



HEGEMONY AND CULTURE  
IN THE ORIGINS OF NATO  
NUCLEAR FIRST USE,  
1945-1955

ANDREW M. JOHNSTON



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Andrew M. Johnston  
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*To my parents, Margot and Tony Johnston,  
my brothers David and Iain,  
and to Bettina Koschade and Halina Cait Johnston*

A very common phenomenon and one very familiar to the student of history, is this. The customs, beliefs, or needs of primitive time establish a rule or formula. In the course of centuries the custom, belief or necessity disappears, but the rule remains. The reason which gave rise to the rule has been forgotten, and ingenious minds set themselves to inquire how it is to be accounted for. Some ground or policy is thought of, which seems to explain it and to reconcile it with the present state of things; and then the rule adapts itself to the new reasons which have been found for it, and enters on a new career. The old form receives a new content, and in time even the form modifies itself to fit the meaning which it has received.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, "Law as civilization"

Custom is the whole of equity for the sole reason that it is accepted. That is the mystic basis of its authority. Anyone who tries to bring it back to its first principle destroys it.

Pascal, *Pensées*

Perhaps the immobility of the things that surround us is forced upon them by our conviction that they are themselves and not anything else, by the immobility of our conception of them.

Marcel Proust, *Remembrance of Things Past*

In every era the attempt must be made anew to wrest tradition away from a conformism that is about to overpower it. . . . Only that historian will have the gift of fanning the spark of hope in the past who is firmly convinced that *even the dead* will not be safe from the enemy if he wins. And this enemy has not ceased to be victorious.

Walter Benjamin, *Theses on the Philosophy of History*

## C O N T E N T S

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<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
Introduction: The Persistence of Nuclear First-Use	1
Chapter One Culture, War, Empire	20
Chapter Two The Persistence of the Old Regime: British, French, and American Strategic Thinking before 1949	49
Chapter Three “Disembodied Military Planning”: The Political-Economy of Strategy, 1949–50	69
Chapter Four Mind the Gap: The Paper Divisions and Cardboard Wings of the Lisbon Force Goals	95
Chapter Five Strategies of Peripheralism: France, Britain, and the American New Look	127
Chapter Six Two Cultures of Massive Retaliation: Neo-isolationism and the Idealism of John Foster Dulles	155
Chapter Seven Hegemony Versus Multilateralism: Nuclear Sharing and NATO’s Search for Cohesion	187
Chapter Eight “Our Plans Might Not be Purely Defensive”: Leading NATO into the Nuclear Era	210



Conclusion: What Does Culture Tell Us About NATO Nuclear Strategy That We Were Afraid To Ask?	242
<i>Notes</i>	254
<i>Index</i>	318

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## *Introduction*

### *The Persistence of Nuclear First-Use*

In Stanley Kubrick's 1964 black comedy *Dr. Strangelove*, U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff "Buck" Turgidson is rebuked by President Merkin Muffley for advocating preventive nuclear war against the Soviet Union. "General," the President admonished, "it is the avowed policy of our country never to strike first with nuclear weapons." Kubrick, who had a library on nuclear strategy and subscriptions to military magazines, knew better. Muffley was wrong, as Turgidson later pointed out: the president had given pre-delegated authority to launch a nuclear attack under certain conditions. Preemption could slide into preventive war if America's field commanders were not watched carefully. Since 1954, it has been the declaratory policy of the United States to use nuclear weapons *first*.<sup>1</sup> It was a policy the Eisenhower administration drafted for its NATO allies, making it the *soi-disant* centerpiece of the alliance's military security throughout the Cold War. Even after its 1991 and 1999 strategic concepts addressed new concerns about regional stability and state-building, first-use was untouchable. It is the most enduring strategic statement of the Western alliance.<sup>2</sup>

President George W. Bush's resuscitation of "preemption," or what Condoleezza Rice once called "anticipatory defense," is not, then, a wholly unprecedented departure from American strategic thinking: striking first in anticipation of a threat was at the heart of American Cold War strategic doctrine. True, it never happened, and truer still the Bush administration has drafted such a liberal definition of *threat* as to move its strategy closer to prevention than it was in the Cold War. Even so, the language of first-use was impossibly, even deliberately, convoluted, veiled

in the dense logic of “mutually assured destruction” that underpinned deterrence and thus sounded less aggressive than preemption. Nuclear deterrence flirted constantly with the temptations of preemption because being *credible* in making apocalyptic threats meant being able to hit first. And since what might trigger preemption was never clear, its distinction from preventive war was hazy, maybe knowingly so. Under conditions imagined by some thinkers at the time, such as Paul Wolfowitz’s former teacher Albert Wohlstetter, the mere existence of Soviet nuclear weapons offered a sufficient *casus belli*.

This tortured reasoning, combined with the absence of a world war between the Cold War blocs, has allowed considerable public confusion over NATO strategy. This is not to say that it is a doctrine without controversy. As recently as the late 1990s, Germany’s Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer and Defence Minister Rudolf Scharping proposed NATO discuss renouncing nuclear first-use. But when Scharping flew to Washington, he was told by William Cohen that NATO would stay the course. Germany obediently assured the United States it sought “continuity” in its NATO policies.<sup>3</sup> Yet the proposal revealed a long-simmering critique of what some held to be NATO’s “discriminatory nuclear order” where nuclear states lecture nonnuclear states on the virtues of nonproliferation. Because West Germany’s admission to NATO in 1955 was conditioned on it never procuring nuclear weapons of its own, the strategic posture of the alliance made its position awkward. Outside NATO, first-use, because it required massive nuclear forces, some argued, was a shameful symbol of the West’s determination to maintain its military hegemony in the world by denying to others what it had long believed was central to rational security.<sup>4</sup>

The American rebuff of Germany in 1998, echoed by fellow nuclear powers Britain and France, was vehement: NATO would not reopen the first-use question just as it was putting the final touches on its 1999 strategic concept. First-use had been an “integral” part of NATO’s historic security and should remain “a key element in ensuring the coupling of the security of North America and Europe.”<sup>5</sup> Although Germany, Canada, Greece, and Denmark all at times expressed interest in some sort of debate, there was no reevaluation of first-use. The 1999 strategic concept emphasized that “nuclear weapons . . . continue to play a key role in preserving peace and preventing coercion and war.”<sup>6</sup>

In the 1950s the conditions facing the alliance were considerably different. Not only was NATO directed against a single enemy, but first-use was also tied to the sudden emergence of smaller tactical nuclear weapons in U.S. forces.<sup>7</sup> NATO had undertaken a massive conventional

and nuclear armament program since 1950, but the pace had slowed by Josef Stalin's death in 1953. Tactical nuclear weapons might not only compensate for Soviet conventional superiority, some believed they could reduce the damage that might result from relying on less discriminating strategic weapons.<sup>8</sup> And they seemed to give security without bankrupting the still shaky West European economies. But there was a catch. Their effectiveness as tools of *defense*—and thus their credibility as weapons of *deterrence*—appeared to rest on their early use. In June 1955, a NATO war simulation known as *Carte Blanche*, in which 335 nuclear bombs of various sizes were dropped over three days, produced an estimated immediate death toll of 1.5 to 1.7 million West Germans.<sup>9</sup> SPD (Social Democrats) critics immediately attacked the CDU (Christian Democrats) for having accepted this as part of German membership in NATO. Konrad Adenauer insisted that tactical nuclear weapons were “no more than a modern development of artillery,” echoing similar remarks made by President Eisenhower who liked to muse that nuclear weapons had become “conventional.”<sup>10</sup>

Others were less certain. Academics, politicians, and military strategists lined up to debate whether a tactical nuclear war could be controlled, and if it could not, did it continue to make sense to fight a war to protect European society with a strategy that would almost certainly destroy it. The trouble was tactical weapons emerged at the same time as the new thermonuclear bomb, a weapon so destructive it threatened to erase the Clausewitzian notion that war should have rational political ends. Unless a firewall could be built between tactical and thermonuclear weapons, it was not clear if the strategy designed to ensure deterrence with small nuclear weapons would not also be a recipe for quick suicide if the deterrence failed.<sup>11</sup> Could one strategy meet both needs without the chance of losing control and becoming, therefore, *less* credible?<sup>12</sup> NATO seemed trapped in a series of bewildering paradoxes.

The debate raged throughout the late 1950s and 1960s, with more and more critics charging that an excessive reliance on nuclear deterrence in an age of thermonuclear proliferation made no sense. This triggered interest in various theories of war limitation, culminating in the 1960s in “Flexible Response,” a doctrine designed to flip some of the burden back on NATO's conventional forces to reduce the perceived inflexibility of nuclear retaliation.<sup>13</sup> Flexible Response was accompanied by a subtle adjustment to first-use: it was downgraded to a policy of *no-early-first-use* to place “the onus of nuclear escalation squarely on the aggressor.”<sup>14</sup> It raised, though, pressures on the Europeans to upgrade their conventional forces, something that proved irksome for not only economic and

political reasons but also because it was feared that by reducing the odds of an immediate nuclear response, NATO increased the possibility of a local war by “decoupling” the U.S. deterrent from Europe’s defense. Flexible Response, in other words, risked throwing NATO back to its lamentable strategic condition of the early 1950s.

The debate then shifted to calibrations of Warsaw Pact and NATO conventional strength.<sup>15</sup> But this argument was soon engulfed in the politics of détente, the Soviet decision to deploy intermediate-range SS-20 missiles in the mid-1970s, and the decision to modernize NATO’s intermediate-range nuclear missiles in the early 1980s. The cluttering of Europe’s nuclear landscape was made more worrisome when newly elected President Reagan ruminated in October 1981 that he could envisage a nuclear exchange confined to Europe.<sup>16</sup> It was a fitting conclusion to the administration’s decision to let its members expound freely on nuclear matters, what one academic called “letting a hundred exotic flowers bloom in nuclear remarks by high officials.”<sup>17</sup> In 1982, a group of former U.S. foreign policy architects was finally prepared to argue in the journal *Foreign Affairs* that nuclear first-use was dangerous and “outmoded.” The “Gang of Four,” composed of Cold Warriors George Kennan, Robert McNamara, Gerard Smith, and McGeorge Bundy, argued that the possibility of controlling nuclear escalation was sufficiently remote as to make consideration of limited nuclear war implausible and thus valueless as a deterrent. Since the costs of nuclear war outweighed any possibility of meaningful victory, it was important to make sure the “firebreak” between conventional and nuclear war was “wide and strong.” The authors advocated an unequivocal doctrine of no-first-use, even rejecting a limited or delayed tactical option as being far too unreliable in a crisis.<sup>18</sup>

The weight that the Gang of Four brought to the issue did little to persuade NATO. Supreme Allied Commander (SACEUR) Bernard Rogers replied in the next issue of *Foreign Affairs* that while NATO’s conventional forces were improving, it was not the time to move to a declaratory no-first-use policy. Ironically, the first-use *status quo* was endorsed in the same issue by Germany’s own “Gang of Four”: Karl Kaiser, Georg Leber, Alois Mertes, and retired NATO general Franz-Josef Schulze. They argued that no-first-use was “antithetical to risk-sharing within the Atlantic Community” because it raised the possibility that a conventional war could be waged in Europe alone.<sup>19</sup> Some European officials argued in the 1950s *against* first-use on the same grounds: that a limited nuclear war in Europe was antithetical to risk-sharing with

the United States because back then the Soviets could not really hurt the United States should a war get out of control.

The terms of the debate had not moved very far from the original pattern of trying to make extended deterrence credible by threatening to use military power that seemed less and less credible as it became more powerful. The 1980s' debate faded as NATO awaited the outcome of the arms control talks that ultimately ended the Cold War. The collapse of the Warsaw Pact yet reinforced the perception that first-use played a role in "winning" the Cold War. Thus, despite, or perhaps because of, the dramatic changes of the early 1990s—the unification of Germany, NATO's expansion eastward, increasing military cooperation with former Warsaw Pact powers, and the growth of new threats outside Europe—NATO's doctrine of nuclear first-use held with astounding resilience.

Why this has been the case is not the concern of this book, which looks at the original choice not its genealogy. Yet history is not so innocent. NATO has what James Livingston would call its own "primal scene," a story that gives "meaning to irretrievable memory traces" to constitute its actors in the present "by orienting them toward a past and a future."<sup>20</sup> Official opinion in NATO is clear that the persistence of first-use is due to its effectiveness in maintaining security for forty years. Yet I am tempted to argue that the psychological grip of first-use is a function of the *fragility* of its logic not its timelessness. Because of the conjectural nature of the issues involved—what might happen in a war involving nuclear weapons—a policy of calculated stabilization in which NATO's primal scene is reenacted is more useful. NATO officials today do not so much as argue for first-use as they do against even discussing it; they insist not that first-use is the best possible strategy but that it is, and always has been, the only possible strategy, and history tells us so.

Thus NATO rests its strategic worldview on history, arguments, often counterfactual, that first-use sprang from necessity, technological exigencies, and desperately good intentions, all of which are enduring. This stability substitutes for the arcane paths of strategic argument, paths that are pitted with irresolvable paradoxes. "Tradition" also makes a contingent choice natural and inevitable. The habit of first-use has, over time, beaten back all challenges. And every challenge forced NATO to strengthen the historical groundedness of the doctrine by interventions that anchored it in the enduring "traditional identity" of Atlantic security. Yet there has never been a documented history of the origins of NATO strategy. We have had less to say about the slippery birth of nuclear first-use than its advocates or, for that matter, its critics, might wish.



This book aims to rectify that omission. It is about an important (but not primal) moment in NATO history, one that did not reveal timeless laws of deterrence, or provide NATO with the secret to collective security in the nuclear age. Nuclear first-use, I argue, sprung from specific conditions in the mid-1950s, namely the intersection of the conflicting demands of the *strategic cultures* of NATO's three largest powers. Britain, France, and the United States were each groping with an untested strategic instrument in an uncertain environment. Each selected its options from a menu inscribed by cultural assumptions about their national identity and the identities of their allies. This does not mean that first-use was not rational as such, but that its rationality conformed to the cultural fabric of time and place; it was bounded by how the Big Three reached for nuclear weapons to gratify objectives consistent with their perceived identities. Nuclear first-use was especially driven by two American desires. One was to maximize the military production of Europe to weaken its demands on U.S. resources. Stimulating European autonomy gave the United States a freer hand in the world when its "interests" were proliferating. The second desire, to compensate for the independence thus cultivated in Europe, was to socialize the allies into accepting the conditions of American peripheralism just as some U.S. officials wanted to circumvent NATO's veto on the use of U.S. nuclear weapons. Europe was to be made *self-reliant* but so seamlessly integrated as to eliminate traces of past national strategic cultures. It was to be conceptually reconstructed so its independence would not evolve into an autonomous third force. It would be autonomous, but realigned into a new Atlantic "community." Rather than a monument to multilateralism and nuclear sharing, as some argue, first-use was the instantiation of a mid-1950s unilateralist American strategic culture on NATO. It survived beyond its peculiar time in part because it was sufficiently indeterminate as to meet a variety of interpretations. But more so because the process by which the Europeans "learned" to accept the new strategic landscape—that is, by which the European allies acquired a new Atlanticist strategic identity in which nuclear weapons functioned as compensation for lost national military prestige—was closer to a process of hegemony than authentic multilateralism.

Using culture, let alone hegemony, to describe this will raise some eyebrows. The introduction of "culture" to the field of international history has been strangely controversial. Historians of foreign policy have always paid attention to the subjectivities, ideologies, "mental maps," and cognitive biases of foreign policy. Some of the new interest in culture is little more than a formal exegesis of these older interests. But *culture*

is also used as part of a belated “cultural turn” in diplomatic history that seeks not simply to introduce another dimension to materialist interpretations of foreign policy—what Eckart Conze calls a “third pillar to national security and/or economic aspects of international relations”—but to replace them with an entirely different interrogation of foreign policy.<sup>21</sup> It is this epistemological and methodological challenge that has alarmed traditionalists. I address these issues in more detail in the first chapter in order to explain why I use culture to understand strategic questions rather than existing methods that have been so productive in the past. This is where culturalists seem to have gotten into trouble because they are more adept at describing general historical contexts than in charting cause–effect relations in foreign policymaking.<sup>22</sup> A great deal of the culturalist literature is involved in deepening such contexts, showing how imperialism is embodied, for example, in exhibitions or literature, or how race and gender condition the worldviews of actors. As such, many culturalists have tended to focus on non-state actors and global cultural exchange outside foreign policy. For those concerned with state politics and military power, some of this contextualizing seems to miss the point. This book wants to show otherwise. It takes a state-centric subject (collective planning for war) and explores how the subjectivities of policy create the form and content of strategic doctrine; and how foreign policies also aim to remake the *subjectivities* of other nations as the very object of policy.

I was drawn in this direction in part because it struck me as a more credible way of understanding how policymakers really think about the world. Behind rational professionalism exists desires formed out of our many identities. This subjectivity is not irrational per se but is an admission that preferences are bounded by worldviews that are, in the end, constructed socially. There may be rational ways of choosing between means, but on the question of ends, reason is quieter.<sup>23</sup> Social constructivism is thus more congenial to the historian’s instincts for contingency, and change, than other attempts to analyze international behavior, attempts that have been more influential on diplomatic historians and their understanding of strategic issues. I was also drawn to culture, ironically, because of what I perceived to be the empirical lapses of traditional explanations. After reading the strategic files of the United States and Great Britain in the 1940s and 1950s, I was struck by the extent to which their language imported vast, usually unacknowledged, assumptions about their national histories, about what options were consistent with “traditions” and “values” embodied in being British or American. It became impossible to read these as dispassionate assessments of security.

They argued—within their own political and organizational bureaucracies as much as between nations—using symbols, tropes, metaphors, analogies, and stereotypes of other cultures in such a way that alerted me to how their ideological positions were “envehicled” (to use Clifford Geertz’s term) in cultural forms. This made the clean distinction between rational and subjective impossible. It meant that the rational outcomes of policy—the concrete policies that were *caused* by real environmental insecurities—were always channelled by subjectivities that needed to be investigated if we were to make sense of their textures.

Moreover, traditional arguments about first-use—that NATO was forced into nuclear dependence because of its inability to build conventional forces—simply did not mesh with important facts. First, NATO has always had the objective means to match the Soviets but it *chose* not to travel that path, partly for genuine political and economic reasons, but because the priorities of key NATO members were committed to projecting power outside Europe. These choices were based on ideas about traditional sources of prestige and power. Empires are rarely rational choices, as Jack Snyder has shown.<sup>24</sup> Second, the decision to put NATO on a nuclear footing predated its failure to reach its conventional goals. The chronology here was wrong. NATO would have gone nuclear regardless of the conventional forces it built because the United States structured its relationship with Europe in terms of nuclear air power and, increasingly after 1950, the use of tactical nuclear forces on the ground.

This sent me searching the cultural language of NATO’s strategic debates. In each of the Big Three powers, I found arguments about *interest* structured in terms of national *identity*, that is, claims in favor of certain strategic choices based on what was the “natural” position—the cultural tradition if you will—of each state. Sometimes this was a claim that the preservation of an empire was the only path to great power status. Sometimes it was the argument that a nation’s true path was in distancing itself from unreliable allies. In each case, I found subjective judgments about history, identity, power, status, and influence, used to make nuclear weapons attractive. In each, there was the hope that nuclear weapons—the unproven but symbolically modern *sine qua non* of strategic independence—would satisfy the desire for autonomy in the face of deepening pressures for integration. It was this dialogue between nationalism and integration that proved so analytically productive. As internationalists in the United States, and Europeanists in Paris, Berlin, and London, pushed for an Atlanticist identity, nationalists in each state mounted more persuasive arguments in favor of nuclear weapons based on the need for some degree of autonomy in the new collectivity. The rising

political power of these nationalists made each state look less stable as an ally, and corroded the tools of integration. The push toward first-use in the mid-1950s came from conditions given to Europe by these internal identity struggles taking place across borders. First-use did not emerge as a rational-choice trade-off between the economic desires of the allies that compelled them to prefer cheaper but more powerful weapons over more expensive ones. There were plenty of discussions pertaining to the economic pains of rearmament and the promised cheapness of nuclear weapons in the early 1950s to make such an argument plausible. But America's disposition toward nuclear weapon solutions predated the end of NATO's rearmament. It expressed itself first in the detached way the United States formalized its defense of Europe, and second in the incipient inclusion of tactical nuclear weapons into U.S. ground forces in 1952. Most accounts of this process chalk it up to the widening search for military means to cope with a more aggressive Soviet threat. But its relationship with the simultaneous conventional rearmament is left unclear.

