which they have welcomed; or that it might mean an endless preoccupation of the United States in the Far East at the expense of their own -- and America's -- European interests.

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At the same time, because the Alliance is so important to most of them and because it depends upon US leadership and power, they cannot but be concerned that US prestige is so deeply involved in Vietnam. Even so, most will give no more than modest token non-military assistance to the US and South Vietnam in this struggle, though their official statements will usually be cautiously positive, at least in the cases of the governments of the UK, the Federal Republic of Germany, and Italy, all of whom give highest priority to preserving close relations with the US. These attitudes toward the war in Vietnam will, of course, affect reactions to the removal of US troops in Europe for service in the Far East, but the severity of this reaction will depend to some extent on the situation in Vietnam at any given time, i.e., on whether a negotiated settlement, desired by the West Europeans, seems at all possible, or whether a steadily escalating conflict is the only visible prospect.

Individual Country Reaction. An analysis of the probable reaction of individual NATO countries to a possible substantial reduction of US forces stationed in Europe is contained in an Annex to this paper.

Conclusions

A substantial withdrawal of US troops from Europe would clearly have an impact on various fields affecting US relations with NATO countries in Western Europe. However, this would be judged in the context of the West Europeans' view of their own regional and national interests, not in the framework of global Western security needs, since there is little disposition among the European members of NATO to view the war in Vietnam as relevant to such needs. They would be prepared to recognize that Far Eastern military requirements were Washington's main and -- in US terms -- legitimate motive for troop cutbacks, but this would not in itself provide adequate justification in their eyes for the action. Indeed, if the war in Vietnam eventually seemed to them to be prejudicing the East-West détente in Europe which they want, the reactions of many West Europeans to a troop withdrawal that facilitated a still heavier US involvement in the Far East could come to focus on this factor, as well as on the direct politico-military effects in Europe of the cutback.

Leaving attitudes towards Vietnam to one side, the major impact of a draw-down of US forces in Europe would undoubtedly be on the Federal Republic of Germany, where the majority of US troops is stationed and where their presence is so closely tied to the maintenance of West Germany's security. Prior to the de Gaulle demarche of March 7, it would appear that bilateral relations between the US and other NATO members, except for Germany, would have been affected, on the whole, relatively little by the withdrawal of a sizable number of US troops from Western Europe. Under the present atmosphere of crisis in the Atlantic Alliance brought on by the de Gaulle demarche of March 7 and subsequent French moves, the impact of a US drawdown would undoubtedly be considerable. There would be much greater attention to its repercussions on the credibility of the US commitment to defend Europe, regardless of US statements and intentions on this point.

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The case of West Germany is quite special. Situated in a country divided by the Iron Curtain and exposed directly to the dangers of the Soviet threat, the Germans continue to seek reassurance that the security guarantee offered by the US is still valid; they see the presence of the equivalent of six American divisions as tangible evidence of this guarantee. In fact, their attachment at present to the "magic number" of "six" divisions seems to have become almost irrational. Only very recently, in his rebuttal of de Gaulle's February press conference pronouncements on the European situation, Chancellor Erhard again referred to American assurances that US troops would not be removed from West Germany because of the Vietnam war. Therefore, it is reasonably safe to assume that the political shock of a substantial US troop withdrawal from Germany would be great enough to cause a severe crisis to the present West German Government.

Nevertheless, with careful diplomatic and public preparation, the psychological blow of such a cutback could probably have been sufficiently softened, prior to March 7, perhaps with renewed presidential assurances about the US commitment to Germany's defense, to enable the US to ride out the ensuing storm. However, since de Gaulle's moves against NATO, which also bring into question the status of the French troops stationed in West Germany, a sizable reduction of US forces in Germany at this time could only introduce major political complications into what is already a most complex situation.

Not only would German suspicions about the motives behind such a US move and its timing be aroused, but also those of most of our other West European allies, who, according to the country-by-country analyses contained in the Annex, could have accepted a substantial US troop withdrawal with some semblance of equanimity or, at least, understanding prior to March 7. Now some would see this as confirmation of de Gaulle's thesis that it is unwise for the West Europeans to place full dependence on US assurances -- precisely because of the change in world political conditions and US views about its extra-European involvements. This concern could tend to raise doubts, whether warranted or not, about the US commitment to Europe, especially at a time when the solidarity of the fourteen allies (without France) is so essential to face the de Gaulle challenge. Such US action would render credible the de Gaulle position that mere adherence to the North Atlantic Treaty without ground troop build-up and deployments is sufficient to retain the protection of the US "nuclear umbrella."