This book also makes a broader argument about thinking culturally in international relations. It begins with the premise that modern nation-states contain two competing subjectivities, one as a state-like-other-states, with a common interest in sovereignty and security.<sup>25</sup> This *state rationality* tends to produce like-minded responses to security dilemmas among otherwise different cultures: cycles of arms races, alliances, diplomacy, and war in an effort to provide protection in an anarchic world. We see this as rational and universal but it is also learned. The second subjectivity is as a *nation*, or, in Benedict Anderson's famous phrase, as an *imagined community*. While nations come in the bureaucratic form of states and therefore internalize a measure of *state rationality*, they are built around particularist identities: states seek recognition of their common attributes as sovereign institutions, while nations define themselves as different from others. Nations are therefore constantly articulating images of themselves, in their history texts, political speeches, popular culture, and so on, in order to create the social unity needed to mobilize power for the state, and to differentiate between inside and outside, us and them. National unity sutures the imaginative, emotional power of the *nation* to the bureaucratic rationality of the *state*. The images generated by such subjectivities are not simply projections of reality but self-perceptions, desires, hopes, and longings about what sort of a people this nation was, is, or can be. Because individuals have other identities—gender, race, ethnicity, religious affiliation or whatever other norms exist to create groups—the national image is something to which individuals try to

reconcile their other identities. As such, national identity is not a solid thing, but a battleground, a point around which groups are defined, and struggle to locate their place. Change the national identity and one's place within it changes. In this sense, national identity reflects the consequences of the distribution of social, political, and economic power in a nation-state. The ability to define nationhood is the prize of social and political struggle inside the juridical boundaries of the state. Diplomatic historians tend to see foreign policy from the vantage of *state rationality* (and its documentary traces) and assumed variations in identity are peripheral to the security interests of all states. Yet neither state nor national subjectivity can be understood without the other; the emotional, cultural views generated by representing national identity interact with the exigencies of state rationality to produce a foreign policy that is universal in its logic and particularist in its desire to satisfy unstable internal arguments about the character of the nation itself.

We ought, for example, to look at American identity as an *internationalist* nation-state, as well as the fluctuating identities of the major Western European allies—all global empires—with their growing but variegated interest in forging a new transnational European identity. For Americans, their contributions to postwar Europe were unsettled by an inchoate identity within the alliance they created. Was NATO part of a new commitment to permanently enfold U.S. interests with those of other anti-communist states? Or was it to provide the foundations for a later retreat from Europe so it could restore its “ancestral” identity in the western hemisphere? This was an open question for U.S. foreign policy in the 1940s and 1950s, and American policymakers knew it. Joining NATO was a bold statement of the evolution of America's identity as a state that belonged to a political-economic community of liberal-capitalist states. America's novel constitutional ethos, as Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri have shown, was expansionistic, open to universal principles of political and economic administration that imagined the incorporation of the entire world, especially where its values and economy were historically entwined. This new concept of “Empire” was not territorial, but juridical, ethical, and deeply inclusive.<sup>26</sup> Yet only part of this identity spoke in universal terms. The need for internal cohesion—as in all nation-states—established a particularist strain as well, founded on the idea of moral separation. The United States was still a residually exceptionalist state, with a political identity that grafted nationalism and internationalism in unstable configurations. The *form* of its internationalism was drawn by its precarious identity as a nationalist-exceptionalist culture with an increasingly multilateralist socioeconomic ethos. American identity did not contain one set of ideas

about its “nationalism,” but was something that divided Americans intensely. During the early Cold War, the main fault-line, in foreign policy terms, was between liberal internationalists and conservative nationalists. But most Americans fell into neither camp with consistency. Most saw virtue in both multilateralism and nationalism and were prepared, on a given issue, to accept the logic of liberal internationalism but to recoil in dread when this logic threatened to transform valued American institutions. They saw support for Western Europe less as a form of self-preservation and more as a species of innate idealism. As such, they could be aroused to turn against the diplomacy of the internationalists and adopt an “all-out or get out” disposition when it appeared that the allies failed to gratify or appreciate this idealism.<sup>27</sup>

The battleground of American politics in the 1950s was over this fluctuating middle terrain between committed internationalists and recalcitrant nationalists. Their ideological divide was articulated in ways that hitched political philosophy to national identity. The envehicling of ideology in the symbol-systems of national culture is what made arguments about foreign policy *cultural* in their content and in their effects. Culture was not a device to legitimize material preferences in this or that foreign policy: it was constitutive of those interests, calling into being what was and was not acceptable to American life. These internal fractures existed in Europe as well. The British and French empires gave both countries an important part of their postwar identities. At the same time, the “Thirty Years War” suggested that a new transnational identity—a European community that eroded the pathology of nationhood—was the best hope for peace. The adjustment between these poles shaped NATO’s internal debates between sovereignty and integration. What is important is how the forces of integration interacted with those of national fragmentation: every push toward a transnational identity, European or Atlanticist, produced nationalist resistance. We cannot know the nature of NATO’s military direction without grasping the dynamics of this cultural struggle.

All very well, you may ask, but what did this mean for NATO’s strategy? My argument flows directly from the way the interaction of nationalities produced the choices available to NATO in the 1950s. As the United States grappled with whether it was *for* Europe or *of* Europe, its military policies in NATO oscillated between two tendencies. On the one hand, it wanted Europe to be an autonomous source of power against the Soviet Union. On the other hand, its ability to exact Europe’s rebuilding depended on its willingness to plug its older peripheralist strategic identity into the common defense of Europe. It discovered

paradoxically that it could only command NATO's redevelopment from within, even if the aim of such a command was to leave Europe to itself. But since the Americans wanted Europe's power for their own reasons, the "autonomy" they envisioned was truncated by a desire to remake an integrated Europe into, if one can bare the further paradox, an independent dependency. This is, I contend, the defining feature of the American "empire," namely its ability to alter the subjectivities of nation-states such that their dependence comes in the form of a nominal independence. Inclusiveness as titular equals offers a more durable hegemony than dominance. The contradiction between independence and conformity could only be resolved by resocializing Europe's nationalist strategic cultures into a single security community with indivisible interests. There was a commensurate change in America's identity as well, although few officials in Washington imagined that a new Atlantic identity would submerge American nationalism.

As the United States pushed for integration along these lines, Europe's economic and cultural divisions, especially between France and West Germany, and also between Britain and continental Europe, made America's integration into Europe a threat to some forms of "traditional" Americanism. The conservative-nationalist tendency in U.S. foreign policy pushed for a comprehensive integration of Western Europe. American nationalists were more prepared to cut and run, to use the threat of withdrawal to extract a new Europe (or abandon the old one), because their sense of American identity was not closely invested in the project. They had more faith in the solo power of the United States. The strategic doctrine that worked its way into America's NATO policy thus in part expressed the residual detachment of conservative-nationalists: a nuclear peripheralism that placed the United States on the edge of Europe, supported by highly technological means designed self-consciously to minimize the involvement American lives should Europe collapse again. NATO was not the means by which the United States was drawn into Europe but rather it allowed the United States to defend Western Europe more credibly from the periphery.<sup>28</sup> The process by which the NATO became nuclearized, then, involved the successive acceptance of this relationship: the United States encouraging the self-defense of its allies while relying on nuclear weapons to provide a strategic *cordon sanitaire* between it and its adversaries.

The potency of this peripheralism varied over the years, in response to perceived European strengths and weaknesses, the virulence of the Soviet threat, and the emergence of new technologies. But it responded to the way these elements played with shifting cultural themes in American

society. While some form of nuclear strategy remained a constant of American thinking from 1945 to 1955, peripheralist values were given a more self-consciously nationalist cast because of the conditions dominating American life at the end of the Korean War, after the collapse of bipartisanship, and during McCarthyism. Riding a wave of hostility toward New Deal liberalism at home, neo-isolationism brought U.S. strategic policy to a point in which a doctrine of nuclear first-use satisfied a variety of these impulses, namely, it eliminated the ability of the allies to veto the strategic desires of the United States to use nuclear weapons in defense of its global interests.

This had been the lesson of the Korean War for Douglas MacArthur, Robert Taft, Herbert Hoover, and William Knowland: America's alliance with socialistically inclined Europeans inhibited the exercise of U.S. power in Asia, where lay the nation's true interest. While this was not the official policy of the Eisenhower administration, there was enough of it in the new Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) and in the ambiguous pronouncements of globalist John Foster Dulles, to make American nuclear autonomy a central part of the New Look. What remained was for this nationalist insurgence to be exported to NATO through a process of reeducation, by which the strategic interests of the United States were made synonymous with the "Free World" as a whole. The educational theme was articulated time and again by U.S. officials, who saw European strategic concepts as outdated. While the allies often resisted this hegemonic project, their own nationalist-integrationist tensions initiated a cycle in which the British and French reached for an independent nuclear force to secure their identities in the face of integration. With each abandoning integration on conventional lines, NATO lacked the resources or cognitive interest in a nonnuclear policy. NATO was forced to accept a nuclear addiction it has sustained ever since.

This book must in the end answer what difference it makes to see strategic doctrine as cultural rather than material. Most historians argue NATO was an expedient marshalling of resources to balance against a common enemy. Nuclear deterrence offered a shield to all and underscored their equal status. A cultural approach to this question does not deny that the process involved calculations of means and ends. But it sees the content of strategic goals as a product of *national desire*. In NATO's case, members brought to their common effort assumptions about national interest that imported—concealed in the language of a dispassionate military rationality—values and preferences embodying internal debates about national and organizational culture. It is not that national strategic cultures exist per se, but nation-states act as if they do. They



assume that strategy, while always rational, should reflect the peculiar historical, social, and ideological conditions of the nation. Strategy is, therefore, *both* universal and particular. Its particularity is not only the material circumstances of the nation, but its ideational conditions: what are we good at? What kind of armed forces and civil–military cultures are consistent with our values? What was our military history and how should it guide our responses to new conditions? The language of strategic doctrine smuggles in answers to these questions, reproducing the idea that while strategic conditions may change, “our” traditions as a people endure. The collective pronoun here—the “we” and “our”—is the taken for granted quality of national security that culturalists seek to uncover.

Culture inscribes a range of ideational elements on the strategic tools of a state. These may be the sense of historical unity—national, formative myths—as well as racial, gender, and class assumptions in the hierarchy of society. The appropriateness of using force against different peoples, of defending commercial interests over other goals, or the premium placed on masculine assertiveness, are all ways in which the strata of a culture are embodied in the foreign policy of a nation–state. When a state’s behavior is *consistent* with its material interest diplomatic historians dismiss the presence of cultural indicators as devices designed to legitimize a “harder” interest. Cultural tools bring legitimacy, for sure, but are also constitutive of policy. Those that prize, for example, assertiveness over compromise, that demand a “two-fisted” toughness, a “strenuous life,” and attack conciliation as feminine, sentimental, and idealistic or impure, reveal gender in diplomacy. It makes contingent decisions seem inevitable. Strategic choice is reduced; states reach for symbols of power and grandeur essential to a vision of the state as masculine. Of course, power and assertiveness may indeed be needed to defend the nation–state against threats; but cultural assumptions reduce the opportunities for other possibilities to emerge, and reinforce choices that favor violence over compromise.

Strategic debates mix the means–ends rationality of the Weberian *state* with the emotional allure of the *nation*, blurring what is militarily necessary and what is culturally desirable to gratify the identity this security is to protect. In NATO, we see this across each of the nations involved but complicated as well by how they came to cooperate with each other. That is why the title of this book is about culture *and* hegemony. It addresses not only the culture of national interest but also how it interacts with other states. After the Second World War, for example, some British policymakers sought to preserve its imperial grandeur, its independence from the United States—even while pursuing the “special relationship”—and its detachment from the continent of Europe, not

because this was the most rational policy, but because its rationality was recruited by the inarticulate contours of cultural arguments about what sort of nation Britain was. Others, meanwhile, wanted it to accept a European role to develop a Third Force between the American and Soviet empires. This disagreement produced the rationale for an independent nuclear force that would distance Britain from the continent yet provide a measure of influence on U.S. nuclear policies. British peripheralism reduced its strategic horizon to a series of options in which a nuclear policy became the most rational.

France was also beset by a historic desire to retain its imperial past while coping with declines in power and prestige. Its identity was split by those who favored its absorption in a European identity and those who preferred traditional independence.<sup>29</sup> These choices could not be settled by rational criterion: they were a debate about what sort of country it was in the new circumstances it faced. Both options were possible. Only once an *end* was chosen, could the means to defend the country's interest be debated more "rationally." If the nation could not, in fact, chose a final destination for its identity, the rationality of its choices would be affected by the indeterminacy of this identity, and thus by conflicting demands on France's strategic resources. By 1954, after the collapse of the European Defense Community, and rising suspicion that the United States was willing to reconstruct the West German military over France's objections, the nationalists succeeded in influencing French strategic policy enough to secure a nuclear military program, something socialists and Europeanists had until then resisted. France's willingness to accept a nuclear doctrine pushed by the United States at around the same time was a product of this emergence, not a multilateral acceptance of the rationality of American nuclear thinking.

The first part of this book, then, takes the reader through these theoretical arguments, justifying my interest in cultural concerns. Chapter one expounds the theoretical lines of my argument, examining three weighty concepts: culture, strategic culture, and empire. I have chosen the word hegemony, deliberately, drawing on Antonio Gramsci (through Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe). NATO's history has been organized around a debate about the relationship between hegemony and autonomy, about the degree of independence the allies secured inside the American Empire. This debate has been, as one might expect, highly normative. Contrary to some who treat hegemony as a form of mere domination,<sup>30</sup> I argue that hegemony describes any capacity to *fix* a common social identity, however provisionally, as a way of resolving antagonisms that exist between identities. Since I contend that first-use

was the product of a U.S. desire to socialize Europeans into accepting its strategic preferences for nuclear war, the argument moves into delicate territory about the normative content of the alliance. However, it bears repeating that the theoretical discussion is not intended to suggest that American hegemony is more or less benevolent than other forms of domination. Hegemony describes a process and looks at the distinct form of American power rather than assume, *carte blanche*, that such power is a good or bad thing.

Chapter two offers a survey of the three NATO powers who dominated the alliance from 1949–55, the United States, Britain, and France. If states do not have objective strategic cultures, they believe they do, or they behave *as if* they do. This “as if” quality is what makes this an ideational rather than a purely material process. The appeals made by policymakers to historical tradition is indicative of the need to stabilize what was “undecidable” about the new relationship each state was forming in the collective space of the Atlantic.<sup>31</sup> NATO forced them to mediate their strategic identities with others, socially altering them along the way. This argument is sometimes used to explain European integration, by which formerly nationalistic states (re)developed a pan-European identity.<sup>32</sup> But this process was not equal: some states had to adjust more than others. Here is where material power, the traditional preoccupation of historians, intersects with identity. And one of the key ingredients to that adjustment was the role played by the *symbolic* power of nuclear weapons in adulterating such changes. The United States adjusted to its interest in defending Europe, but did so with the smallest impact on its existing strategic identity, an instinct toward peripheralism. This was, with varying degrees of political intensity, what tailored its preferences in NATO.

Chapter three explores how this preference was entrenched in the first strategic concepts of NATO, and especially in its Medium-Term Defence Plan (MTDP). The institutional mechanisms by which the United States built its preferences into NATO—the Standing Group, NATO’s regional planning groups, and the Military Assistance Program—are explored in detail. These institutions designed the rules governing the balance of decision-making power in NATO, entrenching a technological and strategic division of labor that protected American peripheralism. The ambitious conventional force goals of the 1950 MTDP that came out of this were the foundation of the infamous Lisbon force goals of 1952, and are examined in chapter four. The Lisbon experience was, in most respects, the “primal scene” of NATO’s strategic genealogy, since it was in its aftermath that NATO failed to build a conventional defense. Yet this involves a profound misreading of what was at work, namely the

cynicism with which rearmament was undertaken, and the trade-offs that underpinned it. More importantly, it dismisses the persistence of U.S. peripheralism in the last years of the Truman administration. The chapter closely examines the negotiations over military and economic assistance through 1951 that sustained a largely symbolic commitment to the MTDP's force goals. These negotiations reveal a growing interest on the part of the United States in using multilateral institutions as the form by which the Europeans were persuaded to adopt a military program designed to secure the conditions of a future American withdrawal from the continent. The multilateralism of the process was intended to exert community pressure toward the economic sacrifice and military integration that would bring German forces into NATO and reconstruct an autonomous but American-oriented European security community. European resistance to these sacrifices was handled in part by threats that a failure to integrate would hasten American withdrawal by playing into the hands of American nationalists.

American peripheralism was not the only force eroding NATO's cohesion, however, because these gestures of disengagement from the United States also led Britain and France to reach for their own forms of nationalist insurance against abandonment. Chapter five looks at the emergence of a thermonuclear strategy in Great Britain in the form of the 1952 Global Strategy Paper (GSP), held by British historians to be the inspiration for the Eisenhower New Look of 1953 and NATO's nuclear shift of 1954. This chapter explores the cultural meanings of the GSP, and argues against this sense of harmonization, showing that the British and American nuclear interests were only thinly complementary. By 1952, the British had abandoned their initial interest in leading Europe toward a "Third Force," and instead wanted a nuclear strategy to position themselves somewhere between Europe and the United States. Such a policy supported British imperial interests and was hoped would act as a break on American nuclear unilateralism. Thus, in chapter six, the Eisenhower New Look does not come from an alliance consensus on nuclear use, but from an insurgence of unilateralism in the new Republican administration that the 1952 GSP hoped to contain. Seeking to reemphasize NATO's original division of labor, the New Look advocated withdrawing American ground forces from the frontiers of the empire and relying on a combination of American nuclear threats (Massive Retaliation) and an "indigenous" guard to contain the Soviet Union.<sup>33</sup>

There were two cultural strains that underpinned the deceptive simplicity of Massive Retaliation. We tend to see nuclear deterrence as embodying a rigorous security logic. But the case of Massive Retaliation

shows a moral position *defining* the strategic one. The first of these, belonging to Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, was a theological response to America's lost historical purpose, what Dulles saw as the corrosive materialism of U.S. foreign policy since the demise of Woodrow Wilson. Dulles paradoxically believed that Massive Retaliation's "absolute deterrent" allowed the United States to restore its security through a greater emphasis on *spiritual* values rather than material force. He did not pursue deterrence, therefore, to preserve the *status quo* but to provide a shield behind which the United States would reverse the direction of recent history. Dulles's globalism was premised on the constant expansion of the American way, which, he believed, could only occur under the shadow of an ultimate deterrent.

The second cultural source came from a rejuvenated neo-isolationism found in elements of the Republican Party, the JCS, the Strategic Air Command (SAC), and the Air Force, and resuscitated by the Korean War. For these conservative-nationalists, the thermonuclear age offered a closing window of opportunity to end the Cold War through a dramatic and dynamic move that might, nonetheless, raise the risk of nuclear war. Under such conditions, the United States needed a nuclear war-fighting strategy to ensure victory at the outset of a war with the Soviet Union. As with Dulles, the need for restored dynamism fed on frustrations that were culturally specific. They were certainly not widely shared by the European allies. Indeed, its nationalism was drawn to nuclear first-use precisely because it circumvented the reticence—"cowardice" was the word many conservatives used—of the European allies.