This corollary effect upon NATO military organization and planning should not be overlooked. Since it is most unlikely that any NATO member would increase its own force level to help compensate for the US cutback, we would run the risk of undermining our present military strategy in Europe, with its important role for NATO conventional forces, if we argued that there would be no appreciable loss from our cutback -- because of increased fire power, air lift potential, etc. -- of overall Alliance ability to resist aggression in Europe. Certainly there could be no question under these conditions of trying to convince our European allies to adhere to the "graduated response" strategy which has never been popular among them because 1) the fear of a Soviet attack has greatly diminished, and, 2) in case of such an attack, they would prefer an immediate

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and massive nuclear response rather than a ground war which would devastate their territories but leave the USSR relatively intact. This negative West European position regarding the "graduated response" concept does not imply an abandonment of the "forward strategy", to which the Germans are particularly attached, and under which the defenders would first resort to tactical nuclear weapons to repel an invader and would escalate to a strategic nuclear blow only if the invader's penetration of NATO territory persisted.

A US troop withdrawal would also compound further the internal political confusion in Western Europe itself which the French move against NATO has already begun to sow. A diminution of US presence, added to the growing isolation of France, would thrust the Federal German Republic, with its burgeoning economic power and its twelve divisions, into a pre-eminent position on the continent, except for the USSR. The possibility of this development is viewed with considerable distress by Germany's West European neighbors, whose fear and distrust of the Germans arising out of World War I and II is amply brought out in the country-by-country analyses.

A combination of such a US action and the projected French moves would literally have a centrifugal effect upon the Western European political situation. On the one hand, the desire for more independent political maneuverability, in the general, if not the specific, sense of the de Gaulle example, would tend to lead the Europeans to seek more flexibility in deciding on the nature and extent of Alliance political cooperation and in adopting policies toward Eastern Europe and the USSR. This would run counter to the objective of maintaining the solidarity of the Fourteen in the face of the French challenge. On the other hand, the emergence of West Germany as the dominant European power in the Alliance would tend to force the Europeans to seek a closer relationship with the United States as protection against incipient German hegemony, above and beyond their reliance on the US as the only credible defender of their security.

Naturally, these conclusions have been drawn on the assumption that a US force reduction would be substantial -- as previously indicated, above 50,000 and perhaps up to 100,000 troops. Obviously, the consequences for the European political scene would not be so grave if the reduction took the form of a "thinning out" of a smaller number of troops, primarily of the non-combat variety. West European reaction in such a case would be negligible and even German reaction would present no political problem provided there was appropriate consultation in advance, since it is clear that our allies generally understand our problems in Vietnam, even if they do not sympathize with our involvement there.

There are, however, two potential -- though apparently unlikely, at least for the present -- developments which would permit a substantial cutback in forces in Europe without engendering the reactions described in this paper. The first development, namely, a firm decision in favor of the establishment of some kind of nuclear sharing arrangement reconfirming organic US links to Europe's defense and satisfactory to the present German government, could serve as an ideal reassurance of continued US commitment to and cooperation with

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Western Europe. Whether such a move had an equally reassuring effect on West Germany's neighbors would depend on its terms. Their reactions would be important, since Paris could be expected to oppose such nuclear sharing and might feel impelled to mount an intense anti-German campaign, especially if it expected to drum up West European support. Of course, even if other West Europeans did not disapprove of the new nuclear sharing plan, they might still fear the consequences of countermoves by Paris toward developing closer relations with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe at the expense of the German Federal Republic.

The second development which might provide a favorable climate for a substantial cutback would be a resolution of the present NATO crisis, and, under present circumstances, this seems well-nigh utopian. Nevertheless, if the US, France, UK and Germany could somehow work out mutually tolerable terms for Alliance military cooperation, the re-establishment of stability in the Alliance would be greeted with such general relief that the situation might then be psychologically ripe for a realignment of the NATO force structure. This could offer the possibility for reduction of US forces maintained for the defense of Western Europe, given the recognition of the changed conditions of détente with the USSR, the disarray in the Communist camp, and the strengthening of the Alliance's own internal solidarity by the adjustment of existing discords.

ANNEX

Allied Reaction By Individual Country

The Federal Republic of Germany. The implications of a major cutback of US forces in Europe are by far the most important and the most delicate in regard to West Germany. It is the country most immediately exposed to and most conscious of Soviet pressure, and also the country where most of the US forces in question are stationed. The Federal Republic, far more than any other ally, has had most constantly to be reassured in one way or another that the US guarantee of its security and defense of its interests, including reunification, are still valid. For the Germans, more than for any of the others, US force levels in Europe have come to be a symbol of the US intention to support NATO and to offer protection against the Soviet Union. The US military presence also means, for Bonn, a bona fides of Washington's commitment to uphold German interests vis-a-vis the USSR and to apply a forward defense strategy in the Atlantic Alliance.

Against this background, the Germans have displayed great sensitivity to the question of maintaining the American garrison in Germany at a strength equivalent to six divisions. German concern on this point has been an ever-present factor in US relations with the Federal Republic over the last decade. Rumors about possible US troop reductions crop up from time to time, nurtured by sensational elements of the German press. Such rumors, often unrelated to any objective change in the international situation from which a change in US defense posture or strategy could logically be deduced, have in the past been enough to touch off speculation and a state of jitters along the Rhine.