These two strains of Massive Retaliation were obviously in some tension, one that was never resolved. The immediate problem was that whatever strategy it was, it hinged on the support of the NATO allies. Chapter seven explores the question of the "nuclearization" of the alliance in 1953 and 1954 in the context of these emerging cultural forces in the United States. Whether this process was multilateral or hegemonic depends on definitional issues (discussed in chapter one), but also on whether one sees conflict between European interests and those of the New Look. This chapter challenges those who claim that U.S. multilateralism in NATO was pursued through a new commitment to nuclear sharing. It argues that nuclear inclusion was the means by which American strategic preferences were made part of the strategic reality of the alliance. Since the unilateral strains of Massive Retaliation were inconsistent with the ostensible national interests of the Europeans, I explore in both chapters seven and eight what might be called the "socialization of hegemony."

The issue here is not whether the United States “imposed” itself on its allies, since the ambiguity of NATO strategy suggests that such an imposition was never complete anyway. What is significant is that American officials *perceived* their NATO strategic policies in terms of “leading” and “educating” the allies to accept U.S. nuclear policies that were a function of American cultural preferences. These would be universalized in NATO, portrayed as impartial, inevitable, and disinterested, the only means by which NATO’s security could be sustained. The remarkable thing about NATO’s statement of nuclear primacy in 1954—the document MC 48—is that “it was built on the assumption that there was one, and only one, way in which the Soviets could be prevented from over-running Europe in the event of war, and that was through the very rapid and massive use of nuclear weapons, both tactically and strategically.”<sup>34</sup> The last chapter also considers the extent that the Big Three came to see nuclear weapons not simply as their only defense against the Soviets, but as their best hedge against the integrationist pressures of each other. Under such conditions, NATO’s nuclear addiction cannot be seen as an indication of collective will.

The conclusion calls into doubt the durability of nuclear deterrence as the rational practice of a multilateral alliance. It situates first-use not in a deliberative process, but in the last gasp of a Republican administration trying to find a quick end to the Cold War, to escape from the gravitational pull of European integration and to satisfy its domestic constituents who saw internationalism as a threat to America’s way of life. First-use was the means around the veto of the European allies, as the United States pursued increasingly global interests and needed to stretch its nuclear shield around the world. And thus first-use was paradoxically an attack on the multilateralism of NATO, an effort to “reeducate” the European allies by making the collective interest synonymous with the narrow interest of nuclear nationalists. However much the Europeans themselves came to embrace nuclear weapons, they did so under the fear of abandonment by the United States, the fear of a reconstituted Germany, and the fear of a trigger-happy Strategic Air Command. None of these elements would have been visible to historians of NATO nuclear decision-making without taking the cultural life-worlds of nation-states into account. First-use was an effort to export American peripheralism into a new collective identity, and it survived doctrinally in NATO by blurring its intent in language that fully satisfied neither American peripheralism nor European insecurity, but which established the historical basis upon which NATO’s future would be repeatedly affirmed. First-use embraced indeterminacy in order to mask a vested interest that would otherwise have destroyed the alliance.

## CHAPTER ONE

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### *Culture, War, Empire*

*The question of hegemony is always the question of a new cultural order . . . Cultural power [is] the power to define, to “make things mean.”*  
—Stuart Hall

*The most successful tyranny is not the one that uses force to assure uniformity, but the one that removes awareness of other possibilities.*  
—Allan Bloom

“Culture” is a controversial term in diplomatic history but this is not the place to offer a full exegesis on its meaning. I offer instead a brief tour of the debate in diplomatic history before proposing ways in which it can be applied to the study of strategy. Historians often speak of nations having “styles of war,” but we are not always clear about how they work. Strategic culture, I suggest, does not exist as a kind of *Zeitgeist* about a nation’s military habits but is *made* by political entrepreneurs from the materials of national memory (or its inverse, national amnesia) to serve specific interests.<sup>1</sup> It then acts as a “social fact” that determines the contours of “appropriate” behavior. In the final section, I examine how these strategic identities are affected by the distribution of power between nations, how some exert influence over others to remake their strategic cultures. This tackles the question of whether it is better to describe NATO’s doctrine as multilateral or hegemonic and what difference it makes. I argue that the opposition between dominance and autonomy in imperialism is complicated by the historical characteristics of American Empire. The American way of managing its internal political diversity through a system of constantly balanced “counterpowers” provides for endless expansion through inclusion, a kind of continuous incorporation

of peoples into networks of shared subjectivity, namely the universal claim that the United States speaks for the “liberty of mankind.” American hegemony is not so much punitive as regulatory, remaking identities through mechanisms that pursue the “interiorization” and arrangement of all differences into “an effective apparatus of command.”<sup>2</sup> First-use was the strategic desire of these hegemonic practices.

### Culture

The first ontological question of diplomatic history is about the location of state foreign policy. Is it in the domestic life of the nation-state? Or in the pressures exerted by global anarchy, forcing all to be preoccupied with security over other goals? Is it some combination of both? Or are the dynamics of global politics in the operation of transnational capitalism? These are often incompatible levels of analysis, and figuring out which one should be privileged entails resolving a deeper question: is the *state* an *agent* empowered with free will to seek out its interests? Or does anarchy structure the content of those interests?<sup>3</sup> Historians called this *Primat der Innenpolitik* versus *Primat der Außenpolitik*, a dichotomy Charles Maier long ago insisted was surely false: foreign policy is the product of a dialogue between the internal and external forces that structure states and their identities.<sup>4</sup> But how do we grab all of this simultaneously? In the United States, the taxonomy of the field—into, for argument’s sake, Realists, Nationalists, and Radicals—still adheres to these lines (Realists privileged anarchy, Nationalists the values of the nation-state, and Radicals the political-economy of capitalism) but also mirrors contemporaneous arguments over actual U.S. policy. This makes the choice between internal and external factors a highly charged one. The end of the Cold War removed some of the animus from these fights but did not resolve them.<sup>5</sup> Among the historiographical survivors, though, was “cultural imperialism,” which looked at both the ideational content of states and international dominance, notably the capacity of strong states to control weaker ones through the diffusion of ideas and values. The concept was first applied to post- and neo-colonialism, and even to tensions between the United States and its allies, the proliferation of transnational “new social movements,” and general anxieties over “globalization.”<sup>6</sup> What was at issue was the role of “culture” in foreign policy.<sup>7</sup>

The cultural turn came late to diplomatic history, but it has provided a better sense of the role private citizens, corporations, religions, and



other transnational forces play in regulating the flow of ideas around the world, sometimes promoting, sometimes impeding, national foreign policy. We have, it seems to me, only begun to use cultural theory to reread traditional domains of interstate relations: war, the state, and economic power. The interest in how *ideas* affect policy is not, of course, entirely novel. Michael Howard once hypothesized that the insularity of the postwar British foreign policy elite toward European integration was a function of school training that gave undue weight to the glories of empire at the expense of other contexts.<sup>8</sup> Many prominent historians, such as William Appleman Williams, Michael Hunt, Melvyn Leffler, Emily Rosenberg, and Akira Iriye, have shown how a nation's worldviews affect its interests.<sup>9</sup> Not everyone, though, liked "culture," pointing out that it hardly made sense to flirt with a concept that has, in Frank Ninkovich's words, "puzzled generations of anthropologists." Marxist Robert Buzzanco concurred, complaining that those who talk culture rarely agree as to what it is, or how it operates. At best it fills in gaps, but it is elusive in its causal relationships, preferring to speak of contexts and meaning rather than interests and policies. The problem with "context" is that it leaves the reader to extrapolate a relationship between currents of thought and what decision-makers did. Because trade, aid, military hardware, and war plans are measurable, Buzzanco argues, they have explanatory power.<sup>10</sup> He does not just argue that material power is more measurable than belief, but that *because* it is more measurable, it is real. The role of the historian is to strip away rhetoric, the rationalizations, and romanticizing distortions to find a real interest. Even the sympathetic Anders Stephanson concedes that by leaving "policymaking proper" for "cultural context," there is "no end to the kind of external aspects that can be called into play since there is no a priori criteria for what counts as context."<sup>11</sup> The possible influences on policy can only be extrapolated from behavior that seems consistent with cultural norms, and by examining the language, metaphors, and tropes policymakers use. These not only reveal the context in which behavior becomes normative, they inscribe the possibilities, motives, directions, and preferences of the policymaker and her audience. And as the rhetoric represses, silences, or celebrates, it is the *real* surface on which we act out our aims. We assume the existence of unobservables—like social structures and balances of power—by their effects on what *is* observable. If the anxiety of many critics is that "culturism" is the thin edge of a postmodern wedge, they are mistaken.<sup>12</sup> Culture is concerned with the power of *representation* to mediate between reality and our conceptions of it; it is not the same as the linguistic turn. As George Steinmetz explains, "rather than argue for

a specific theory of meaning and interpretation, the cultural turn in the social sciences involves a more general assertion of the constitutive role of culture." Against "objectivism," culturalists draw attention to how human practices are "inextricably cultural . . . an entanglement of a material 'substrate' and its meaning."<sup>13</sup>

To help us get away from contexts and non-state actors, I have consciously chosen to subject nuclear weapons—what Jeffrey Checkel calls "the ultimate material capability"—to a study of how strategic doctrine is cultured.<sup>14</sup> The closer we look, the more clear it is that policymakers do not make sense of the world without using (even for their own reasoning) a repertoire of culturally inscribed understandings of reality. NATO even attempted to create *supranational* symbolism based on a metaphysical idea of "the West" and its heritage. These mystical speculations about identity intended to furnish the logic to an integration process that would chip away at the national identities that made coordination difficult. Symbolism requires a new understanding of the state as "rational actor," for if its behavior is permeated with culture, its rationality must, in Herbert Simon's phrase, be "bounded."<sup>15</sup> A certain kind of *instrumental* rationality is at work in the Weberian state—in the calibration of means to ends—but this rationality is placed in an architecture that forms both the *ends* of policy and even how we theorize about the relationship between means and ends. Let me offer a trivial illustration. To protect my house from burglars, I might choose between an alarm system, a guard dog, a handgun, vigilante justice, or nothing at all because I think the risk is exaggerated.<sup>16</sup> Two things are material: first, what can I afford?<sup>17</sup> And second, what is the *real* crime rate? Immediately, we cross into nonmaterial realms: risk assessment is subjective regardless of how "solid" the statistics. Then I am faced with more evaluations: if I am an animal-lover, or live in a society that frowns on gun-ownership, I would *rationaly* opt for the dog, calibrating my *preference* toward a particular means to achieve security. Material factors constrain some choices, and the lack of a well-funded police force may narrow them further. But my values, degree of fear, and personal affinities, always select the options.

Let me begin with culture broadly conceived. If Raymond Williams's quip that "culture" is "one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language" is not sufficiently off-putting, the news from anthropology and sociology is no less discouraging. But as sociologist George Steinmetz, historian William Sewell, and anthropologist James Clifford have all concluded, the "crisis of identity" that has paralysed many anthropologists cannot yet prevent the proliferation of its uses, nor

the importance of relying on its carrying capacity. As Clifford lamented: “culture is a deeply compromised concept that I cannot yet do without.”<sup>18</sup> Our modern usage descends from Johann Herder’s insight that culture is the expression of the beliefs and practices of a given “people” at a given time. Herder’s idea was part of the Romantic resistance to the Enlightenment’s idea of universal reason in ideology.<sup>19</sup> (*Culture* and *ideology* thus represent two typologies of worldviews.) Late-nineteenth-century definitions embraced the idea that culture was *the* process of social development (akin to *civilization*), in which creative production embodied human progress by resisting, in Matthew Arnold’s words, the “*common* tide of men’s thoughts.”<sup>20</sup> By then culture became tainted with biological ideas of race, only to be restored to Herder’s sense by the mid-twentieth century, after two world wars discredited race as a normatively positive social category.<sup>21</sup>

This has left us with two related ways of thinking about culture. First, culture is a separate sphere of social life *specifically* devoted to the production of meaning, distinct from, say, economics, politics, biology, or even society. This is close to the definitions of Clifford Geertz and David Schneider. For them, culture is a “system of symbols and meaning” irreducible to other forms of social life. While it retains its autonomy, its structure reveals something of the logic of the life it represents.<sup>22</sup> Yet because of its self-sufficiency, it reproduces this logic even after the material conditions of that life have changed. The residue of an old order can exert influence over the incipient values of the next one. This provides stability (or resistance) against change. What we regard as the objects of culture—art, literature, music, media, and other “creative” forms—are only the most self-conscious “representations” of a group’s social structure, but they can show either the old hegemonic culture or the vanguard of an emergent culture.

Alternatively, culture is the entire “bounded world of beliefs and practices” of a given people. This is closer to Herder’s idea, with classes, ethnicities, ages, and genders having their own cultural forms, provided they have been designated as “groups” in the first place. Culture is a sphere of “practical activity” that expresses and reproduces the social relations of a given society, including its way of allocating authority throughout society. It is for this reason that historian William Sewell has argued that these two meanings—culture as *system-of-symbols* and *culture-as-practice*—are in fact dependent.

To engage in cultural practice means to utilize existing cultural symbols to accomplish some end. The employment of a symbol can

be expected to accomplish a particular goal only because the symbols have more or less determinate meanings—meanings specified by their systematically structured relations to other symbols. Hence practice implies system. But it is equally true that the system has no existence apart from the succession of practices that instantiate, reproduce, or—most interestingly—transform it. Hence system implies practice.<sup>23</sup>

Blending the practical and symbolic, Sewell argues social activity is simultaneously structured by preexisting “meanings,” *and* the material conditions in which these practices take place (power relations, geography, or resources). Thus “culture is neither a particular kind of practice nor practice that takes place in a particular location. It is rather, *the semiotic dimension of human social practice in general.*”<sup>24</sup> I take Sewell to mean that all social activity relies on representations of reality that embody in their architecture the worldviews of the social order. Religious practice, family rituals, business communication, and international diplomacy have behavioral codes that make practices intelligible to those who participate in them. Since signs are related to each other through a complex system of “likeness and contrast,” the basic social dimensions of “similarity and difference are defined culturally.” Groups exist because they have been assigned a cultural identity. The capacity to allocate significance to these group-making signs is an important social prize because representation exists, as Pierre Bourdieu argued, in a linguistic “market,” in which some have more capital than others. Communicative competence, authority, and legitimacy flow throughout the way things are represented.<sup>25</sup>

Culture thus pulls elements of the social order into a set of relations by representing reality in ways that promote connectedness. This is why we use metaphors to embrace “multi-million things” in a small vocabulary. Metaphors replace incongruous or contingent events with an “influx of significance,” to coerce ambiguity into a “unitary conceptual framework” by relating it to understood situations. Representing a material thing (distributions of wealth, military capacities, or crop losses) automatically imports the web of other cultural meanings from the entirety of the social system.<sup>26</sup> Poverty is not about aggregate income levels, but about hierarchy, morality, exploitation, progress, individualism, family, race, gender, and even science. Another state’s military arsenal is material, but its meaning is also *about* intentionality, perception, insecurity, history, purpose, and national character.

The use of metaphor, trope, and mythology, also ties back together ideology and culture. Clifford Geertz proposes that societies, being

chronically malintegrated, are riddled with “insoluble antinomies” such as those between liberty and order, tradition and change, and so on. These tensions between norms, expressed as social friction over goals, reaches into individual personalities. The traditional sense of ideology in the social sciences is that this perpetual sense of internal strain causes us to reach for coherent ordering systems, to make sense of the antinomies or provide us with intellectual reasons for trying to overturn them. The problem with this, Geertz argues, is that the actual link between the cause of psychic strain (social malintegration) and the kind of ideological behaviour we reach for (systematized worldviews) is not explained. Why do some respond to social anxiety by blaming immigrants, women, or Jews? To understand our *ideological* behavior, we need to grasp the mechanisms of “symbolic formation.” Geertz argues that ideological arguments have to be “envehicled” in an intelligible *cultural* carrier—the metaphor, trope, historical myth, or narrative—in order that new situations can be grasped. The stakes are especially high when the “untaught” assumptions of a society are called into question. Dramatic changes, say, economic collapse, mass migration, warfare, or an influx of alien ideas carried by new modes of communication, might turn what was taken for granted into new cultural uncertainties. These might prompt a search either for new ideological formations or ways of restoring the old ones, what Geertz calls “retraditionalization.”

And it is, in turn, the attempt of ideologies to render otherwise incomprehensible social situations meaningful, to so construe them as to make it possible to act purposefully within them, that accounts both for the ideologies’ highly figurative nature and for the intensity with which, once accepted, they are held. As metaphor extends language by broadening its semantic range, enabling it to express meanings it cannot or at least cannot yet express literally, so the head-on clash of literal meanings in ideology—the irony, the hyperbole, the overdrawn antithesis—provides novel symbolic frames against which to match the myriad “unfamiliar somethings” that, like a journey into a strange country, are produced by transformations in political life. Whatever else ideologies may be—projections of unacknowledged fears, disguises for ulterior motives, phatic expressions of group solidarity—they are, most distinctively, maps of problematic social reality and matrices for the creation of collective conscience.<sup>27</sup>

Culture thus provides the vehicle of articulation in the ideological conflicts of society. The types of argumentation we use affix not to the

literal meaning of events, but onto figurative, emotion-bearing signs we use to represent reality. It does not mean that reality is without meaning (that Wall Street bankers or mass immigration are not “real” causes of change), but that because our “vehicles of conception” are a function of shared values and semiotic devices, our way of knowing and thus acting cannot be conceived outside of this *collectively* built lens. Culture is that dimension of social symbolism that mobilizes our sense of the meaning of things.<sup>28</sup>

The slippage between reality and sign cannot be stretched infinitely. It must address what we *believe* to be real (that men and women are different; that the economy produces variations in power; that geography or language imposes social traits). It must speak to analogies that are consistent with dominant values. Metaphors are not only rhetorical tools; they cause us to act as if they were descriptions of reality. Gendered metaphors tell us something about a society’s sexual order, but they also *produce* meanings not inherent in the object being described. This pushes people who receive the metaphor into acting on its behalf: *as if* tough diplomatic positions were an indication of required masculinity, rather than simply one strategy among many. Describing a state’s foreign policy as “effeminate” evades the content of its policy, replacing it with an emotionally simplifying dismissal that uses existing cultural values. The “undecidability” of a situation is resolved by linking it to something already understood.<sup>29</sup>

Similar arguments about taking culture seriously in national foreign policy can be found in “social constructivism” in international relations theory.<sup>30</sup> The fight between the sociologically inclined constructivists and their “neo-utilitarian” foes (Neo-Liberalism and Neo-Realism) need not concern us here.<sup>31</sup> Briefly, though, neo-utilitarians see the world in largely material terms and behavior in rational-actor ways. State interests are given by external conditions, namely the uneven distribution of power that generates insecurities. This is a chronic feature of global politics because anarchy cannot be resolved through gestures of cooperation.<sup>32</sup> Constructivists, on the other hand, are concerned with how states form their interests through their identities. To materialists, identities have no autonomous power to determine how a state behaves. Yet we see evidence that citizens perceive their nations not simply as juridical bodies but as cultural unities that cohere around values, customs, and characteristics thought to be distinct. War is, after all, the pinnacle of a state’s claim on the emotional loyalty of its citizen to the *idea* of nation. Yet materialists see this as if the froth of nationalism conceals interests that are biological, economic, or utilitarian, but never ideational. Constructivists do not believe that interests are intelligible without the identity that glues

states together. They treat identity as a social fact that, in Chris Jenks's words, is "intangible but real and always real in its consequences."<sup>33</sup>