The Vietnam situation, and the resultant growth of the US military commitment in Southeast Asia, both of which have found official verbal support in Bonn, but little public understanding in the FRG, only served to heighten German concern about potential US troop withdrawals. While most German government leaders do not consider it unthinkable that the US may be forced to redeploy men to meet Vietnamese needs, they do recognize the concern of the German public that this would mark a decline of US interest in Europe's fate and have taken steps to deal with it. Foreign Minister Schroeder, for example, told his party's parliamentary delegation in January that the US does not intend to withdraw troops from Europe, but he also pointed out that developments in Southeast Asia would probably give rise to increasing discussion in the US about the possibility of such withdrawals. Schroeder's cautionary words were misinterpreted by some German newspapers -- one, given to sensationalism on this subject, carried the headline, "Schroeder Anticipates US Troop Withdrawals." As long as the US is heavily engaged in Vietnam, German anxiety about a reduction in the size of the US military presence in Europe is likely to continue, and the US announcement in April that there will be a drawdown of about 15,000 soldiers in 1966 to cover Vietnam needs has only stimulated further doubts in West Germany, even though Washington has promised full replacement of these troops by the end of the year.

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Long-standing German concerns about maintaining the US troop commitment must also be seen in the light of the NATO crisis precipitated by French President de Gaulle. Any weakening of the integrated NATO structure would have implications for German security. At worst, the withdrawal of one of Germany's principal allies from European defense arrangements, an end to the French commitment to German defense and to Berlin, and the removal of the two French divisions from the Federal Republic, would have serious politico-military repercussions on Germany. As far as Bonn's peace of mind is concerned, US troop withdrawals, potential or actual, coincident to the French threat to NATO, would be a remarkably unfortunate turn of events.

Conceivably, German political and military leaders might be brought to accept the notion that some US troops could be withdrawn without any meaningful harm to German security and the US commitment to uphold it. The scope of the problem would obviously not be unrelated to the size of the withdrawal contemplated -- the adverse impact of withdrawing any major force unit would surely be much greater than cutting back the level of individual specialists, such as is involved in the planned temporary US reduction of 1966. Of course, even the redeployment of men rather than units leading to a gradual process of thinning-out the US garrison could be highly disturbing if the size of the cut had not been stated publicly and if the public had learned of the development only unofficially or through press leaks. And, if a reduction of units or a major withdrawal of individuals were involved, it would be idle to think that even careful psychological preparation and a calm, quiet manner for implementing the reduction would prevent grave repercussions. This is doubly true in the current situation, where the disarray in NATO and the extent of de Gaulle's threat, as yet but dimly seen, will make any effort to lessen the impact of a reduction in US force levels, regardless of numbers, methods, or advance preparation, a most difficult task.

If large-scale troop reductions were proposed or carried out, contrary to the expectations of the Bonn government, German policy would be influenced in a number of important ways. In the NATO context, the Erhard government, with the full support of the SPD, has followed the US lead in subscribing to the position of the 14 NATO allies vis-a-vis France. It will be important to Bonn to avoid, if possible, a complete isolation of France from the rest of NATO and, at a minimum, to preserve, through some sort of politically acceptable, pragmatic arrangement, French involvement in Berlin and in German defense. US troop withdrawals would, in the face of the current threat to NATO, cause Germany to give greater consideration to accommodating France. The two French divisions in Germany would assume much greater importance, particularly if American redeployments reached significant proportions. The Germans might be reluctant to support allied moves which could conceivably increase the isolation of France and lead to a complete break between Paris and the 14 NATO allies. To lose the French contribution to German defense at the same time the US appeared to be reducing its material support might portend for Bonn the crumbling of the whole edifice of German security. At the very least, it would mean a strong inducement for Bonn political leaders to reconsider the basic German position.

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No doubt a number of Germans, certainly those in the armed forces, would think more about the value of nuclear weapons for the defense of Germany. Though the "Gaullists" of German politics have been dealt a heavy blow by the General's policies and are now on the defensive, long-cherished illusions about a "third force" alternative for European defense may receive new impetus as the NATO structure appears to lose force and effectiveness. Other important elements in German political life, already prone to worry that the US may neglect German interests in an effort to seek accommodation with the Soviet Union, might see in any significant US troop reduction in Europe evidence that Washington and Moscow have worked out a modus vivendi in Central Europe at the expense of German policy goals.

For the great majority of Germans, US troop reductions at this critical stage in Alliance affairs might have other more meaningful and far-reaching consequences. There has been an increasing tendency in the recent past for Germans to question the direction of Bonn's policy course and to reexamine the underpinnings of the German position in the world. Subjects long considered taboo are now being openly discussed in the Federal Republic. The unquestioned responses of the past now no longer provide adequate answers for a widening circle of moderate German political opinion. Past German policies have not brought reunification any closer, and there is a growing tendency to consider fresh approaches.

The policy of building bridges to the East, of seeking accommodation with the Communist countries of Eastern Europe, becomes visibly less controversial with the passage of time. Contacts with East Germany are increasing, in the cultural as well as in the economic sphere, and pressure for more intensive personal and face-to-face contact across the East Zone border and irrespective of it is rising. The possibility of living with the Oder-Neisse line as a boundary in a reunified Germany is being broached with an increasing degree of frequency in public discussion in the Federal Republic.