Constructivism draws from sociology the view that humans are "cultural beings" who create "social facts" that depend upon agreement rather than being "out there."<sup>34</sup> Max Weber did not argue that material interests were irrelevant but that the "'world images' that have been created by 'ideas' have, like switchmen, determined the tracks along which action has been pushed by the dynamic of interest."<sup>35</sup> This means *ideas* are "socially causative."<sup>36</sup> Constructivists also use Anthony Giddens's theory of "structuration," which is an attempt to explain the reproduction of social systems (the "rules" that make society stable) and social change through the very capacity for action (agency) given by the systems that produce agents. Giddens argued for a "duality of structure" in which action embodies both continuity *and* the means by which people transform the structures in which they live. We use social rules to interact with each other in creative ways. Acting *as if* rules were real gives them a hardness they otherwise lack. At the same time, actions can change structures. Giddens insisted that agents and structures are not ontologically opposite ends of a spectrum; they are mutually constituted.<sup>37</sup> This parallels the dual image we have of *culture* itself: on the one hand, we think of it as an impediment to change; on the other, the word derives from the creative sense of "cultivation."<sup>38</sup> In international relations theory, structuration was used against neo-utilitarians who neither grasp the interactive nature of agents (states) and structures (anarchy), nor the way in which this relationship can transform itself over time.<sup>39</sup> The materialism of neo-utilitarianism shares ground with some branches of history, particularly those that stress geopolitics, balances of power, and the invariant regularity of international politics.<sup>40</sup>

Constructivism makes two especially useful claims: first, the international system is "social as well as material" and therefore capable of change; and second, it provides states with "understandings of their interests" by constituting their "identities."<sup>41</sup> A nation-state's modern subjectivity consists of two parts: a belief that it is a state like others, claiming sovereign rights in a system that is anarchic;<sup>42</sup> and a belief that it is a particular *nation* with a "self" derived from a comparison of its own personality (for want of a better word) with those of other nations. This dual subjectivity—one utilitarian and universal, the other cultural and particular—means that nation-states are wrapped in a paradox: they are compelled to behave in similar ways, but develop identities derived from the patterned, historical way they act.<sup>43</sup> The "nation" part of the nation-state creates the "political love" needed for social cohesion. The modern

bureaucratic state (concerned with the “business of rule”) cannot acquire the attachment needed to mobilize the citizenry as a resource. The goal of the *nation* is to replicate forms of love (likening the nation to a family, for example, or tying it to land, language, or religion) and fixing them to the national “idea.” Identity thus focuses attention, as John Gerard Ruggie puts it, on “the array of additional ideational factors that shape states’ outlooks and behavior, ranging from culture and ideology to aspirations and principled beliefs, onto cause–effect knowledge of specific policy problems.”<sup>44</sup>

In the origins of the American sense of self, for example, the material and the ideational were powerfully reinforced. Sacvan Bercovitch has argued that the Puritan narrative of errand in the “New World” gathered strength as the American Revolution was later reconstructed as evidence of prophetic fulfillment. Even though little of the new confederation was Puritan in theology or culture, the “The New England Way” embraced the nation because its symbolism offered tools for social discipline, and a sense of a deeply inscribed (Biblical) past that it lacked. The myth *worked* because of the interplay between the material conditions of separation from Europe, the ideational belief that the land was “empty,” and the need for order on the part of early national elites. The later stages of territorial growth across the continent provided “a sort of serial enactment of the ritual of consensus” around the ideas of errand.<sup>45</sup>

The function of symbols, we recall, is to link what is contingent or politically interested with what can be conceived of *at that time and place* as undeniable. Metaphors of kinship, shared language, geography, skin color, or birthplace, make inevitable what is chosen. Representations are not mirrors of reality, nor are they complete fantasies: they succeed when they make sense of the distribution of power in the world. Metaphors make, in the words of anthropologist Eric Wolf, “some forms of action become unthinkable and impossible.”<sup>46</sup> As Ole Wæver puts it: “What distinguishes (national) identity is not similarity of actual connectedness but the self-conscious *idea* of community.”<sup>47</sup> What remains to be uncovered is who speaks for this idea, and in what form the community is articulated.

Thus we must look at the “domestic,” historically self-conscious, side of a nation–state’s identity, the way its citizens are organized, the arrangements of economics, politics, religion, gender, race, and ideology that give it its sense (or lack) of coherence. To do this, I have borrowed from Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe. Their work begins with the premise that there is no fixed identity governing a nation, only a “field of differences.” Social unity is created by forging an identity, but such identities are overdetermined. Every individual has multiple subjectivities that give



the identity its fluidity. We are partly determined by “structure” (the sedimented life practices we inherit) and partly by autonomy (our creative capacities to manipulate what we have inherited). If we were wholly “determined,” there would be no politics because our place would be fixed by necessity. “Politics” is the effort to fasten identity over other peoples’ efforts to do the same. “Society” is thus a field of efforts to build identity around a point on which everyone can provisionally agree.<sup>48</sup> The only way to do this is through “hegemony,” the necessary but provisional process of regulating the key concepts that organize social existence.<sup>49</sup> Hegemony here is not pejorative, but the ability to establish it in most instances depends on the distribution of power in society, insofar as the capacity to assign cultural significance to terms is an aspect of dominance; and it only succeeds when it is able to incorporate into its universal claims the particular longings of those who are dominated.<sup>50</sup> The politics of representation is, therefore, about “the power to define, to ‘make things mean,’” which is, in other words, the power of cultural hegemony.<sup>51</sup> “What we call ‘social reality,’ ” Slavoj Žižek writes, “is in the last resort an ethical construction; it is supported by a certain *as if* (we act *as if* we believe in the almightiness of bureaucracy, *as if* the President incarnates the Will of the People, *as if* the party expresses the objective interest of the working class . . .). As soon as the belief . . . is lost, the very texture of the social field disintegrates.”<sup>52</sup> In international relations, the willingness to threaten others with the violence of war can only be undertaken in light of the capacity to create such internal mental allegiances.

These issues are not therefore peripheral to security policy. In the words of Ken Booth, “the issue of identity—what makes us believe we are the same and them different—is inseparable from security.”<sup>53</sup> The question tips on how collective identities are formed and what sort of work they do for the state. The nation-state negotiates this on two levels simultaneously: its self is constituted by its comparative relationship with other nations, meaning its identity is dialogic.<sup>54</sup> How we articulate who we are can only be understood next to other national histories.<sup>55</sup> The paradox of culture is that we become aware of it only when we confront others who make us aware that we have a distinct “way-of-life.” As Aaron Wildavsky has written: “Adherents of culture learn their identity by knowing not only what they are for but also what they are against. *It is cultural conflict that gives meaning to cultural identification.*”<sup>56</sup> Because this underlines the extent to which “culture” is a creation of collective will, nation-states convince themselves that *their* social order is also the most correct one. State interaction thus reinforces the coherence of cultural

boundaries because it underlines how the *idea* of culture is relative. As Antonio Gramsci insisted, to argue that *we* have a culture is to remove certain shared values from “the arena of legitimate [ideological] controversy,” making us politically more homogenous.<sup>57</sup> National unity is forged through the use of myths and symbols that are, according to S.N. Eisenstadt, always communicative. Myths and symbols

depict the combination of the attraction of the world outside the boundaries of social order and of the fear of stepping outside such boundaries. They stress the purity of the world inside, the pollution of the world outside, and the need to remain within such boundaries. They are not, however, able to eliminate the awareness of various possibilities that exist beyond such boundaries and hence the certain arbitrariness of any such boundary, of any instituted order.<sup>58</sup>

This struggle over national “origins” makes “history” a raw material for the political love that binds people across space. This has been an acute problem for the United States because of its fear of “pastlessness.” Placed in competition with other nations saturated with historical fixity, America has responded by exaggerating its founding myths.<sup>59</sup> Even this absence of history has sometimes served as a sign of difference, that its national ideology was distinct from heavily weighted “Old World” societies. This is still a search for “origins” of a sort, but the broader point is that the past becomes a reservoir of materials in the politics of cultural hegemony, and provides a tool in the promotion of political interests.<sup>60</sup>

What may still puzzle traditionalists is how these cultural elements *concretely* (a good metaphor if there ever were one) build the foreign policies of states. Do ideas about race or gender, for instance, actually determine interests or are they merely used to legitimize the “content” of national interests? Yet ideas about race and gender clearly have exerted enormous *real* power over the distribution of political, social, and economic benefits in society. And there is impressive evidence of the way that race and gender impel the actions of imperial states. My claim is not that ideas determine foreign policy “all the way down,” but that there are no material interests without an animating ideational form, no content without a cultural vehicle in which material elements ride. It is important not to relegate culture to the superstructure of economic or national security interests but more than that, cultural theory does not insist that this be an either/or question. Taking culture seriously enables us to see how national identity is contested, how policy is the outcome of the struggle between competing ideas of what best binds the nation together, and how power conditions that competition.

**Strategic Culture**

While the cultural turn in diplomatic history has been assailed, a great many military historians have always assumed that nation-states have “strategic cultures.”<sup>61</sup> My approach to culture suggests that “national” strategic identity is more problematic than this. If national cultures are symbol systems not innate to some mythical national “character” but are indicative of the distribution of social power that generates them, “strategic culture” is a field of competitive visions of how a nation should organize and project its power in the world. If we look carefully at how strategic doctrine makes claims to defend the national interest, we see how it inserts cultural identity into the rationality of military professionalism. It uses structures of argumentation, historical analogies, and metaphors that formulate “concepts of the role and efficacy of military force in interstate political affairs, and by clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the strategic preferences seem uniquely realistic and efficacious.”<sup>62</sup> Culture, as Elizabeth Kier writes, “has (relative) causal autonomy” in the formation of strategic doctrine.<sup>63</sup>

The battles between American conservatives and liberals in the late 1940s were, for example, struggles over the legitimacy of their respective versions of American history.<sup>64</sup> Conservatives believed that internationalism was the foreign policy face of the enemies of “real” America: New Dealers and their socialist kin. For Truman’s critics, there was no separation between domestic and foreign policy. Moreover, these competing ideas about what kind of society America ought to be produced concepts about how best to defend America against threats from outside.<sup>65</sup> Liberal internationalists, infused with norms that placed the United States in an interdependent, capitalist system, were disposed toward cooperation with like-minded states. Their multilateralism was a projection of the “embedded liberalism” of the New Deal. As Anne-Marie Burley concludes, the United States was by the mid-twentieth century the

most inclined and most able to project its domestic political and economic arrangements onto the world. The distinctive features of multilateralism—the emphasis on general organizing principles, with the corollary characteristics of indivisibility and diffuse reciprocity—are also organizing principles of the liberal conception of a polity. The United States sought to project these principles onto the world as a macrocosm of the New Deal regulatory state.<sup>66</sup>

Conservative nationalists, on the other hand, suspected that international institutions eroded American sovereignty and provided a pretext for the expansion of federal power at home. They preferred national means, including a strong navy and air force, instead of a large standing army. Venerating state militias over professional armies, they argued against overseas commitments that ushered in a new state–federal balance of power. Their strategic arguments were *cultural* because they embodied representations about “authentic” American identity. Culture intervened not only in setting the ends of foreign policy (the values in the America worth defending with force), but also by choosing the means thought to be most compatible with these “national values.”

The influence of culture is also at work in the state’s administrative functions. “Organizational culture” has long been thought to exert some causal power in the production of foreign and strategic policy.<sup>67</sup> There is a tendency to describe this more in terms of *interest* than culture: air force officers prefer air power doctrines because it gives them more resources. Some pecuniary concerns are undoubtedly at work in bureaucracies, and cultural symbols can be manipulated to bring support for these interests. But organizational culture means something deeper and less utilitarian. Military services also produce identities through a socialization designed to foster unity against other services. The ideas *specific* to the organization (as opposed to general “military” dispositions that might culturally separate them from civilian bureaucrats) provide in-group loyalty against others. This culture is not synonymous with the national culture, but it must forge a relationship with the dominant identity to enhance its prestige as that most indispensable to the national interest.

Elizabeth Kier has shown, for example, that French Republicans after the Great War favored a conscripted army over a professional one because they feared the latter would become a reservoir of political conservatism. This struggle was ideological, but it was also about the French Revolution. In the 1930s, faced with budget cuts, the Republicans opted for a shorter, one-year conscription period. Army planners, who drew their ranks from conservative elements and had strong ties to the Right, concluded that this new army could not possibly execute offensive operations into Germany (as had been the original plan). France would have to adopt a defensive strategy that merely kept the Germans at bay. The army’s belief was not *objectively* true, but a function of its hostility toward a conscripted army and the wider social aims of the Republicans.<sup>68</sup> France shifted from an offensive doctrine in the 1920s to a defensive one in the 1930s not because of a change in the threat (that happened later) but because of how domestic and organizational culture afflicted strategic planning.

We might then conceive of the process of strategic production as a blend of material and cultural factors, interacting like this:

<i>A (cultural/competitive)</i>	<i>B (material/objective)</i>	<i>C (cultural/competitive)</i>
<p><i>nation-state value</i>      ➡</p> <p>(the result of ideological competition within the state, in which culture is used to envehicle the competing interests of different domestic identities, and generate a dominant national culture, complete with foreign policy interests)</p>	<p><i>domestic condition</i>      ➡</p> <p>(an objective condition resulting from <i>A</i>, i.e., the length of conscription, the size of the budget, the kind of technology and industrial production available)</p>	<p><i>organizational culture(s)</i></p> <p>(military and civilian subcultures that socialize their members according to their differences, but that must still draw on the values in <i>A</i> to solidify their relationship with the national interest)</p>

The outcome of this process, in which cultural symbolism is more salient at some stages—namely, in (A) and (C)—is strategic doctrine. There are feedback loops as well, since applying the strategic doctrine in both diplomacy and war will produce “lessons” used in the reproduction of national and organizational cultures. How lessons are learned is a function of preexisting discursive conditions. The lessons of history, as Jack Snyder had argued, are deeply ambiguous sources of knowledge. A straightforward reading of history ought to show how counterproductive strategies of imperial expansion are over the long run. Yet the myths of empire are more common than arguments for restraint. History is used by those who, for *other* reasons, prefer strategies of aggrandizement.<sup>69</sup>

These multiple levels of culture complicate older notions of strategic culture. Those who speak of a nation having a “way of war” are hard-pressed to demonstrate how historical experience acts on a nation and then on its strategic culture. Many of these histories are themselves implicated in a desire to influence policy. Sir Basil Liddell Hart first used the phrase “the British Way of War” in 1932 to show that there was “a distinctively British practice of war, based on experience and proved by three centuries of success.” He wanted to prove that Britain’s disastrous experience with continental warfare in 1914–18 had been a tragic deviation from “tradition” so as to influence policy in the 1930s. Michael Howard rejects Liddell Hart’s account, but not the idea of strategic culture itself. His counterargument, more suggestive than explicit, concludes that the dialectic between “Maritime” and “Continental” strategies in British history become central to its “political economy and indeed her *culture*, throughout her historical experience. We have not

escaped from it yet.”<sup>70</sup> Britain’s strategic debates, in other words, continued to take their cue from a “tradition” then linked that to contemporary problems.

Thirty years ago, American historian John Shy claimed that the idea that nations have ways of war was one of the most widely held and misunderstood claims of military history, mainly because no one knew how historical experiences were passed on.<sup>71</sup> He hoped “leaning theories” might help because, among other things, they showed how *distant* experiences are often learned better than *proximate* ones. But the rest of his paper was merely a narrative of U.S. military history, repeating arguments that frontier warfare infused the American people with a tendency to see war as violent and unrestrained by moral considerations except by a theology of ultimate ends.<sup>72</sup> By the Revolution, Shy saw “classic American” ideas about strategies of total annihilation of one’s enemies, dispositions toward war as unremitting, unorthodox, cruel, and totalizing that were then “locked in” for two centuries.<sup>73</sup> This is a good example of the tautology used by traditional strategic culturists to trace a form of behavior to some pure mental “origin.” Shy and others, in short, did not follow their own advice and explore how learning takes place, how Benjamin Franklin’s thoughts on exterminating the French became “classic” the very year they were articulated, and how distant experiences are reproduced through succeeding generations.<sup>74</sup>

Russell Weigley’s monumental military history of *The American way of war* likewise weighted “historical experience” on how subsequent generations of strategists considered U.S. interests. Weigley did not provide a theory to suggest how this “way” was acquired, but his belief in how history teaches was tantalizing.<sup>75</sup> More recently, some strategic studies literature brought culture into the foreground of political debates over American strategy under Ronald Reagan. Colin Gray and Richard Pipes argued that the United States and the Soviet Union had strategic cultures rooted in divergent historical paths. They wanted to show that Washington’s belief in mutually assured destruction (MAD) was based on the mistaken premise that all states shared the logic of deterrence. They argued that Soviet strategic culture was Clausewitzian, and thus the “liberal” universalism of MAD was ill-equipped to face the threat. American policy needed to throw off its cultural baggage, embrace warfighting, and accept that strategic culture mattered.<sup>76</sup>

The scope of these generalizations was staggering, and oddly missed the extent that U.S. strategy had always been wedded to warfighting, but there were two other theoretical problems. *First*, Gray could be highly deterministic in arguing that “culture” defines strategic style, but

indeterminate about what counts as culture, offering a menu of historic artefacts that not surprisingly pointed toward his conclusion: geography, ideology, civil–military relations, economic system, technological prowess, religious beliefs, military experience, all led to a homogenous “national” belief about warfare. He failed to clarify how a single culture of war was reproduced. He speaks of “historically rooted concepts,” recent and distant, as “formative” without a sense of which events were formative or why. It is commonplace to argue, for example, that the United States is prone to “absolutist” ideas about war based on its experiences with total war. But these are scarcely unique to America. Not only has the United States vast limited war experiences, but other states have also been more immersed in total war and evidently generate different strategic cultures. The lessons of experience are still indeterminate.<sup>77</sup> Gray’s selections from history, in other words, do what political leaders do: *inscribe* a strategic culture out of memory and amnesia. He evades the question of whether the past forms national tradition, or our writing of it, “highlighting or downplaying” traditions, creates the belief in a national cultural identity itself.<sup>78</sup>

The second problem is related to this. These accounts treat the nation as a coherent personality. Nations do not have pasts purely etched onto the consciousness of their people without some political or cultural intervention by those with the power to represent that past. The imprint of history is grasped through, or is dependent upon, existing social hierarchies and the control they have over cultural idioms. The Civil War, for example, was undoubtedly formative but in a way that was intelligible only in terms of the antebellum “minds” of Americans. These minds were built from cultural meanings that produced different identities. How a single historical event imprints such diversity is something to be studied not taken as given. The legacy of the war was different for African Americans, southerners, northerners, men, women, and immigrants. Its meaning could only be transposed onto these identities, and efforts to provide one meaning to its legacy were ideological acts that *created* history. We ought not to begin with the premise that the past acts on culture as a kind of *Nationalgeist*. It is the *Nationalgeist* that is the prize of people interested in suturing a particular version of history to national culture.

If national cultures are created by ideological work rather than rising out of the soil or blood, what would be a better way of thinking about culture in war? Anthropologists who examine war in preindustrial societies have found that a group’s symbolic life is deeply entwined with their martial behavior because war serves as a “virtual magico-religious magnet,” involving all of the conditions “that have been invoked to explain

religion and magic, such as collective action, social control, group survival," "hazardous unknowns," and questions of "ultimate meaning."<sup>79</sup> In modern nation-states, where the diffusion of power makes compulsion less effective as social discipline than the production of individual subjectivities, the symbolism invested in warfare can be just as profound. Strategic doctrine is arguably the pinnacle of the nation-state's claim to act in a singular way on behalf of a presumed but always provisional nation; it poses questions about identity because it seeks to integrate the idea of the "national interest" in which the claims of the state enlist individuals in the production of social violence.

I do not wish to overstate the weight of culture in *differentiating* strategy from one country to the next. Recall that nation-states contain a *dual* subjectivity. The Weberian state shares with other states, by definition, *the* dominant cultural form of political legitimacy of the last 300 years. I do not assume that strategic culture operates solely in response to national idiosyncrasies for it to be cultural. If the love of martial combat is a masculine enterprise, it is clearly both transnational *and* cultural. But the second subjectivity—that belonging to integrative ideas of community uniqueness—creates pressure for strategic preferences. States share military language and concepts because of their socialization through conflict. But there remains a category of subjectivity that sustains relations of solidarity *within* the nation. Since the nineteenth century, nation-states rarely go to war without producing an organic self-understanding that makes national sacrifice possible.<sup>80</sup> It is this difference that produces the culture of foreign policies.

These variations are not easily seen because states have incentives to articulate strategic choices as rational, universal, and even scientific, not emotional and idiosyncratic. Yet, strategic choices are tailored to make the idiosyncratic seem universally rational. Nation-states, for example, may favor some states over others for reasons that have little to do with power per se and much to do with ideological harmony, a harmony that hinges on claims that the shared ideology is universally valid.<sup>81</sup> This preference is "cultured" when it is articulated as part of the nation's identity, influencing the options available to its foreign policy. Nation-states, in a way that is qualitatively different from the dynastic states of the *ancien régime*, work their foreign policies around these axial points of identity because their own legitimacy is built on such internal logic.<sup>82</sup> In the modern industrialized state, where war is dependent increasingly on a highly integrated system of specialized knowledge, where science and social science act as disinterested experts whose purpose is, as it was in the past, to control criminality, poverty, drinking, popular disturbances,



and so forth, the liberal military state heightens its political legitimacy by claiming its actions in the name of socially desirable ends: the march of history, the plight of civilization, but in all cases, the proper conduct of global life.<sup>83</sup> Strategic culture emerges as a *claim* that seeks to reconcile the values sought by the dominant culture with the exigencies of the rational bureaucratic state, its military apparatus, and a potentially violent external world.

### Hegemony

Anyone who has studied alliances knows there is often barely enough to hold a coalition together against a common foe. The integrative push for greater security is often held back by centrifugal desires for independence, opportunism, and fears of entrapment. NATO's success has unfortunately left us a cultivated image of harmonious, multilateralism, despite an almost neurotic sense that the alliance has always been in some form of terminal crisis. This anxiety, as Frank Costigliola astutely reminds us, served a useful integrative function, giving members an opportunity to repeatedly and publicly reaffirm their sense of community.<sup>84</sup> At the heart of NATO's anxious selfhood has been one recurring question: who really controls its policies, Americans or Europeans? Much of the moral heat among Cold War historians has been about this. Did the United States impose a *Pax Americana* on an unwilling but weakened Europe, or did Europe seek American power to redress its own weakness in the face of a Soviet threat? The trivial answer is both. The complex answer is that we need to understand how the two sides of the Atlantic socialized each other into altering their identities such that they could engage in an unprecedented degree of military integration. This may be as simple as claiming that integration was driven by a common threat. But this ignores the disagreement amongst the allies, the differences in threat perception, and the ambiguities of NATO's role as defender of European and American global interests. And it especially ignores how so much effort was expended at turning a security pact into what Dulles liked to call a "spiritual community."

How this process is defined—the debate over U.S. "imperialism" in Europe—is really about the normative content of the postwar order. But how NATO reflects the balance of power within itself, whether it is multilateral or hegemonic, communitarian or utilitarian, requires a better understanding of how agreement was fashioned in NATO. To explain, I need to take a long view of U.S. foreign policy. Michael Hardt and

Antonio Negri's study of the new form of global "Empire" offers a way of considering the historical moment embodied in the liberal-internationalism of U.S. foreign policy. They are concerned with the postmodern form of globalization, but their argument hinges on a revolutionary historical event. Noting the influence of Niccolò Machiavelli and James Harrington on American republicanism, they propose that the United States brought to the world a constitutional model for political expansion. The American way of managing its political diversity through balanced "counterpowers" provided the political theory for a universal "Empire" that supplanted the territorial sovereignty embodied in "modernist" European imperialism. The spread of American authority is not a twentieth-century incarnation of an older imperial form, but a new style of *Empire*, with "open, expanding frontiers," and a system of integration through networks of power rather than control of territory.<sup>85</sup> The founding fathers were not only inspired by republican Rome, of course, but imperial Rome as well. The genius of the Empire was that it dealt with expanding its power by incorporating others into its realm not as subjects but as citizens, or friends of the empire. The Roman *imperium*, Machiavelli wrote, was "a system of alliances between and among the Roman *populus* and other nations." This inclusion was a more effective means of expanding Rome's power, especially when dealing with societies accustomed to "self-government." Incorporated peoples were granted equality, although Rome reserved "to herself the seat of empire and the right of command."<sup>86</sup> Harrington—anticipating James Madison's "extended republic"—took this further by arguing for a federal system of divided power, what he named a "Commonwealth of Increase." Its expanding governance would bring "the liberty of mankind," but would be based on the Roman model of "unequal leagues" by which the "centre" retained "overriding authority and military presence" over newly incorporated lands.<sup>87</sup>

The American model was therefore intrinsically expansive because its concept of sovereignty residing in the people ("multitude") was based on "productivity." The multitude is not statically regulated but is creatively regulatory through its own "productive synergies." Power is what people make, and so the political equilibrium of the Republic is sustained through the relentless creation of more power constantly keeping itself in check. The new conception of power requires continuous outward expansion. "Without expansion," Hardt and Negri argue, "the republic constantly risks being absorbed into the cycle of corruption" all republicans feared. Initially, this took the form of continental expansion into the "empty" space of the west. This "utopia of open spaces" played a role at

the end of the nineteenth century when the limits of territorial expansion were reached. The United States flirted briefly with European-style imperialism, but ultimately, under Wilson, returned to a model of expansion through inclusion and openness.<sup>88</sup>

The “Empire” that Hardt and Negri describe is the juridical order of the United States inscribed onto the world. It is not *imperialist*, in that it does not seek to command territory, but it is *imperial*.<sup>89</sup> It expanded through its openness, its ability to absorb differences into networks of control. The American style incorporates the world under a single notion of “right.” It is not based on force per se, but is called into being because of its ability to resolve conflicts: its strategic trajectory is determined by the troubled frontier of the old order. This does not mean that Empire is not violent but that its operating procedures are different from the old imperialism. It resembles the tradition that once linked universal Christianity to European civilization, which is why Empire is accompanied not by gratuitous violence in a *realpolitik* sense, but a return to the concept of “just war.” Modern political thought and the *raison d'état* of the *ancien regime* had done much to banish the celebration of war “as an ethical instrument.” But it reappeared under the auspices of a global system in which war is either a police-action to defend order itself, or a just war, “a concept historically linked to the earlier Roman-Christian concept of universal empire.”<sup>90</sup> Its means of consensus-building are through a network of administrative functions that penetrate the minds, bodies, and cultural orientations of its “citizens.” Freedom is central to this “interiorization,” because if authority resided solely outside the body, the individual would be antagonistic to the system, excluded from power but free to roam outside it.

Hardt and Negri concede that the United States contains other traditions, particularly those that support older forms of imperialism. They surfaced periodically, notably in Latin America, and sometimes in Asia and Africa. This suggests that it was also animated by racial discourses—much as the Romans were better able to grant limited autonomy to self-governing societies that resembled their own than to “barbaric” ones.<sup>91</sup> It is indicative of how definitions of “American” determine the direction of U.S. foreign policy. The wrinkle in all this is the opposition between an expansive, integrating notion of *Empire*, and a narrower definition of “nation” that separated the United States from other states in order to maintain its internal discipline. Taking the thread from Machiavelli to Harrington to Madison and Hamilton, we see that they aimed to create a powerful “nation” around the loyalty of its diversity.<sup>92</sup> This created a country that is Janus-faced: it is expansionistic but proprietary about its character. Its

system depends on productive expansion (inclusion of others) and internal cohesion (exclusion of others). Nation building in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was, after all, a highly competitive one. But America's organizing principles encouraged it to envelop more and more people to retain its internal virtue. In Harrington's febrile mind, the Commonwealth of Increase was universal and millennial.

This tension expressed itself in dynamics traced by Ninkovich's *Modernity and Power*. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the United States celebrated its capacities, enveloped the world, became interdependent with that world, and then faced threats from its frontier because of this interdependence. This was the price of modernity. Yet the exclusionary strain remained a powerful counter-voice to the Commonwealth of Increase. Nationalists drew on a tradition that abhorred engagement with a morally suspect world and the political consequences of an enlarged state. The Left saw expansion as the companion of American capitalism that threatened their communitarian vision for America. The Left, it is true, had a more universalistic vision than the Right, but its principles were still at odds with the idea of military or economic expansion overseas.<sup>93</sup>

American foreign policy in the twentieth century therefore expressed a cultural antagonism between Empire and nationalism, with endless variations in between. The nationalists wanted to act from the walls of Fortress America; the agents of Empire to wrap those walls around the world into a system that celebrated cultural differences and self-determination while simultaneously weakening national barriers. This was the cultural content of American power in the aftermath of the Second World War. The empire-by-invitation thesis, rightly identifying distinctiveness in American "imperialism," misses the significance of the new political administration. The autonomy of the allies was central to "general economy of command" emerging from Washington in the 1940s and 1950s. The premise of *Empire* is that national identities are not fixed, because that would logically preclude integration. Its aim is not to negate differences, but to arrange them "in an effective apparatus of command."<sup>94</sup>

Making the link between Hardt and Negri's account of globalization, and the decision-making processes of NATO in the 1950s may seem a stretch. But the bifurcated characteristics of American foreign policy defined the tension between hegemony and multilateralism with which so much Cold War literature has struggled. NATO's first decade was, to use the Duke of Wellington's words, "a near run thing." The challenge was to get its members to accept interdependence and harmonize their prior strategic cultures. NATO was not to be an aggregate of power, but

a symbolic statement on behalf of a new transatlantic entity. Its new identity did not spring spontaneously from the Soviet threat, but had to be cultivated and taught by those who saw this in their interests. The desire was, as one U.S. government study concluded in late 1951, to try to create the “long-established bonds of common interest, mutual trust, and sense of unity of purpose that characterizes the successful national state.”<sup>95</sup>

This purpose has never been far from NATO’s symbolism. But who drove it? Geir Lundestad’s claim about imperialism “by invitation”—the real issue was America’s unwillingness to lead despite appeals by Europe’s leaders—makes NATO morally positive because the United States was a *reluctant* hegemon, and NATO more consensual than its Soviet counterpart.<sup>96</sup> American reticence in the late 1940s is irrefutable; the desire by the Europeans for U.S. protection equally so. But the “empire by invitation” model is inadequate to explain the process of mutual socialization involved. The Europeans wanted American power, but it is less clear how much they wanted American *ideas* about how to use that power. The Americans had their own reasons for wanting to reconstruct Europe’s conception of its strategic interests, not the least of which were the political costs of failing to accommodate American neo-isolationists. A rearmed Europe was a strategic asset to the United States, but rearmament had to be pointed in the right direction. An independent-minded Europe was not what U.S. strategic planners wanted.

The normative framing of the empire-by-invitation thesis is consistent with older arguments that the international system is most stable when dominated by a single “hegemon” ensuring an open economy, as with Britain in the nineteenth century and the United States in the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>97</sup> The theory tends to produce a benevolent image of the hegemon, some versions suggesting that it sacrifices its long-term interests for the greater good.<sup>98</sup> Such a form of rule is, in fact, barely *rule* at all. The theory conceals the exercise of power behind disinterested progress. The reality is not that simple. Maier has pointed out that American reticence in the 1940s and 1950s should not conceal the *fact* of hegemony, nor the way in which it aimed to transform Europe. *Pax Americana* rested on how the United States meshed its desire for control of Europe’s orientation with the promotion of a type of European autonomy that masked its loss of sovereignty. The key was forging ties between American internationalists and key Western European partners since “such a transnational elite forms the backbone of any imperial system.”<sup>99</sup>

In this sense, *all* empires are more or less empires by invitation.<sup>100</sup> The question is, who does the inviting and why? Some historians

downplay the power differentials in NATO because the democratic tendencies of (most of) the allies means the collaborators represent the *vox populi*. In this way, "U.S. ascendancy allowed scope for European autonomy."<sup>101</sup> This is consistent with Hardt and Negri's concept of *Empire* in which diversity is critical to the economy of command. Put a different way, the United States wanted to help the Europeans "discover" where their "real" interests lay, which is to say, to change their interests. Liberal internationalists wanted a new postwar order to make amends for their failures in 1919, to prevent a return to the autarky of the 1930s. But they favored *means* consistent with their values. Progressive liberals believed that the reconstruction of economic arrangements to facilitate mutual economic growth—a properly ordered global economy—would not need military-political intervention. This *form* of international engagement would obviate a transformation of American institutions.<sup>102</sup> If there was little initial interest in exercising U.S. military might in Europe after 1945, this was because liberals hoped to build a system that did away with military power as the means of maintaining order, which dismantled nationalism and imperialism through integration.

Moving away from the normative content of this debate is to understand the transatlantic relationship in terms that recognize *both* the pull of European insecurity and the interest the United States had in conditioning European development in ways congenial to its interests. Steve Weber's study of multilateralism in the United States' NATO policy, echoed by Marc Trachtenberg's brilliant *A constructed peace*, describe Eisenhower's willingness to share nuclear information with NATO in the mid-1950s as a policy of genuine multilateralism in which decision-making power was shifted to a democratic arena.<sup>103</sup> The dependence of the allies on U.S. forces under Truman's "containment" was reversed under the New Look: an independent Europe would defend itself with U.S. power but without U.S. tutelage.<sup>104</sup>

This definition of multilateralism does not, in my view, properly characterize the relationship constructed in NATO by either Truman or Eisenhower. American policy under the New Look drifted *away* from multilateralism because of the infusion of nuclear nationalist thinking found in elements of the Republican Party and Eisenhower's own JCS in the early 1950s. The New Look was self-consciously hegemonic because it aimed to make American strategic doctrine the *only* choice of NATO as a whole, even as U.S. policies turned openly nationalistic. NATO's multilateralism in the 1950s concealed the fact that Washington reconstituted the rules protecting *its* strategic values by rewriting those of the Europeans. While this process was certainly more consensual than

coercive, building consent followed a process of careful social control. The word “unity” in NATO meant accepting U.S. strategic preferences, not fostering European alternatives. I call this process one of *hegemonic socialization*, a form of internationalism designed to reduce the friction of American expansion without handing the autonomy of the United States to multilateral institutions that it might not be able to control. It aimed to convince its allies that this was the best, and only, of all possible worlds.

This is a distinction not merely of semantic interest. Lundestad made his contribution to the Cold War debate by placing quotation marks around the word empire when next to the United States. Since hegemony is often used synonymously with dominance in mainstream diplomatic history, I want to reclaim its Gramscian sense. It is the *necessary* means by which social “orders” become orders at all, how they build relationships that are antagonistic and power-imbalanced. It involves the creation of an “equivalence” between disparate elements (an “us”) by the identification of elements exterior to that equivalence (a “them”).<sup>105</sup> Multilateralism, on the other hand, refers to an important qualitative element that emphasizes the “*kind of relations*” established between states. Coordination can occur under any number of different principles that govern conduct. In trade, it may mean *nondiscrimination*; in security, it usually refers to *collective security*. It differs from “imperialism” in that it does not seek to deny the sovereignty of any of its participants, and from bilateralism because the expectation of benefits under bilateralism is specific and immediate, whereas multilateralism tends to promote “a rough equivalence of benefits in the aggregate and over time,” or what Robert Keohane calls “diffuse reciprocity.” Thus, the internal character of nations is part of the qualitative nature of multilateralism. Liberal-democracies promote it because it is consistent with their political norms.<sup>106</sup> Thus while the global systems can be dominated by a single power, that power’s values determine the order it establishes. To Ruggie, this means that NATO was multilateral because of *American* hegemony, not American *hegemony*.<sup>107</sup>

Yet even with pluralistic norms governing decision-making, there are power differentials in NATO that have meant some states were more autonomous than others, some could bring more power to bear on the semiotic instruments of exchange.<sup>108</sup> Autonomy in itself tells us little, since it is also a vital part of the politics of hegemony: without autonomy obedience is maintained by force not consensus. Second, since national identity is itself contested, there is no single American culture but a struggle over the authenticity of the “nation” that expresses itself in competing foreign policies with different expectations of inclusion, cooperation, and

compliance. Liberal historians write as if the internationalist tendencies of U.S. foreign policy were settled. But nationalism was always a robust voice in U.S. policy, and produced norms less congenial to the interests of multilateralism.

Weber does identify types of U.S. policy that affected the degree to which NATO behaved as a multilateral body. But in his narrative on NATO and Eisenhower, he has the order reversed. He contends that originally the United States pursued a policy of “reconstructed multipolarity,” since George Kennan’s aim was to rebuild independent centers of power to balance the Soviets.<sup>109</sup> NATO first wanted to preserve Europe’s national autonomy and *restrict* U.S. ties to Europe. Nothing in the treaty “gave the United States a privileged position within the military or political structures of the alliance.” The Korean rearmament then changed all that. The United States committed ground forces to Europe, which Weber interprets as a move away from multipolarity and toward a “deterrence scenario” by which the United States used *its* own military power to balance the Soviets. Eisenhower’s fiscal restraint and affection for nuclear weapons reversed this. Eisenhower’s insistence in sharing nuclear weapons with the allies so they could take care of themselves, proved his commitment to multilateralism.<sup>110</sup>

My concerns are based on a reading of the evidence assisted by looking at how collective identities formed under asymmetries of power involve *hegemonic politics*.<sup>111</sup> The line between cooperation and hegemony is fine but significant. The evidence suggests that no one there ever seriously considered Europe’s strategic autonomy in terms of an independence that might have weakened the spiritual unity of a reconstituted “Free World.” U.S. officials did not want to have to look after Europe, but nor did they seriously envisage a reconstituted military power that broke free of the values of what U.S. officials saw as the common interests of a Western security community. It was this desire to make Europe nominally independent but functionally compliant that defines U.S. policy as hegemonic. Hegemony is about “moral and intellectual leadership” by which a group “articulates and proliferates throughout society cultural and ideological belief systems whose teachings are accepted as universally valid.” Social control can be exercised through power—through rewards and punishments—but these are not as binding over the long run as establishing norms that make the order legitimate. There must be agreement enough to “counteract the division and disruptive forces arising from conflicting interests.”<sup>112</sup> The concept Gramsci applied to civil societies can only be roughly transposed to the international system of sovereign states. The translation is easier though if one accepts Hardt and Negri’s



argument that American expansion is the externalization of a revolutionary domestic political theory.

Domestically hegemony is how a particular *part* of society emancipates that society from an older social order. The *part* establishes its *particular* interest as the emancipation of the whole by inscribing its beliefs over all of society. In international relations, the eighteenth-century emancipation of the United States provided the moral and cultural model by which subsequent U.S. foreign policy equated American liberty with the teleology of history itself, squaring its nationalism with internationalism. In the 1950s, many American leaders, in private and public words, described the object of American foreign policy in precisely these metanarrative terms. In a sense, American hegemony over Europe is less important, and less meaningful, than their shared hegemony over the world. But asymmetries of power exist at a number of levels in the system, not only in this instance between the United States and Western Europe, but within Europe itself. Hegemony is not the fixed relation of a dominant hegemon and a field of subordinates, but a “political type of relation,” with filaments throughout the international order.<sup>113</sup>

How might this actually take place? Hegemony speaks of the spread of ideas through real power relations in ways that conceal their interested purpose. Between states, it happens by creating intertwined economic, political, ideological, and military networks that limit “the bounds of what is understood to be legitimate policy choice.”<sup>114</sup> Interdependence acts as a conduit for shared values. Institutions become the agents of a new community identity through both cognitive (speaking *as if* such a community really exists) and material (establishing bodies to which members must belong in order to have access to power) structures. A community is an “idea” with material forms, the place where members get their authority to act. States retain their sovereignty but, by acting through these institutions, reproduce the “normative and epistemic expectations of the community.”<sup>115</sup>

It is not inevitable that the most powerful members have the most say in determining policies. The problem is not about capabilities, but the interaction between power, the ability to secure leadership, and the political-cultural orientations of the states involved. Places with similar historical and cultural heritages as the United States and Europe already share values, even if nationalism intrudes. After 1945 the United States did not have to convince all Europeans to oppose communism since there already existed anticommunist traditions in Europe. However, it is clear that the United States wanted to reconstruct Europe on new economic and ideological lines.<sup>116</sup> It did so by trading Europe’s need for

U.S. economic power for the ability to build new institutions of international governance. The dominant power enjoys material advantages in determining the rules governing how these institutions are established.