It is in the nature of things that Bonn's endless quest for a formula to end the division of Germany will probably lead, in time, to greater flexibility in German foreign policy, a readiness to consider national above allied interests, and, in the long run, a possible willingness to consider some loosening of the Federal Republic's Western European and Atlantic ties. It has been suggested in responsible unofficial quarters that a reduction or complete withdrawal of foreign forces from East and West Germany might contribute to a solution of the German problem, and that US assurances of assistance in the event of attack could carry more weight than American troops in Germany. A German Foreign Ministry note of March 25 on disarmament proposes such things as an exchange of formal non-aggression declarations with the USSR and Eastern European states, and a pledge on the staged reduction of nuclear weapons in Europe.

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It cannot be concluded that, even with a substantial US troop cutback, the sum total of these tendencies will necessarily lead Bonn to seek for a substitute for NATO and the Alliance with the United States in the immediate future. The Federal Republic will aim first at a reaffirmation of US guarantees and a NATO solution which will permit some form of multilateral defense arrangements in Europe to continue. It may also press with increased vigor for a new institutionalization of security guarantees, particularly in the nuclear sphere. At the same time, US troop redeployments will almost certainly make the Federal Republic a less amenable and more difficult ally, and hasten developments which even now point toward substantially greater independent Bonn policy initiatives in the German national interest.

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France. The French government of General de Gaulle would be the one allied regime which would welcome a cutback in US forces in Europe and would try to turn this development to its own advantage. De Gaulle has long since prepared the way for doing so. He has constantly argued that the Europeans could not depend on US protection indefinitely and that they should, therefore, undertake an independent defense effort of their own. The French nuclear force de dissuasion has been justified on these grounds. A withdrawal of US forces because of the Far Eastern situation would obviously seem to de Gaulle an exploitable confirmation of his arguments. Indeed, even though the recently announced temporary US draw-down of 15,000 men during 1966 does not qualify as a troop reduction at all, major or minor, Gaullist propagandists have already taken note of it for their own purposes.

The important question is, however, what success he would have in trying to exploit this opportunity? At home, de Gaulle's pro-NATO opponents would probably lose some further ground to him, and this might have a favorable effect for the Gaullists in parliamentary elections to be held within the next year. But, in Western Europe, we would judge that this advantage comes to de Gaulle some years too late.

Had there been any credible "evidence" of US "abandonment" of Europe some years ago, de Gaulle might have been able to turn it to his advantage in organizing the kind of European bloc he has sought to lead. But, in the meantime, his anti-integrationist Common Market policy, his constant inveighing against US presence and "hegemony" in Europe, and, perhaps above all, the harsh, and contemptuous manner in which he has pursued his goals, have alienated many of those Europeans who might have gone along with some of his ideas about European "independence." While he can still influence some opinion leaders in Western Europe, it is probably too late, barring a very major upset of the world political situation, for him to seize the leadership of Western Europe from the United States.

Since de Gaulle initiated his open challenge to NATO on March 7, the course of events has indicated that no other ally supports him in his desire to reduce US influence in Europe or to replace the integrated alliance structures with some kind of looser grouping. Nevertheless, it is not yet clear whether and to what extent the allies will be able to work out some kind of accommodation whereby France would retain certain links with the other members of the alliance. This uncertainty reflects the ambivalence of the allies who, though they do not support de Gaulle in his designs, are not sure that they want to see France altogether isolated in Western Europe.

In these circumstances, a US troop cutback would probably not -- at this point -- bring support for de Gaulle's own policies but it would no doubt raise obstacles to US leadership in Europe. Ideally, of course, the NATO issues raised by France should be settled before any major cutback is announced. But, if this is not the case (leaving aside as not to the point the planned temporary 15,000 man drawdown during 1966), the US may find that the allies will be more demoralized by the cutback because of the coincident crisis created by France than they would be without the latter. The other allies would be bound

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in these circumstances to interpret a cutback as a sign of decreased US interest in European affairs and US leadership would inevitably suffer. The allies would therefore be somewhat less inclined to make the adjustments within NATO to counteract France's departure, which the US might decide to be appropriate. They might be more inclined to favor accommodation with France in order to spare the alliance the double blow to its prestige and solidarity that seemed to threaten it. At best, the net effect might then be a subtle psychological, though not institutional loosening of US ties with the other allies. French designs would not really be advanced, but the alliance as a whole would undoubtedly be weakened, and the other members would be the more impelled to reexamine their own foreign policies in light of this clearly changed situation.

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The United Kingdom. The diversity within the Atlantic Alliance cannot be better illustrated than by comparing the implications of US troops cutback for West Germany with the implications for the UK. Where the former would feel that its security was genuinely impaired, the latter would not be measurably affected by such a concern.