In the case of NATO, the United States could not exert its power at the *expense* of European interests without exposing its power as a type of dominance, turning the allies into satellites, and weakening the legitimacy of its ideological arguments about the character of the "Free World." Internationalists instead sought to *alter those interests* altogether. The critical move in hegemony is to universalize the interests of the powerful. To the extent that they appear merely the *particular* interests of the strong (as in the Warsaw Pact), they lack the capacity to be anything other than repressive.<sup>117</sup> John Ikenberry and Charles Kupchan offer an idea of how this resocialization occurs. They posit that it often happens after wars, when "secondary states" are vulnerable to incentives to conform to another's interests. The use of inducements here looks like a type of coercion (which it is) but it can lead to the internalization of the relationship in consensual ways. European weakness not only meant they were willing to bend to U.S. conditions for aid, but that, for domestic reasons, they absorbed many of the beliefs of their ally.<sup>118</sup> Political entrepreneurs in Europe saw American power as a means not only of coping with the Soviet external menace, but with internal ideological adversaries. The invitation of empire was thus a political process. Adapting to American power cultivated a constituency of bureaucrats, industrialists, financiers, investors, consumers, unions, and intellectuals whose identity depended on bridging old and new values. Sometimes the relationship could be overt. Ousting communists from France and Italy as a condition of U.S. aid is an obvious example. Conservative elements were happy to accept American help, although in covert ways as to avoid the stigma of acting against their own nationalist credentials. Yet, since American policy linked the external Soviet threat to the internal communist one, this domestic reconstruction became a collective security issue.<sup>119</sup> This process can only be described as multilateral and consistent with "European autonomy" if it assumes a priori that the ideological outcome was a "natural" evolution toward the American model. The words we use are important. If we describe a transfer of political values from a dominant power to weaker powers that use this relationship to alter their political landscape, we are seeing hegemony and socialization.

As hegemony is about gaining permission to rule, and always entails resistances and counter-hegemonies, we cannot focus solely on the intentions of the American metropole or its conservative nationalist subculture. In the United Kingdom the tension was between Europeanist/Third

Force advocates and old-fashioned Imperialists. Both had reason to curry favor with the United States since both needed to augment British power. At the same time, they needed to tame the unilateralism of the United States by tying it to a “special” relationship. The tension between European and Imperial tendencies settled on an *Atlanticist* compromise, emphasizing strategic peripheralism as the best means of resisting the push of the United States and the pull of the Continent. An independent nuclear force was thus a rational conclusion. France was also divided between Europeanists and Nationalists: the former opposed the bomb and hoped that American power could subdue Germany and encourage its integration into an identity France could control. Nationalists were more interested in traditional guarantees against Germany and in France’s imperial position. The solution, as West German autonomy grew, was an independent nuclear force, since it was an element denied to the Germans and possessed by France’s Anglo-American rivals. Integration was a defense against the dangerous nationalisms of the past. But the harder the institutions of integration pushed to forge a common identity, the stronger the nationalist counter-resistance. They triggered each other by raising the stakes: nationalism offered the specter of diminished European cohesion, forcing greater efforts toward integration to stem the spiral toward fragmentation. This shifted the political momentum back to those who feared the loss of *national* identity.<sup>120</sup> NATO’s strategic doctrine emerged from this contest between integration and fragmentation, pushing each of its largest states toward nuclear independence as military interdependence threatened to absorb their strategic autonomy altogether. Such dynamics can only be properly understood by showing a sensitivity to culture and hegemony at the same time.

## CHAPTER TWO

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### *The Persistence of the Old Regime*

#### *British, French, and American Strategic Thinking before 1949*

*Nations, like individuals, can become objects to themselves only through the eyes of others.*

—George Herbert Mead

The postwar strategic cultures of Britain, France, and the United States were framed not just by what was militarily necessary but also by perceived differences between themselves and their prospective allies. Even as each viewed its interests as impeccably rational each interpreted others' agendas as distorted by cultural eccentricities. When differences cropped up, they were explained by the peculiar baggage carried by others. This involved historical valuations of the place occupied by these nations: the impetuous adolescence of the United States, the aging imperial cynicism of Britain, the emotional instability of France. These refractions altered their conceptions of what was possible in NATO. As the Big Three articulated their *natural* strategic interests, the prospect of integration altered their conceptions of national security. The question is whether each adapted expediently to these new circumstances, or "learned" new conceptions of its security. In theoretical terms, *learning* internalizes a changed identity—in this case, a transnational "Atlanticist" culture to augment nationalist ones. Adaptation, on the other hand, involves a tactical shift to accommodate old identities to new conditions so as to extract a temporary advantage. When conditions change, one expects a return to "traditional" behavior. Cooperation under such conditions is

fragile, unsettled by signs that adaptation is not working. In the case of the British, French, and Americans, until the Washington Treaty brought NATO into existence in April 1949, there was clearly more adaptation than learning; each clung to the hope that the arrangements forged in the late 1940s would secure traditional strategic priorities. Collaboration was seen as a way of *maintaining* identities rather than revising them. This was the cause of NATO's disjointed early strategic planning. It provided the conditions governing an incipient strategic doctrine in 1949 and early 1950. My aim is to show how subjective this process was, and how these subjectivities were the starting point for NATO's headlong flight into nuclear addiction. The tension between American, British, and French priorities meant that American and British peripheralism—their resistance to committing resources to continental Europe, their preoccupation with the real and symbolic capacities of atomic air power—provided the footings of NATO strategy. It meant that conventional defense was always placed out of reach, that France was isolated on the continent as the Anglo-Americans rebuilt West Germany to compensate for their own peripheralism. Such conditions not only produced an incongruous mixture of atomic and conventional war thinking produced by NATO's rearmament after 1950, but also put in place incentives for the Big Three to pursue independent atomic programs.

I do not provide here a full genealogy of the three strategic cultures. Later chapters concentrate more on that of the United States for reasons that will be obvious. Although Britain and France found their own motives to pursue nuclear programs, it was mainly pressure from the United States that pushed NATO toward *first-use*. Nonetheless, because the British and the French governments forced the United States to alter its initial course, to make *first-use* a collective rather than national doctrine, their strategic cultures will be treated in some detail.

### **America and Europe in British Strategic Thinking before NATO**

Britain's approach to postwar security was informed by a prewar tendency to limit its commitment to continental Europe so as to free resources for imperial interests. Michael Howard has argued that this was not a *traditional* doctrine, but rather the result of a self-conscious rejection of the experience of the Great War.<sup>1</sup> What happened in the interwar years was that this choice was labeled "traditional," tied to a series of practices that sought to establish a cultural connection between being British and

pursuing strategic values desired by those who wished to avoid another continental war. The sense in which British identity was invested in its imperial system shows that there was some cultural drag, as postwar strategic arguments were made intelligible in terms of British heritage. In the interwar years, the military became wedded to a doctrine of “dissuasion,” by which a combination of the economic potential of the Commonwealth and the power of the air force were expected to deter threats to the European balance.<sup>2</sup> Whether faith in “extended” dissuasion was genuine or merely hopeful was not resolved by the Second World War. The war failed to produce a single lesson because of the persistence of peripheralist ideas. Despite ambiguous evidence, the strategic bombing campaign was held to mean that total reliance upon air power was within reach, or at the very least, victory in the next war would go to those capable of initiating a massive aerial surprise attack.<sup>3</sup>

There were problems with this confidence. While air power might prove decisive as a deterrent, it underlined Britain’s vulnerability if it failed. This gave rise to another argument, from Field Marshal Montgomery, that a forward defense in Europe was essential to keep enemies far from British shores. A continental commitment was a complement to, not a drain from, air deterrence.<sup>4</sup> Besides, there was much to be gained politically by aiding friends whose political stability was important and whose military power would help keep those enemies away. What was not clear was whether Britain was yet ready to divest itself of its interests in Egypt, Palestine, India, and Malaya in the face of its economic recovery.<sup>5</sup> Would Europe be the sole theatre of British strategy or would maintaining global prestige inhibit a reorientation? In 1944, the Chiefs of Staff (COS) claimed that the main “problems” Britain would confront in the postwar period were the “increased risk of getting involved in the defense of Western Europe and the maintenance of land-forces on a continental scale.”<sup>6</sup> Why was this construed as a “problem,” or a “risk,” unless the military held prior assumptions about British strategic identity inscribed by being an empire? Yet there was also no question that British policy wanted to preserve the “balance of power” in Europe. The COS addressed this using a powerful touchstone, arguing not that a continental commitment gave security so much as risked “another Dunkirk.” Yet there was pressure to provide support to anticommunist elements in European countries.<sup>7</sup> The Treaty of Dunkirk in March 1947 was a gesture to this cause, to support French socialists without a military commitment.<sup>8</sup> The traditional question of what sort of state Britain was—a global hegemon, a European power-balancer, or some blend of both—was still the only basis for discussing matters of strategy.

Labour Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin's foreign policy vision was at first decidedly Europeanist. Days after the end of the war, he recommended to the Foreign Office that it pursue alliances with France and the Benelux countries, with links to Italy and Scandinavia.<sup>9</sup> This new structure hinged on close cooperation between Britain and France, two weakened imperial states whose identities as "Great Powers" depended on maintaining a semblance of independence, ironically, from each other. This placed limits on the degree of cooperation thought possible, though still desirable, to aggregate their power. As late as 1947–48, Bevin continued to pursue the idea of a European "third force," led by Britain and dedicated to the creation of an ideological alternative to the statism of the Soviet Union and the *laissez-faire* capitalism of the United States.<sup>10</sup> Although Britain wanted access to American power and markets, the Third Force embodied a nascent collective identity in which some British (and French) saw a *European* political culture as preferable to national fragmentation in an American system. The prospect of a European identity grew precisely as interaction among the Europeans enabled them to contrast their selfhood with the powers on Europe's flanks.<sup>11</sup>

The Third Force had broad political appeal in Britain for this very reason, even if Bevin assumed it would be constructed on social-democratic principles. Conservatives could be attracted to it because initially the "wider circle" into which Bevin's Western Union would fit included the Commonwealth. Western Union could prop (or be propped by) the British Empire. What changed this into a pro-American Atlanticism by the end of the 1940s were the twin realizations that Britain had less to offer the Europeans than they wanted, and that Europe's stability was an open question. Historians John Kent and John Young conclude that Western Union was not designed to capture the Americans in Europe but, rather, the Atlantic link was necessary to "make Western Union succeed."<sup>12</sup> Bevin's desire for a European security community forced Britain to grasp that it could not offer much to Europe's defense since its war plans were still more interested in defending the Middle East than Europe.<sup>13</sup>

This puts a different look on "empire by invitation." From Britain's perspective, European integration was implicitly *anti-American* (and *anti-Soviet*), even while it assiduously cultivated support under the Marshall Plan and later NATO. *Anti-American* is perhaps too strong a term, but the rationale behind the Third Force was to use U.S. resources to create Europe's autonomy. The model could be provided by British leadership as a conduit between Europe and the United States. Bevin

began to imagine the structure of the “small tight circle” of Britain, France and Benelux within a “larger circle” that would include the United States and Canada, but that would not be absorbed into an American system.<sup>14</sup> In the overlap of these spheres, Britain could hold lines to Europe and the Commonwealth, funded by its American ties, a community *backed* but not *led* by the United States.<sup>15</sup>

Many British hoped this would preclude a military continental commitment. In the first half of 1948, British studies—civilian and military—were consistent in this. The strategic advantages to an Atlantic security group were principally the addition of U.S. power to augment Britain’s waning ability to protect both Europe and the empire.<sup>16</sup> European integration was important, but Britain’s military, in contrast to Bevin, identified itself as an extra-European power, which demanded no change in its prewar strategic thinking: limited commitments to Europe, greater reliance on peripheral strategic assets, such as sea and air power, as well as “responsibility” for the Middle East.<sup>17</sup> The paradox is striking: while the United States would encourage the military reconstruction of Europe to *avoid* being entrapped there, the United Kingdom endorsed the same principles to preclude a continental commitment by having the Americans assume the role it wished to avoid. NATO emerged “as the best way to prevent divisions from developing from the conflicting military priorities of the Europeans and the British.”<sup>18</sup>

By 1948, the key for Britain lay in rejuvenating an Anglo-American partnership while finding a way to offset the tendency of the United States to want to dominate it. Here, British policy was sensitive to the fact that the United States was itself uncertain of how its interest in European reconstruction would be finessed. Until 1948, most American initiatives revolved around the world’s economic institutions. For conservatives in Britain, these policies were a threat to the Imperial system; for the Left, they might erode progress on social justice at home.<sup>19</sup> Thus, Britons of diverse ideologies saw U.S. economic plans challenging national control, indicative of an emerging American hegemony that needed to be used but channeled into safer directions. The problem was that most Americans wanted a self-regulating economic order that would restore the global economy, preventing any need for military or political internationalism. To conservatives, liberal internationalism, however necessary in 1941, was part of an expansive New Deal statism at home. The Labor government’s dilemma was to find a way of drawing American power to Europe without having it being accompanied by a structural readjustment of Britain’s institutions. Bevin needed to sustain a creative tension between the reticence of American neo-isolationists and the



grand, reconstructive ambitions of American internationalists. Public rituals of European unity and resolve would win Washington's confidence, while private negotiations might offset the pressure to swallow the liberal-multilateralist medicine whole. When Marshall announced his plan for reconstruction, the British quickly embraced it. To help Truman with domestic opposition, Bevin made it clear that Europe would cooperate enthusiastically. Washington's condition was that the ERP (European Recovery Program) sought full-fledged European integration. Harmonizing social, political, and economic values would facilitate freer trade, and assuage congressional critics.<sup>20</sup> The Economic Cooperation Act of 1948 aimed to export the U.S. federal model of economic integration to Europe, and expected the recipients to conceive of their future in terms of a European state rather than a diversity of national identities. "We hoped," George Kennan wrote, "to force the Europeans to think like Europeans, not like nationalists, in this approach to the problems of the continent."<sup>21</sup>

A similar attitude tempered the administration's response to the Western Union (WU). John Hickerson, director of the Office of European Affairs, told Britain's Lord Inverchapel that any idea of U.S. involvement in a European defense organization "should give the impression that it is based primarily on European initiatives. If the European nations created such an organization and made it work, there would be no difficulties in settling our long term relationship to it."<sup>22</sup> There was something odd about offering help only once the Europeans demonstrated they no longer needed it, but the British understood that WU could leverage an American guarantee before Europe's full recovery. Still, it was impossible for Bevin to predict the price Washington would demand, given what London perceived as the vagaries of American domestic life. It was assumed that it would involve a greater continental orientation than either the Foreign Office or the COS thought consistent with their strategic values.<sup>23</sup> The pressure, though, from the French and the Americans, to make a contribution to continental defense would grow. A year after the North Atlantic Treaty was signed, Bevin told the Cabinet: "our future relations with the United States will largely be determined by the success of our collaboration in the Atlantic Treaty. Since it is the kernel of their policy, it must be the kernel of ours."<sup>24</sup>

The pressure toward a continental commitment was offset by the resistance of Britain's military to arrangements that contradicted its priorities. Here the atomic bomb was something of a bureaucratic panacea, a means by which the incompatible orientations of the military and civilians could be reconciled. Many in the British military saw the

bomb as a substitute for the security afforded by the sea. Physicist Patrick Blackett sensed this when he wrote in 1948: "the atomic bomb is seen in many British and American circles as the answer to the power of the Soviet armies, and the only answer that does not seem to involve large overseas military commitments."<sup>25</sup> The bomb—like an alliance with the United States—might forestall rather than initiate a reevaluation of British strategic traditions.

Two things might have shaken that complacency but instead sent British strategic thinking hurtling faster along the same track. First, the U.S. McMahon Act of 1946 officially terminated Anglo-American cooperation on atomic matters. This gave impetus to an independent atomic force, but it also underlined Britain's dependence on the United States. Without a formal American military guarantee to Europe, full reliance on atomic weapons seemed the only pessimistic choice Britain had of avoiding annihilation in a war fought with new weapons. The logic here was decidedly *parabellum*—if you want peace, prepare for war—since Britain would be annihilated with or without an atomic force; the security afforded by an independent bomb would be symbolic or, at best, psychological. Even with American cover, the British could not depend on the United States to be circumspect in avoiding atomic war or in risking it if it were itself to become vulnerable. Doubts about the United States as an ally, with its supposed impetuosity or, conversely, isolationism, made these arguments persuasive. Years later, Prime Minister Clement Attlee conceded that not wanting to be "entirely in the hands of the Americans" was the best reason for developing a bomb at a time when an economic crisis made the atomic project prohibitive.<sup>26</sup>

The *desire* for a bomb thus preceded the strategic rationale for it. The COS had only a hazy sense of how the bomb might be used, but the awareness of Britain's inability to fight a long war through mobilization was suggestive. They told Attlee in October 1945 "the best method of defence against the new weapons is likely to be the deterrent effect that the possession of the means of retaliation would have on a potential aggressor."<sup>27</sup> This "elementary notion of deterrence" through the threat of punishment became part of British thinking even before some Americans grasped its significance.<sup>28</sup> The British realized that an adversary armed with atomic bombs could saturate British defenses with enormous attrition rates and still deliver a crippling blow.<sup>29</sup> Air Marshall William Dickson wrote to the Minister of Defense at the end of 1947:

We must recognise that absolute war, if waged against us, may well prove fatal within a matter of days. We can foresee no measures

which can prevent this if it starts. Our first aim must therefore be to prevent absolute war. Where there is a clash between measures needed to prevent absolute war and those needed if war comes, priority must go to prevention rather than cure.<sup>30</sup>

Dickson did not address what would happen if the deterrent failed. So, as early as April 1947 the COS started exploring “damage limitation” through counterforce targeting, that is, aiming for Soviet air and atomic forces on the ground to offset damage to British forces from a Soviet attack. It placed a premium on striking first, blurring the extent to which it was *retaliatory* at all. The COS skipped over this dilemma: “As our ability to strike back will represent both a very strong deterrent to aggression and one of our principal means of defense, the development of our counter-offensive force must be given high priority.”<sup>31</sup> Counterforce targeting was thought to serve two purposes at once, both of which preserved Britain’s innocence as an instigator of war. Their thinking was still too rudimentary to question whether a counterforce doctrine could be carried out without preemption, and thus if it did not exist uneasily beside deterrence.

On the other hand, the bomb reinforced the arguments of the air force and the navy that atomic weapons made a continental force unnecessary. But Montgomery repeated the army’s view that Britain had to throw its support behind a European defense as far to the east as possible. No air strategy would be *possible* unless the Soviets were held away from the Channel.<sup>32</sup> Montgomery was supported by Bevin and Attlee, and attacked by Chief of Air Staff Tedder and First Sea Lord Cunningham. Yet it was at exactly this time that the Foreign Office shifted its emphasis toward using integration as a means of attracting an American commitment to Europe. It meant that Britain needed to make stronger gestures toward European defense to draw the United States into the role Britain wanted to avoid. On May 10, it agreed to plan for a continental defense, even though British doctrine remained, at heart, peripheralist.<sup>33</sup>

The gesture toward the continent was not a rejection of the RAF’s atomic strategy *per se*. The willingness to *plan* for a European defense was not matched by enthusiasm for sending British forces to the Rhine on a permanent basis. The budget dictated that any such force would be small; the air force and navy were thought to be more cost-effective. And the COS never relinquished their fear that a land force would be swept away by a Soviet advance and was thus a waste of money. As fears go, this was a rational one, but it was reinforced by an older habit of equivocating on the defense of France. As such, the COS debated Britain’s continental

commitment well into 1950. Only then was it agreed to promise the French “two extra divisions” to give “a clear indication that we were in earnest over the Western Union.” And yet was only made available three months into the war, once the British had decided that the French “were standing firm.”<sup>34</sup> The commitment to European defense under NATO aimed to minimize the intrusions of a continental strategy, maintain Britain’s freedom to develop an atomic relationship with the United States, while encouraging the French to keep the war as far from Britain as possible.

### **Britain and America in French Strategic Thinking before NATO**

But how would the French take this proposed division of labor? Britain’s fear of over-commitment was reinforced by a perception of French weakness. In military terms, over-commitment risked losing autonomy and flexibility. Yet from a political view *under*-commitment jeopardized the entire edifice Bevin was building, undercutting incentives for integration, which was of strategic benefit in courting the Americans. France *was* a vital ally—the British believed that the “foundation of the defence of Western Europe in war is a strong France,” but they wanted that strength to offset the continental commitment on their part.<sup>35</sup> How small a commitment was too small to seed Europe’s military integration? In 1948, the only British troops in Europe were occupying Germany, and since both Britain and the United States were promoting West German reconstruction, they refused French requests to make these forces permanent. They intended to withdraw them as soon as West Germany was rebuilt. This refusal reinforced a key “lesson” taught by France’s experience: that “allies can be as unreliable as adversaries are implacable.” It was not just that Anglo-American forces would vacate the continent; it was that they would leave *because* they had rehabilitated Germany. It was not uncommon to hear prominent voices in France express doubts about the benefits of an alliance with the “Anglo-Saxons,”—an expression uttered with cultural derision—as well as the assumption that British and American policies were synchronized.<sup>36</sup> Even so, the government rarely wavered in its bleak determination to get the security guarantees the “Anglo-Saxons” eschewed. It was this relentless cynicism, rather than a changed Soviet threat, that led France to adopt a nuclear doctrine of its own.

The French approach to post-1945 security policy was similar to its aims after 1919. In principle, successive governments endorsed the UN

but, they fell back on the *realpolitik* promises offered by a formal alliance with Britain and, if possible, the United States. In 1945, General Charles de Gaulle instructed General Pierre Billotte, a member of the French delegation to the UN, to sound out his wartime allies about postwar collaboration. By the end of 1947, Billotte reported that the UN would be unable to provide for France's future, and the country would have to rely on traditional means to provide for its security.<sup>37</sup>

The problem was the persistence of France's fears of Germany coupled with its distrust of the British and Americans. Most French people saw a revived Germany as the most tangible threat, a painful reminder of past humiliations. Soviet Russia, though more powerful, was geographically remote. More importantly, even when the French modified their perception of the Soviet threat—perhaps by late 1945 but certainly after the Czech and Berlin crises—they simply wedded the old German threat to the new Soviet one by fearing a Soviet–German alignment.<sup>38</sup> Officials suspected that Soviet–American competition over Germany could allow German nationalists to bargain for autonomy. The United States might then override French anxiety in its haste to contain the Soviet Union. A hurriedly revived West Germany was the thing most likely to provoke a Soviet invasion.<sup>39</sup> Through 1946, the government tried pragmatic neutrality, attempting to stay free of the fight between Moscow and Washington.<sup>40</sup> If that were not enough, the French knew early on that in the event of this Soviet invasion, the British and the Americans would run from the continent.<sup>41</sup> It is easy to understand Paris's different view of the Soviet threat: it was not that it regarded Stalin benignly, but it understood that the *costs* of east–west conflict would be borne by France. This recurring sense of victimization made France responsive to Soviet overtures for a settlement and more willing to go it alone when possible.<sup>42</sup>

If there was a positive side to this vulnerability, it lay in France's ability to use its strategic location and veto-rights over Germany to bargain for U.S. aid. Paris used domestic opposition to NATO as a means of extracting greater concessions than its aggregate power suggested possible.<sup>43</sup> It was adept at convincing the Anglo-Americans that a weak commitment on their part would destabilize France or force it to seek an accommodation with the Soviets. There were limits to this strategy. France's vulnerability constrained its freedom to pursue it indefinitely, and when forced to choose between continued U.S. support, and noncooperation, Paris generally sided with the "camp of liberty."<sup>44</sup> But France's strategic horizon was also wider than Europe. Its approach contained a proposal for Euro-American collaboration on *global* defense. Only this would allow France

to protect its European and overseas “interests,” to secure, in other words, its “*grandeur* and security” as a Great Power.<sup>45</sup>

It is easy to dismiss these pretensions—as American officials frequently would—but there is no doubt France’s global aspirations were a sedimentation of its past, cultivated by French nationalists. “France cannot be France,” de Gaulle once said, “without *grandeur*.”<sup>46</sup> This also imposed on the French a paradox similar to the one facing Britain: some degree of dependence on American resources was needed to sustain the mythologies of greatness. The trouble was that the Americans held in varying degrees, and for their own cultural reasons, an anti-imperialism that made the restoration of Anglo-French global interests problematic. This encouraged France’s initial interest in Bevin’s “third force.” Besides, dependence on the United States would become another face of France’s postwar identity crisis, a symbol of its weakness in the battle to defend civilization against barbarism.

The realization that the United States was to be courted, though, shifted French policy toward serious engagement with Washington. Strategically, this involved trying to infiltrate the informal military relationship London and Washington enjoyed. There was a hope in some quarters that the United States offered the prospect of circumventing the frustrations successive French governments had had trying to extract a British continental commitment. The Americans, wrote General André Beaufre, might bring into these discussions “a breath of fresh air,” as French relations with the British had been more “exhausting than conclusive.” The Americans might get Europe “out of the rut in which we were already foundering,” by bringing pressure to bear on integration itself.<sup>47</sup> The military arrangements that might come from this support could then allow France to join the ranks of the top powers, even help sustain France’s empire, if not its dominance on the continent.<sup>48</sup> The United States was invited into Europe to resolve the problems its constituents had with each other, not only with the common enemy to the east.

Thus, while France instigated the Brussels Pact and the North Atlantic Treaty, its ambitions were not in perfect harmony with those of its allies. What might happen to its cooperative spirit if it were shut out of an Anglo-American strategic condominium? What if the British and the Americans reconstructed German military power as the price for their support in Europe? It was the persistence of the older imperial discourse that most distorted integration. French forces after 1945 were preoccupied with fighting wars of national liberation, not planning for the conventional wars that might be expected against the Soviet Union. This was a

function of actual threats versus potential ones. It was also clear that the preservation of the empire, as the emblem of national prestige, was an important part of the country's identity, especially among nationalists and the military, both of whom were haunted by the failures of the Second World War.<sup>49</sup> As such, French military thinking languished in the late 1940s. In an atmosphere in which their role in Europe was reduced to providing "cannon-fodder," while the "off-shore" allies relied on technologically "modern" methods of warfare, the French struggled to find strategic roles commensurate with their ambitions.<sup>50</sup>

The search for greatness might have offered the psychological conditions for an early shift toward an independent atomic force, as it did for the British. Yet this was not the case. The French atomic project was designed for civilian uses, and it was nine years before the government committed itself to nuclear weapons. French engineers, according to Gabrielle Hecht, saw the peaceful atom as a symbol of France's historical "*mission civilisatrice*," a grafting of "modern technology and historical monuments" that revived its battered self-image.<sup>51</sup> France's reluctance to pursue an atomic weapons program before 1954 cannot be understood in *parabellum* or rational-actor terms. For one, there was widespread domestic resistance to the bomb, especially on the Left.<sup>52</sup> For some strategists, moreover, France's vulnerability argued in favor of an outright ban on atomic weapons.<sup>53</sup> The British military, under the same conditions, came to the opposite conclusion. The lack of an obvious strategic rationale for France, combined with shock over the use of the bomb in Japan, generated sufficient moral opposition in high enough places to suppress interest. Among the strongest voices were those of the scientific elite of France, including Frédéric Joliot-Curie, the Communist director of the civilian *Commissariat à l'énergie atomique* (CEA). Even after the Communist elements of the CEA had been removed by a "nationalist" director in 1950, much of the CEA remained opposed to the military use of atomic power, even as late as 1954.<sup>54</sup>

In the military, the resistance to atomic weapons is most perplexing to those who generalize from the American and British experience. In France, the military saw the costs of developing a bomb as threatening its "traditional" manpower while offering few strategic advantages. There was no sense in which the bomb could "distance" France from its potential enemies—Germany and the Soviet Union—in a way that strategic thinkers in Britain and United States hoped. Doubting that the Soviets would ever attack "out of the blue," the French military argued that an atomic superpower exchange would destroy France anyway. If the U.S. deterrent worked, the French had no need of a bomb; if it failed, there

was nothing a French bomb could do to provide for their safety. French planners, preoccupied with colonial wars, believed that a large army was still the basis of national prestige and security.<sup>55</sup> Technology was an important part of the discourse of modernity in France, but its salience as the source of French strategic independence only grew as anxieties about French power were revived in the wake of decolonization and the rise of West Germany. As France became disillusioned about its status as an *equal* within NATO, fearful that a rearmed Germany would supplant it, convinced that the Americans were drafting a peripheral nuclear strategy for NATO, the French Ministry of Defense, in the autumn of 1952, authorized the first study of nuclear weapons as a part of French strategic doctrine.<sup>56</sup>

### Europe in American Strategic Thinking before NATO

Official American attitudes toward Europe at the end of the Second World War reflected the same tension between tradition and novelty that made British and French policy unstable. On the one hand, there was no doubt that the United States had turned away from many of the “isolationist” tendencies that had beset its policies during the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>57</sup> Yet it was not entirely clear how decisive this turn was, and misleading to assume that U.S. foreign policy could not *both* internationalize and retain elements of nationalism in the same politics. Although Truman constructed a delicate bipartisan consensus on foreign policy for a few years, marrying his own internationalism with Republican anticommunism, the unilateralist character of nationalist tendencies still surfaced in parts of the U.S. policy. I cover this in more detail when examining the Republican internationalism of the Eisenhower administration. The absorption of left-wing isolationists into the liberal center after the war left a form of neo-isolationism that was both rabidly anticommunist and powerfully unilateralist. Conservatives were less burdened by pacifist idealism, moving from a prewar “theory of impregnability” to a postwar “isolationism of power and preparedness.” With its emphasis on force, as Alexander DeConde argues, neo-isolationism held an expansionist vision of power and self-interest, and thus differed from its prewar antecedents in important ways.<sup>58</sup>

If the United States was a strategic *imperium* at the end of the war, it was by all reckoning a reluctant one. The Truman administration expended a great deal of energy trying to overcome opposition to an expanded military role for the United States after the war. Pressure for



demobilization in 1945 underlined the fact that most Americans had little interest in “sharing their military power.” The absence of these standard political–military markers in national power make the American “empire” appear unorthodox, if indeed an empire at all.<sup>59</sup> Marc Trachtenberg has shown that even after the signing of the North Atlantic pact, the idea persisted that the United States should withdraw from Europe as soon as it could be certain that NATO had enough strength to stand on its own.<sup>60</sup> The pressure for withdrawal from Europe came not only from elements of Congress, but also from the U.S. military. The defense establishment was uncomfortable with the expansion of commitments after the war, partly because of its own declining resources and partly because there was little precedent, outside of the navy, for thinking in global strategic terms.<sup>61</sup> However, the corollary of this—that the military rejected an active role for itself in NATO, or encouraged European *autonomy* in NATO—is highly misleading. The Second World War had a profound impact on U.S. military thinking, sensitizing a generation of U.S. war planners to the importance of projecting power beyond the walls of Fortress America, or, more precisely, to moving those walls to different places.<sup>62</sup> The resistance of the JCS was to *formal* obligations that tied U.S. forces to plans that constrained their definitions of security. The JCS were so concerned with maintaining their freedom in a prospective alliance that they worked to mold the alliance’s war plans and the military assistance program that underpinned them. Paradoxically, to protect their own priorities, the JCS recognized that they needed to become *more* involved in the collective military planning they feared. From inside, they could exert influence over other states’ priorities. The desire to protect American *autonomy* thus provided incentives for integration with Europe because the military understood that U.S. power could shape the institutions that designed NATO’s strategy. These institutions could be inscribed with a new transnational logic that eroded the nationalism of old Europe. This claim is based on evidence that the U.S. military made a mental division between its own global strategic plans and those on behalf of Western Europe. In time, the military saw transatlanticism as an opportunity for resolving two strategic problems of its own: first, the need for overseas bases from which to launch an atomic offensive against the Soviet Union; and, second, the desire to augment “defense in depth”—a forward defense in Europe—by encouraging European rearmament while staying within America’s own constricting defense budget.

Others have covered the incipient stages of American atomic strategy.<sup>63</sup> Most argue that under Truman, the United States did not

coherently integrate atomic weapons into its foreign policy and, with budgetary restraints that played into the hands of air power advocates, this failure encouraged war plans that were, to put it mildly, poorly reconciled to political needs. After much wrangling, National Security Council memorandum 30 (NSC 30) granted permission to the JCS to *plan* for the use of atomic weapons but reserved to the president the final decision as to when and where they might actually be used.<sup>64</sup> Truman's intention was to maintain presidential prerogative without hampering the military, but NSC 30 gave the JCS the expectation that atomic weapons would be the cornerstone of U.S. doctrine. The freedom to plan for an atomic war removed restraints on a military culture that saw atomic weapons as a strategic panacea. Contrary to later claims that Truman hobbled their ability to embrace a wholly nuclear strategy, by planning for the prompt application of atomic power, the JCS precluded the development of alternative strategic concepts even before NATO was signed.<sup>65</sup>

The Air Force was the most committed to the virtues of atomic warfare. It helped lead Truman's Air Policy Commission in 1948 to conclude that "the military establishment must be built around the air arm."<sup>66</sup> The charm of air power was reinforced by the atomic monopoly, which offered the United States an "alternative barrier" to the "effortless security" it historically enjoyed. It was also a form of power that celebrated American powers of invention. Social critic Dwight MacDonald attacked the bomb's popularity on these grounds, complaining that atomic weapons "are the natural product of the kind of society we have created."<sup>67</sup> Americans initially had tremendous moral ambivalence about the bomb, since it seemed to combine elements of ultimate good (ending the war, if not all war) and evil (the potential to destroy civilization). But as the Cold War deepened, more Americans became positively buoyant about the relationship between the bomb's destructiveness and American virtues.<sup>68</sup> Truman—ignoring the contributions of the legion of foreign-born scientists involved in the Manhattan project—bragged that the bomb came from unique American qualities and thus was justifiably the "sacred" weapon by which America alone assured world security. His Secretary of Agriculture, Clinton Anderson, attributed the bomb to "American mathematical and mechanical genius," and General Leslie Groves insisted that potential adversaries were simply too primitive to match American technology.<sup>69</sup> These delusions made the bomb easier to swallow. They also hardened many Americans against arms control precisely because they believed it was morally irrelevant to the task of global security.<sup>70</sup> Journalist Walter Lippmann wrote, echoing Patrick

Blackett, that Americans saw the bomb as “the panacea which enables us to be the greatest military power on earth without investing time, energy, sweat, blood and tears, and—compared with the cost of a great Army, Navy and Air Force—not even much money.”<sup>71</sup> The Air Force used this to encourage appropriations that favored its strategic vision over all others, driven also, as Michael Sherry has characterized it, by their own “technological fanaticism,” and their ability to describe the Air Force as the least “military” of the three services. The more technologically modern the force, the more it seemed merely to be the face of science and engineering know-how, rather than an old-fashioned professional military. The projection of American power through an offshore air force seemed less threatening to civilian–military traditions in American society.<sup>72</sup>

The air power bias was attacked by the Navy, the other branch of the services historically perceived as tolerably consonant with American anxieties about militarism. But the Navy’s purpose in the late 1940s was not to weaken the military’s dependence on atomic weapons or on strategic peripheralism: it simply wanted a cut of the action, claiming it was better equipped to deliver the bomb through its carrier-based air force. As Paul Hammond wrote, “the issue within the military establishment was thus put in terms of who could carry out best a strategy which equates threats to our national security interests with the necessity of inflicting maximum devastation on the heart of the Soviet Union.”<sup>73</sup> This was a battle the Navy was bound to lose. Truman’s economy-minded Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson, scrapped the carrier program and the United States deepened its affection for a strategic doctrine based almost entirely around atomic air warfare.<sup>74</sup>

The earliest U.S. war plans after 1945 reflected this. The emergency war plan BROILER, approved in early 1948, written without any political guidance from civilians, posited that a Soviet conventional attack on Europe would compel the West to accept the loss of the region. U.S. forces would concentrate on holding the western hemisphere and launching an atomic counteroffensive from bases in Britain, Okinawa, and possibly the Cairo-Suez area. A ground offensive to recapture lost territory might begin ten months later.<sup>75</sup> BROILER coincided, unfortunately, with the first appeals from Bevin and French Foreign Minister Georges Bidault for the United States to associate itself with the Brussels Treaty.<sup>76</sup> The JCS knew the strategic advantages of a transatlantic link, but they fretted about the overextension of their power. They feared, though, that excessive enthusiasm for collective defense would give “permission for Europe to raid America’s own severely strained supplies.”<sup>77</sup> Yet the JCS developed a military concept that rested on the preservation of a ring of overseas bases

from which they could hold a future enemy away from the U.S., projecting power into the heart of the enemy's territory. To the military, closer political ties with Europe was immediately related to the needs of its older strategic agenda rather than any particular affection for European interests. American strategic interests had become global as a result of calculating the importance of Asian, European and, ultimately, Middle Eastern resources, to the stability of the global economy. A stable and open economy, liberals argued, was the final source of political security. Although the Americans abandoned their earlier faith in a "one world" capitalist system, the "two world" concept that replaced it still demanded a "far-flung" vision of strategic interest. Any attempt to tie the U.S. military to Europe's narrow interests through strategic planning or military assistance, was initially rejected by the JCS.<sup>78</sup>

While the Europeans wanted American military support, how supportive would they be of strategic plans posited on a pessimistic view of Europe's defense? They were adamant that U.S. military assistance had to be predicated on the security of all Europe from the outset, and not on the hypothetical effects of an atomic exchange with the Soviets. If the bomb were to serve any purpose, it should be to deter war with the Soviets not fight one if the deterrent failed.<sup>79</sup> It was for this reason—to ensure U.S. participation from the outset—that WU invited the Americans to participate in its military planning. The question for the U.S. military was not whether to seek ties with the Europeans, but whether such ties would serve a "peripheral" U.S. strategy of atomic air power, or demand a radical revision of its strategic thinking. In the end, the Americans compromised, retaining their atomic doctrine and marrying it to a continental strategy they hoped would be furnished by the integrative forces of Western Union, and then NATO. But the aim in cheering integration was to fertilize Europe's indigenous military resources so as to preclude a long-term drain on U.S. resources. John Gimbel has argued that the army's interest in the Marshall Plan was to "avoid being chained to the dead body of occupied Germany."<sup>80</sup> This was understandable and consistent with the Europeans wanting the Americans more than the Americans wanted to be stuck in Europe. But what is muddled in thus interpreting U.S. plans to generate what Kennan called "elements of independent power" in Europe, is that Washington's understanding of "independence" was framed in terms of reducing "the burden of 'bi-polarity'" on the United States not cultivating Europe's open-ended political-military orientation. True, Hickerson suggested in 1948 that the United States might construct a European "third force," capable of resisting both the Soviets and the Americans "if our actions should

seem so to require.”<sup>81</sup> It was an idea that would return under the Eisenhower administration in its project to share nuclear weapons. But these aspirations were not borne out by American policy. There was nothing in the policies pursued by American military institutions that indicated that they were prepared to relinquish the control, once arduously acquired from both the Europeans and Congressional skeptics, they found so vital to implanting their strategic concepts in NATO.