Any UK Government recognizes that the maintenance of British military forces in West Germany carries with it both advantages and disadvantages. On the benefit side, the UK's contribution to NATO forces enables London to participate in controlling West Germany's place in Europe, and it enhances Britain's role in Europe, especially during a period when the UK is excluded from participation in the European communities. Moreover, given London's recent decision to maintain the current level of its armed forces, the BAOR (British Army of the Rhine) affords Britain a convenient means for retaining these troops at lesser cost than it could at home. In recent times, the UK has demonstrated that it feels as free to consider the BAOR as much a strategic reserve as the troops stationed in the British Isles.

On the negative side, the UK has long groaned about the foreign exchange costs of the BAOR. Britain's balance-of-payments situation is extremely serious, and the foreign exchange drain of its forces in West Germany amounts to an estimated £85-£90 million a year. In recent years, the offset agreement with Bonn has never come near to covering this outlay, nor is it expected to do so now. Moreover, the UK has also long expressed doubts about the validity of the strategic case for maintaining the BAOR. British officials argue that the Soviet threat to Western Europe has receded, that a long conventional war in Europe is most unlikely, that the focal point of Cold War confrontation has shifted to the area East of Suez, and that the main danger of Communist military action or subversion, heightened by Peiping's development of nuclear weapons, now lies primarily in the new, underdeveloped, and therefore highly vulnerable nations found in that area.

Despite these arguments against the maintenance of troops in West Germany, Britain continues to put great emphasis on the need for a strong Western Alliance, and even though this is now important mainly for political reasons, both Tory and Labor Governments have accepted the maintenance of a credible British military contribution to the direct defense of Europe against invasion -- however unlikely that may appear to them -- as the military price for their political influence in NATO. The UK knows that significant reductions in the BAOR would raise objections from Washington and London's other NATO partners. The Defense White Paper issued in late February stated that the Wilson Government thought it "right" to maintain British ground forces in Germany "at about their existing level..., provided, however, that some means is found for meeting the foreign exchange costs of these forces."

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UK officials had told Washington earlier that the UK intended, in consultation with its NATO partners, to make more use of the BAOR as a source of reinforcements for meeting emergencies in other parts of the world, i.e., as a strategic reserve, than it has done in the past; furthermore Britain planned, subject to consultation with its allies, to make certain reductions in the RAF units based in West Germany.

Given its own views on the BAOR and Britain's own strategic position, it is understandable that the UK would dislike having the US make significant troop reductions in Europe for a variety of reasons. We believe that the UK government would feel that such cutbacks:

- 1) Would encourage proponents of the view that the costs of the BAOR are intolerable and that the strategic reasons for retaining it are invalid, and would therefore tend to undermine advocates of the policy of maintaining the BAOR for the political advantages that keeping it provides.
- 2) Would cause many Britons to fear that Washington, already preoccupied with Vietnam and other extra-European problems, was further relegating Europe to a lesser level of attention.
- 3) Would be seen -- in view of de Gaulle's most recent moves to force the removal of NATO forces and facilities from France -- as constituting a further centrifugal force within NATO and endangering NATO's function of containing West German strength and predominance on the continent. Before de Gaulle's latest actions, the British reaction to the long-standing French threat to pull out of NATO had been one of insistence that the other 14 members must preserve the Alliance and the Organization built up under it. Since then, the British have moved vigorously in pushing, as a first step, the issuance of the 14-nation declaration of principles of March 18, 1966, which re-emphasized the essentiality of NATO and the unacceptability of bilateral arrangements as a substitute for it.

In view of all the foregoing, we believe that if the US made significant troop reductions in Europe (not to be confused with the temporary US draw-down in 1966 of 15,000 men), the UK would come under considerable pressure from quarters both in and outside the government to follow suit. If, in the meantime, the FRG had failed to increase its offset sufficiently to cover what Britain considered a satisfactory portion of its foreign exchange costs, the UK might feel compelled to make drastic reductions in its own forces in Germany. However, if the US strongly urged Britain to maintain the BAOR, we believe that the UK would find ways to continue to keep its troops there, given the above-noted advantages to London of doing so.

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Italy. Unlike some other European allies, Italy has never doubted the credibility of the US commitment to defend Western Europe. As a matter of fact, the emergence in the early 1950's of a "third force" movement in Italy can be traced to Italian concern (especially among left-center and left elements) that the US might be too impulsive in using its power in Europe. Since then, the so-called East-West detente has confirmed their preconceived idea that a war in Europe is extremely unlikely, if not impossible. With these basic premises in mind, withdrawal of US troops from Europe (even if of a substantial magnitude) would not alarm the Italians unduly about their security. It is assumed, of course, that the withdrawal would be appropriately justified and would be accompanied by reassurances that the US was not planning to pull out of Europe lock, stock, and barrel. To be sure, Washington could anticipate a certain amount of concern in the established bureaucracies in defense and foreign affairs. But, contrariwise, many Italians might even welcome a reduction of US forces in Central Europe as a possible contribution to a further relaxation of tensions there. (Some Italian suggestions might even be made that the US might negotiate a commensurate Soviet troop withdrawal from Central Europe.) Certainly, current plans for a temporary drawdown of 15,000 US troops from Europe during 1966 have aroused no anxiety in Italy.

Even with de Gaulle's threat to NATO, this picture is not likely to change. It is extremely doubtful that a reduction of US forces would lead many people in Italy to rally around de Gaulle. The political leadership and military protection offered by France have found few takers in Italy. Only the Communists have applauded de Gaulle's recent initiatives.

The Italians would be very reluctant to part with some of the few US units still in Italy, more because of the adverse economic impact that this would have on the affected areas than out of fear of a US abandonment of the defense of Italian security. Precedents recall that the negotiation of reductions of US troops in Italy has always been a long and delicate exercise.

The chances that Italy would increase its own military contribution to NATO in the event of a reduction of US troops are practically zero. Secretary McNamara's rapid air-lift troop deployment to Europe a few years back genuinely impressed the Italians. A combination of the credibility of the US commitment and an appreciation of the proven US capacity to redeploy troops on quick notice would probably militate against any undue concern on the part of the Italians about any moral obligation to increase their share of the Allied burden.

The Netherlands. Any significant withdrawal of United States troops from Europe would meet with a certain amount of adverse reaction in the Netherlands. While the Dutch have never publicly questioned our intention to defend Western Europe against outside aggression, a US troop withdrawal would tend to bring out into the open whatever private doubts there may be on this score. If our position in the event of a withdrawal were carefully explained, however, we should probably find the Dutch understanding. In fact, the Netherlands Defense Minister has already

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suggested in private the possibility that the United States might be tempted to shift troops from Europe to Southeast Asia, and we should continue to benefit from the fact that the Dutch have been generally sympathetic to our problems in Vietnam. There are not likely to be any repercussions from current plans for a temporary US drawdown of 15,000 troops during 1966.

The Dutch view the presence of US troops in Germany not only as a bulwark against possible military aggression from the Soviets but also as a guarantee against threats coming from a possible revival of German militarism. Dutch relations with the Germans have generally been good since the end of the war, particularly because of the fact that trade with Germany is vital to the economic welfare of the Netherlands. The Dutch remain skeptical, however, of the depth of Germany's political reform. Much has been said of the Dutch opposition to French leadership of Western Europe, and many Dutch viewed the Franco-German treaty of 1963 as the vehicle for eventual Franco-German hegemony over Europe. However, the basic fear among many Dutchmen is of eventual German domination rather than of French pre-eminence in Europe. This fear has been augmented by de Gaulle's recently expressed intention to disassociate France from the NATO military arrangements.

Thus increasingly more concerned about Germany, the Dutch might, in the event of a US troop withdrawal, paradoxically feel even more heavily dependent upon the United States as an ally. Whether they did or not, however, the Netherlands would be likely to press still harder for a strengthening of the common institutions which tie Germany to the rest of Western Europe. This would lead to an increased awareness of the need to preserve as much of a French presence as possible and would again underline the Netherlands' desire for Britain's inclusion in the councils of Europe.

The Dutch have maintained a generally high level of contribution to NATO. It is expected that they would continue to do so despite a reduction of US forces. The Dutch Government might be hampered by increased pressure from those who would take the US action as justification for allocating a greater segment of the budget to domestic programs. It should be noted, however, that all major Dutch political parties have had few foreign policy differences among themselves to date, and they have been in agreement on the necessity for a strong NATO. Furthermore, any reduction in military strength would be carefully weighed against the above-mentioned fear of giving a stronger European role to the Germans.

Belgium. The Belgian public remains generally apathetic towards international affairs; the only strong public reaction to an announcement of US troop withdrawals would be among the vocal Communist and left-wing Socialists

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who would be quick to claim, along with any Belgian followers of de Gaulle, that the United States has given new proof that it is an untrustworthy ally quick to abandon friends in the pursuit of an unjustified war in another part of the world.

Were the US to reduce European troop commitments, however the internationalists among Belgium's leaders would be seriously weakened in their already well-nigh impossible battle to raise the low level of Belgian budgetary support for NATO and foreign assistance. Even the temporary US force draw-down in 1966 will nourish budget-cutting efforts. Although most Belgians support NATO in theory as a safeguard against both the Soviet Union and a resurgence of German militarism, they believe that Moscow no longer intends military action, and they feel that, in practice, the Belgian contribution to Europe's defense is so insignificant that a change in the Belgian commitment would have no effect whatever on the balance of power. Furthermore, if the US troop withdrawal were announced in such a way as to leave the impression that Europe's security now required less conventional military commitment than was previously necessary (presumably, for military-technological reasons), most Belgians would then feel that it was high time to devote more of their country's attention and resources towards meeting its critical domestic problems. There would, therefore, be no public notion of "taking up this slack" left by US withdrawals.

De Gaulle's recent disavowal of NATO arrangements only gives added voice to the many Belgians who would like similarly to downgrade NATO and reduce their troop total, possibly under the cover of "NATO reorganization." In fact, the new Belgian government may well substantially reduce defense expenditures regardless of any possible US action of this nature, though this need not, in itself, have any relevance for the question of whether major NATO installations can be relocated from France to Belgium.

Luxembourg. The withdrawal of a significant number of American troops from the continent, but not the planned 1966 drawdown, would meet with considerable concern in Luxembourg on political grounds. Luxembourg views the US presence as a stabilizing factor with respect to any German ambitions, particularly in the light of de Gaulle's recently expressed desire to withdraw entirely from NATO commitments. Luxembourg also regards the United States as its principal protector, and this view would not be changed by a withdrawal of American troops. It is not unlikely, however, that such a move would have the effect of increasing French influence in the Grand Duchy, for Luxembourg has traditionally looked to the French rather than the Germans as allies.

Luxembourg's military contribution to NATO, already miniscule, is under continuous attack at home. Military and defense questions have long been a political football, and the army suffers from lack of any support. Any US action giving the impression of downgrading European security would only increase public pressure to abolish military service in Luxembourg altogether.

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Norway and Denmark. There have been no reports of any official statements or public discussions concerning a possible US partial troop withdrawal from Western Europe. However, any substantial US force cutback would be viewed with alarm by the Scandinavians, particularly in the context of their still somewhat uneasy relations with the German Federal Republic.

While the Scandinavians have not in the past questioned US willingness and ability to defend Western Europe from Soviet aggression, a major troop reduction would almost certainly raise certain doubts in their minds about the steadfastness of the American commitment. Greater than this concern, however, would be the fear that a reduction of US military involvement in Europe would automatically increase the importance of the German role and German influence, both political and military, in the Alliance. Latent distrust of German intentions, particularly in view of the Federal Republic's growing economic and military power, are still strong in Norway and Denmark. Any development tending to increase Germany's power would be especially distasteful to Denmark, which counts on the present political arrangements in NATO, i.e., US predominance, to guarantee its security not only against the Soviet threat but also against the revival of West Germany as a dominant power on the continent.

This attitude of the Scandinavians does not necessarily mean they are ready to approve of General de Gaulle's efforts to dismantle the NATO military structure. Rather, they view his actions to disengage French forces from NATO with great alarm, for this would be a step in the same unfavorable direction of enhancing Bonn's position as any US troop withdrawal. Scandinavian interests dictate the requirement for as little change in the present military integration arrangements in NATO as is possible. Hence, any coincidence of a US troop cutback and French defection from NATO would only magnify fears and policy doubts in Norway and Denmark. This reaction, however, would not extend to the 15,000 temporary US troop drawdown during 1966, which has now been announced.

If a US forces cutback were added to a French withdrawal from NATO military cooperation, the result would almost certainly be an increase in already existing pressure, particularly from left-wing Social Democrats and other groups, for a referendum on Norway's continued participation in NATO after 1969, as well as for an examination in both countries of the feasibility of establishing a Scandinavian regional military pact with Sweden as an alternative to continued NATO membership. The present Danish and Norwegian governments, however, would most likely try to maintain their present policies of cooperation with the US and NATO and to counter neutralist trends.

Finally, another fear which plagues the Scandinavians in this context is that the US may become so deeply involved in the Far East that the conflict there could escalate into a broader and more general war. A substantial with-

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Drawal of US troops for transfer to Vietnam would be regarded as a sign that this danger was increasing, and this would add both to Scandinavian resentment and to neutralist sentiments.

Iceland. The question of US troop withdrawals from the mainland of Western Europe is not likely to create much public or official reaction in Iceland. Icelandic security interests are different from those of Europe, and since Iceland has no armed forces of any significance, it is almost entirely dependent upon the United States for its defense. The Icelandic government would therefore accept any US decision in this matter as long as the US naval and air commitment to Iceland remained unchanged. However, it would want to be able to counter any pressure from left-wing labor elements that might be brought upon the government to demand a similar withdrawal of US forces stationed in Iceland, since this could also have undesirable domestic political connotations.

Portugal. A possible US troop cutback in Western Europe is largely of peripheral interest to Lisbon. Portuguese officials have never joined those Europeans who advocate US withdrawal for the sake of furthering the image of growing European independence vis-a-vis the two major world powers. The single most important factor for the government is its preoccupation with holding on to its overseas empire. Portuguese officials have frequently expressed their recognition of the US contribution to NATO during the early years of the Alliance as the principal deterrent to any possible Soviet aggression against Western Europe at that time. Like many of their counterparts in neighboring countries they have felt that the Soviet Union has for some years no longer posed a direct threat to Western Europe. The reasons underlying their views have been rather different, however. Their idea is that Moscow, in giving up any thought of directly and frontally attacking Western Europe, is, instead, attempting to extend its influence into Africa with the intention of eventually mounting a threat to the West from that continent. Lisbon has always contended that NATO's jurisdiction should extend to the Portuguese empire; and this contention has become more vehement since the outbreak of the Angolan rebellion in 1961. The Portuguese therefore feel they derive little benefit from NATO insofar as their main national interests are concerned and, consequently, although they pay lip service to the principle of NATO integration, will not be greatly disturbed about the effect of de Gaulle's projected moves against the Alliance.

While the Portuguese are bitter about post-1961 US policy toward Portuguese Africa, they still have confidence in US determination (regardless of the number of ground troops in Europe) to resist Soviet aggression in the unlikely event it should occur. Thus even a substantial withdrawal of US troop could be expected to have few repercussions on Lisbon's attitudes. This would be just as true whether the troop reduction coincided with or were independent of actions by Paris, with which, incidentally, the Portuguese maintain increasingly cordial ties in any case.

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Greece. Any significant withdrawal of US military forces from Europe would be of immediate concern to Greece, which heavily depends on US support in the event of an attack from Bulgaria. Reduction of the US military presence in Europe would be interpreted by the Greeks as meaning that NATO assistance in an emergency would not be forthcoming with sufficient dispatch and substance. The Greeks would, therefore, be likely to press for greater bilateral US military assistance in order to develop and maintain a larger national military establishment of their own. Failing to secure this type support, the Greeks might seek a political accommodation with their Balkan neighbors that would minimize the Bulgarian threat and reduce the Turkish pressure on Greece over the Cyprus issue. These national concerns would, in any case, prompt the Greeks to seek to maintain satisfactory bilateral relations with France, and this would not be altered by de Gaulle's threat to the existing integrated NATO structure (which, incidentally, the Greeks desire to preserve).

Turkey. Immediate Turkish reaction to a substantial withdrawal of US forces in Europe would not be significant, nor would the reaction be much influenced by the fact that the reductions were connected with the war in Vietnam. While the initial official reaction might be confined to an expression of regret that US commitments elsewhere necessitated such a step, the withdrawal would probably result in spirited debate on Turkey's relations with NATO, and this could ultimately affect Turkey's commitment to the alliance.

In recent months, largely as a result of the Cyprus dispute, there has been considerable public debate on Turkey's role in NATO. The far leftists have advocated complete withdrawal, and, while the other opposition parties have come out in favor of continued association with NATO, they want unspecified changes in the relationship which would include a greater emphasis in defense policy on developing "national forces," i.e., forces not committed to NATO. The government, which has often restated its commitment to NATO, has countered these arguments by affirming that all forces are, in effect, national forces and can be used whenever necessary for national purposes. However, the widespread belief that the US has "prevented" Turkish intervention in Cyprus by forbidding the use there of MAP-supplied equipment has created doubts concerning how readily NATO-committed forces could be used for national purposes.

A withdrawal of US forces in Europe might also be viewed as convincing evidence of lessened US interest in NATO, and, if this coincided with de Gaulle's attack on the Alliance, Ankara might conclude that NATO no longer represented a strong reed on which to rely. In this case, Turkey would place increased emphasis on arrangements which, while within the NATO framework, were essentially bilateral, such as increased US military assistance to Turkey. The level of US assistance would thus become increasingly the yardstick by which US intentions toward Turkey would be measured.

In the short run, it is unlikely that a substantial withdrawal of US forces would alter Turkey's basic posture toward NATO, whatever de Gaulle does. The government, as well as the top level military commanders, remain NATO-oriented. However, a cutback, together with de Gaulle's action, would act to strengthen the position of those politicians and military officers who would like Turkey to adopt a more independent policy toward NATO and the US.

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Canada. The immediate reaction of the Canadian government to a significant withdrawal of US forces from Western Europe would in all likelihood be to deplore publicly the necessity of such action, while at the same time maintaining an "understanding" attitude — provided that it were not considered that the withdrawal signaled a basic shift in US policy towards Europe or a serious escalation in Vietnam. Within the context of the present French-inspired NATO crisis, any planned major withdrawal of US forces would probably cause anxiety in Ottawa concerning a possible reallocation of priorities in the US global foreign policy, and they would not want it further to upset the political equilibrium or military balance in Western Europe.

The Canadians themselves feel that their military participation in NATO, especially their nuclear role, should be diminished in favor of greater attention to Canadian non-nuclear forces suitable for UN peace-keeping operations. (Therefore, they are not too upset about the prospect of moving their two non-nuclear Reconnaissance/Attack Squadrons from France, at French insistence.) Nevertheless, they welcome the opportunity to play a substantial role in the North Atlantic Council, and through NAC in Europe as a whole, and they are willing to pay the price of keeping troops committed to NATO in Europe, i.e. those in Germany, as long as NATO, even without France, continues to give the impression of being a viable organization. Consequently, a withdrawal of troops by the US from Western Europe would not therefore necessarily evoke a concomitant withdrawal of Canadian forces.

All in all, it can be expected that Canada would not in any case be the first or most vocal NATO ally in criticizing or protesting such a withdrawal of US forces, any more than it feels able or anxious to get into the forefront of NATO members attacking de Gaulle for his actions. Canada's position vis-a-vis both France and the US is too vulnerable for histrionics, and its geographic location reduces its interest in the military aspects of European defense, and US involvement therein.

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