Indeed, stressing the importance of European autonomy to the entire policy placed the desire for this control in a highly positive light. The mechanisms put in NATO’s defense planning groups by U.S. diplomats, the promotion of strategic concepts drafted mostly in the Pentagon, and the tying of military aid to the provision of bases for U.S. bombers, produced an Atlantic strategic orientation that made Europe’s “autonomous” military orientation virtually impossible. It protected U.S. forces from interference by the allies but generously provided for their protection in turn. Nowhere was it permissible that “independent power” in Europe be inconsistent with America’s global struggle against communism. The greatest danger that faced the United States in NATO was European neutralism—precisely the sort of independence Hickerson and later Eisenhower should have applauded. Calls for Europe’s autonomy concealed the intention of remaking Europe’s strategic environment in ways that ensured its permanent orientation toward, and ideational, if not material, dependence on, the United States. Whenever a European expressed a different strategic point of view, NATO, from Washington’s vantage, was plunged into a “crisis” of cohesion. If autonomy meant little more than the freedom to endorse American policy, then it was hardly autonomy at all.

On the surface there may be nothing especially cultural about the desire of a powerful state to minimize constraints on its military sovereignty. But uniqueness is not what makes behavior cultural. There is much in the culture of *realpolitik* that harmonizes the tendencies of states—regardless of their internal make-up—to seek security through power and the control of their allies.<sup>82</sup> We know this from everyday life: our behavior in society must be functionally similar for there to be an order at all. But we also know that within these commonalities there are idiosyncratic variations that define our behavior next to others. These differences constitute the individual *qua* individual. In American strategic policy in Europe, we can trace the persistence of a desire for command of the institutions of NATO within a security community that hallowed autonomy and equality. What emerged in the late 1940s was a hesitant policy of control through the construction of mechanisms that were multilateral and yet socialized along a narrow conception of strategic

possibility. This was a function of the liberal character of American policy, and the need to satisfy both internationalist and nationalist constituents. These factions presented antagonistic visions of what America ought to be; and expressed, therefore, conflicting prescriptions for how it should integrate into an interdependent world. Nationalism could be reconciled with internationalism if the institutions the United States forged abroad embedded the political values and strategic desires of the United States. The paradox of this strategy, of course, resides in its inherent instability. The desire for command of NATO was framed for domestic audiences in terms, ironically, that culturally separated the United States from its allies. Meanwhile in Europe, American officials worked to create the fiction of an Atlantic “community,” a mythico-historical entity to displace the nationalist idioms of European politics. Historians may struggle to identify consistency in national cultural style, but American policymakers behaved *as if* such a thing as national character existed and had to be addressed at home and abroad.

The Big Three felt their way through the late 1940s by adjusting their strategic traditions to the power distributions of war’s aftermath. This meant a cooperative relationship with the others, but on often contradictory terms. Their “interests” were displayed against a background of the historic identity of their nations, and those with whom they felt drawn to cooperate. There is no question that the circumstances of security, and the conditions of ideological unity, provided the impetus for this desire. They chose each other not only because of the power they could collectively muster to face a threat, but because they knew that whatever their differences, there was a disposition toward each other that made cooperation safe and predictable. But the precise form that cooperation might take—the strategic arrangements they made—was instantiated by cultural perspectives of self and ally. Britain and France worked from a self-image as declining powers unless they retained their imperial assets. Neither was prepared to relinquish easily the *sine qua non* of its heritage. The United States, newer to the pressures of a “traditional” great power, was deeply invested in projecting its power across the Pacific, and in defending the liberal-capitalist states of Europe. But its leaders—especially its military ones—believed that America’s interests could best be defended by securing a position on the edge of the Eurasia, relying on atomic air power to minimize restraints on its resources. Though the wealthiest of the wartime belligerents, the United States guarded its autonomy—as most states do—but all the more so because new technology confirmed its belief in its role as a benevolent, if detached, defender of world order. H.W. Brands argues that the United States has

“exemplarist” and “vindicationist” tendencies, a desire to serve as a New Israel or as a New Rome, to use the pairings preferred by Anders Stephanson.<sup>83</sup> In the late 1940s, these tendencies fought for mastery of U.S. policy without either one wholly triumphing. The result was a structural ambivalence in U.S. policy toward NATO that desired to reconstruct, withdraw, control, provide for, and dominate all simultaneously.

## CHAPTER THREE

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### *“Disembodied Military Planning”*

#### *The Political-Economy of Strategy, 1949–50*

The Medium Term Defense Plan (MTDP) of 1950 has played a critical heuristic role in the history of NATO’s nuclear policy. It provided the basis of the 1952 Lisbon force goals, a landmark if only because it was the failure to attain them that drove NATO into its irreparable dependence on nuclear weapons.<sup>1</sup> The history of the MTDP is important for two reasons: first, because of the seriousness of the lessons historians have taken from its failure; and second, because it institutionalized a division of labor in NATO that reflected the perceived cultural attributes of each state’s role in the alliance. This was the function of a view in Washington that European military integration would dissolve *national* military forces in order for the United States to retain its peripheral nationality in tact. This deprived NATO of strategic options, establishing the conditions by which U.S. planners sought to convert NATO’s strategy into an extension of their own air power doctrines.

To offer a better account of the nuclear turn after Lisbon we need to reexamine the MTDP that gave us Lisbon. It involved the unsurprising desire of the United States to control its atomic forces. But my argument is that the rationality of this longing for command was sustained by bursts of nationalism that targeted the strategic cultures of the allies. Autonomy was not enough: what was needed were reconstituted subjects. Put another way, the United States wanted client states whose independence was protected by U.S. power, but was also remade under new rules of conduct. American separateness was written into these rules, as was the division of tasks that made Europe’s nationalism an impediment.



The MTDP was, therefore, something of a paradox: a *conventional* strategy but one that instantiated rules of authority in NATO that maintained U.S. peripheralism against the NATO'S integrative pressures while applying the same pressure on the allies.

### **“A Rather Thin Rationalization of What We Were Doing”**

Washington's response to Western Union reflected the desire to maintain a balance between over- and under-commitment. Only after the Czech coup were Truman officials willing to open discussions on a transatlantic military link.<sup>2</sup> From the beginning, the U.S. military made it clear it was not prepared to underwrite continental defense. JCS Director of Joint Planning General Alfred Gruenther insisted it must be “entirely clear that no commitment to aid a state, victim of attack, should require that aid should be given locally. We should retain freedom to carry out action against the aggressor in accordance with [our own] strategic concepts.”<sup>3</sup> The State Department objected that a loudly proclaimed need for U.S. autonomy failed to address European anxieties or provide them with a model for integration. The JCS bent and proposed “a military ERP,” that would stress the temporary nature of the U.S. commitment. The military too knew that their emergency war plans calling for the “frantic evacuation of American occupation forces from Europe,” might convince some prospective allies “*of the hopelessness of their situation.*” They promised to replace their emergency plan with ones that successively offered more hope. This, though, was to be provided by the reconstruction of European forces not American ones.<sup>4</sup> The problem facing U.S. strategists was how to induce Europe to rearm.

The British government was the only one to accept the U.S. view that atomic weapons were NATO's only option in the meantime. But it had its own agenda here, and it was inconsistent with the American one. British officials were troubled by the end of atomic cooperation, and wanted their own program to balance that of the United States. Their belief was that only a fellow atomic power could influence U.S. policy.<sup>5</sup> The French came to another conclusion. In meetings with the JCS in June 1948, they said WU was unanimous that the war for Europe must be fought “as far to the east as possible.” The prospect of an occupation followed by U.S. liberation “with its new and immensely more powerful means of destruction,” would cause France “sullenly and reluctantly to turn to Communism.”<sup>6</sup> Fearing abandonment, the French thus answered

with a threat. Truman concluded military assistance might be used as the Marshall Plan had been: to facilitate European integration.<sup>7</sup> Unlike the ERP, where U.S. capital remained a profitable feature of the economic order created, military aid had to strike a balance between ensuring Europe’s cooperation and incurring commitments that tied America down. The United States “must . . . avoid the harmful influence on our global strategy that might result from [any] decision regarding assistance of this sort dictated by foreign demand rather than appropriateness of strategic plans.” The word “appropriateness” drew a distinction between objectively sound strategy and that which stemmed from mere “foreign demand,” which would be inherently “inconsistent with [U.S.] strategic concepts.” The United States would only use “long-range methods of warfare, [which] would afford defense to Western Europe only incidentally, although with potentially great effectiveness.”<sup>8</sup> The incidental and hypothetical nature of the commitment was not stressed.

The JCS strategy aimed toward “ultimate capabilities.” This gave time for European recovery without gloomy attention on Europe’s weaknesses, thus lessening pressure on U.S. strategic concepts in the long run. The United States allowed WU to plan for a Rhine defense as long as it was “properly channeled.” This would “have the greatest benefits in security for the US.” The JCS affirmed that their strategic concept for Europe did not envisage a long-term military presence there, but instead anticipated “progressively greater likelihood that the free nations of Europe will themselves be able to deny their territories to conquest and occupation.”<sup>9</sup> This offered the “greatest benefits” to United States security because the interests of the Europeans and the United States were here contiguous. Would there be a role for *American* strategy when Europe was able to defend itself? Indeed yes, and it underlined the extent to which American assistance was driven by the demands of its own peripheralism. The JCS wanted aid to be reciprocated by having the allies give “base and transit rights, in some cases outside the European area, of the type we would require in the event of a common war effort, and the possession of which would facilitate our common military readiness in advance of war.”<sup>10</sup> These bases gave the United States the means of executing its chosen strategy: the delivery of an atomic offensive.

The Pentagon sent a team of officers to participate in WU military discussions in the summer of 1948 to help this along. By the time Paul Nitze arrived in January 1949, the team had calculated that rearming Europe would cost between \$25 and \$35 billion, not a price Congress would support. Nitze offered a different approach. “Let’s say,” he told his colleagues, “that the maximum which you can hope to get from the

US Congress is of the order of magnitude of a billion and a half to two billion dollars. Then try to calculate the amount of defense which can be bought for that amount." What the West ought to aim for was a force "which would really have more of a political effect than a military effect." The NSC agreed it could support strategic concepts technically in variance with its own if the "morale and internal security" of the recipients could be affected by modifying the strict application of JCS conditions.<sup>11</sup> This was reasonable, but it opened a gap between JCS *national* thinking and the plans encouraged under the auspices of cooperation. The West's collective force would emphasize the *political* utility of an open-ended rearmament. Privately the United States clung tenaciously to a strategic plan at odds with that aim. The U.S. military instincts suggested collective planning was a trap, but a second look saw that it *could* resolve some of their own problems. The first of these was geography. The frontiers of the nation were never clear-cut. Beyond its juridical, territorial borders, the United States was involved in a network of ties to other states around the globe. Its vision of security had been expanding for a 150 years, culminating in a highly technological, geostrategic vision of global power. This process involved a redefinition of the frontier toward a more seamless sense of global space, hampered only by the need for tractable allies and bases from which to project military strength. The atomic age, heady with the promise of "effortless security," was still dependent on bases. Military assistance could be a *quid pro quo* with the Europeans, granting the United States rights in Europe and its empires. The military was apparently adamant this was one of the main purposes of military aid.<sup>12</sup>

The second problem facing the JCS stemmed from what Glenn Snyder calls the "alliance security dilemma."<sup>13</sup> For an alliance to be useful, the United States needed to hedge against being abandoned by its allies by offering credible support. How would it do so within the limits of Truman's budget on the one hand, and its own peripheralism on the other? Congress was also less likely to sustain a U.S. presence in Europe without an unmistakable sign of allied self-help. By 1948, conservatives saw internationalism as an invitation to create a "globalized welfare state," with the United States as "Santa Claus." Republican Charles Vursell bitterly observed that the "New Deal crowd" was making sure that "your tax cut will go to Europe."<sup>14</sup> The JCS thus concluded they could forestall a U.S. presence in Europe by using the lure of cooperation to expand WU forces and fill the vacuum in the continent.

The problem was how to get them to go down this road without realizing what was being asked of them. Anglo-American strategic

differences were minor next to what separated them from the French. In March 1949, two weeks before the Washington Treaty, French Army Chief of Staff General Georges Révers told JCS Chairman Omar Bradley that “whatever happens, France has decided to fight for the Rhine,” and that there would be no question of either “abandoning the defense” or “maneuvering in retreat,” since the defense of Europe was the “prime reason for the Atlantic Pact.” The atomic offensive might weaken Soviet war potential, but Révers did not think it would “prevent the Soviet Armies of Europe from pushing on towards the West.” If the United States spurned the defense of French territory, then membership in NATO was worse than useless: as the French *Institut des Hautes Études de Défense nationale* put it, “an ally without means is more dangerous than a non-belligerent.”<sup>15</sup>

The JCS liked Révers’s enthusiasm for continental defense, especially his promise to assume its main burden, but his price—enduring U.S. support for a Rhine defense—was too high. More telling was Révers’s determination to link the size of France’s contribution to its expected place in NAT planning. The French suspected—correctly—that the British and Americans wanted to squeeze them out of NATO’s military executive and knew in the face of such an enormous military commitment they could not refuse French participation.<sup>16</sup> This is how the national interests of states were given an incentive to cultivate a new identity around the idea of a “North Atlantic.” The French—others followed—began participating in public rituals that created a collective identity. Their purpose, it bears repeating, was to promote traditional strategic ambitions. But by engaging the United States and Britain through these public affirmations of trust and unity, they produced a cultural space at odds with their own strictly national sense of self. This was thus more than bargaining. It entailed a ritual affirmation of confidence in an “Atlantic community” as a means of extracting approbation and, therefore, real benefits. The articulation of this *common* selfhood deliberately concealed the divergent intentions in it, since each nation hoped articulation would accomplish what it was not itself prepared to do. Because of this, the United States wildly underestimated the allies’ expectation of assistance, believing that a promise to furnish 30 divisions was a commitment to pay for them.<sup>17</sup> In a rare moment of candor, Secretary of State Dean Acheson put it this way:

what I was saying in 1949 was very much a rather thin rationalization of what we were actually doing. . . . went on to say that you would do this at a considerable overall saving, and that at a cost

which the European could support in time, without aid from the United States. Now, as you look back on that discussion, it's perfectly obvious that you say, "at a considerable overall saving over what?" Well, that was the point, and that point wasn't brought out, and of course left the whole thing vague. Then there was the assumption that the Europeans could support what would be set up, after a while, without aid from us. That all depended on what was going to be set up. So that all that discussion really went in a circle, but it seems to me at the time a straightforward, honest statement, which really came out, I think, of ignorance rather than any desire to confuse.<sup>18</sup>

Later events suggest both sides knew what they were doing. The tendency to mislead each other on strategic commitments stemmed from a shared desire *not* to adjust strategic preferences to each other. This encouraged everyone to overestimate the coalition's capabilities, since each based its ambitions on what its partners would supposedly do down the road. Since the JCS had been invited to participate in WU planning and were expected to play a role in NAT planning, they held the best way of encouraging European rearmament was, as Averell Harriman recalled, to make "a mental division between national planning under conventional economic and political restrictions and international planning for the allies," based on the belief "that the European countries somehow or other would do it."<sup>19</sup> U.S. officials used the absence of central authority in NATO to present an idealized assessment of aggregate capabilities. Gestures toward expansive global military power could be had because there was no one to say no. Initially this was not a problem. No one, Nitze mused, made a decision "as to what our eventual end goal was going to be: whether it was going to be a military force sufficient . . . to give Europe a chance of military security against the Russian capabilities; or whether it was going to be less than that, because you couldn't foresee being able to get the amount of equipment or the amount of economic support which was necessary to carry the full force." It did not matter what the goal was: rebuilding Europe's defenses would be "useful" either as an "initial stage towards a lesser target of a respectable military force which would have political repercussions" or a small step toward total defense.<sup>20</sup> This disengagement of national and supranational policymaking was what one U.S. official called "disembodied military planning." The U.S. military was not hemmed in by the realities of the national budget when it looked at Europe. It could ask the

world of its allies and claim their failure would incur the wrath of Congress. Acheson knew this was a key feature of NATO.

The only method which [we had] available was to have soldiers tell us what they thought their needs were, and as they developed these needs they were so absolutely uncontrolled by the ordinary restraints which exist within a national state that they exceeded all possible bounds of what could be done, and by their very great magnitude they discouraged those who clearly saw that they couldn't be accomplished, and created a very grave political situation.<sup>21</sup>

The significance of United States engagement with Europe, in this sense, lies less in its rejection of isolationism than in this tactical awareness that NATO offered new frontiers of authority outside the constraints of the nation-state. The U.S. military savored the opportunity to interfere in the priorities of foreign states. That these states were desperate for aid only made the incision into Europe's political interior much easier. U.S. planners could justly propose that Europe's strategic traditions be rewritten. This habit emerged before the treaty was even signed, pre-dating both NSC 68—the U.S. call to arms of April 1950—and the Korean War. The U.S. military's desire for strategic autonomy launched rearmament well before the traumas of 1950. Acheson said this a few years later: NATO's “disembodied planning,” he knew, “really [had] nothing to do with Korea.”<sup>22</sup>

### Arming the New Alliance

American conservatives provided the terms of NATO's integration, notably that it create bodies to ensure collective thinking took precedence over national thinking. It had the unintended effect of drawing the United States into these institutions to control them. Still the U.S. military concluded in late 1948 that “concentration on the timely consummation of our own rearmament program will contribute more to our over-all security than would undue expenditure on the progressive revitalization of Western Union military power.” The *Wall Street Journal* agreed: “Every gun we give to Europe strains us, and weakens us, by so much more. . . . If we weaken ourselves, what have we done to strengthen the Atlantic Pact? . . . To pour out arms in support of the pact is not only unnecessary, it is foolhardy.”<sup>23</sup> This refrain echoed conservatives Robert Taft, William Jenner, and Lawrence Dennis, posited on the belief that NATO was a type of American philanthropy. During the NATO hearings, they asserted Atlantic defense would be efficiently

consummated if the United States reconceived its geographical authority and simply extended the Monroe Doctrine to Europe. Their aim was to make sure the defense of Europe took place under American priorities rather than an open-ended pact with states still mesmerized by “old-style military alliances.”<sup>24</sup> The Air Force answered it was “axiomatic that the United States should not divert resources from its own requirements for national security.” The question was whether the “progressive revitalization of Western Union military power and the needs for military forces of the United States” was “to be . . . part of our over-all security problem.”<sup>25</sup> But how exactly? Was a commitment to rearm Europe part of *American* strategic concepts that were ever more promiscuously atomic? Or merely political insurance to promote European concepts? The answer depended on which service you asked, but for the most part U.S. concepts moved in a different orbit from Europe’s. There was no unqualified affection for collective security per se, but a recognition that only secure allies would be willing to provide assets the United States could not furnish itself. The unrepentant nationalism of Taft and his allies was counterproductive because it offered no incentives for the Europeans to rebuild.

The State Department thus formulated the conditions by which military aid might meet both the needs of NATO and the approval of Congress. In February 1949, the Foreign Assistance Correlation Committee (FACC) said that its aim was “to help increase the economic and political stability and the military capability of such of those nations as are willing to *make an important contribution to US security*.” Aid helped ensure “their political and military orientation toward the US.” Recipients were determined by their importance to U.S. war plans, their political stability, and, remarkably, “the degree of orientation of each country toward the United States in its own political philosophy.” Political philosophy, however, receded where base rights were concerned, unless ideological differences translated into foot dragging. States “uncooperative” on “base rights” could have their assistance reduced; “and if the lack of cooperation was serious, this would mean no military assistance at all.”<sup>26</sup>

It is hardly surprising the United States invoked these conditions, or hoped to punish states that did not control leftist or neutralist elements. Such coerciveness was usually consistent with the interests of the ruling elites in Europe. What is interesting is the clarity with which American interests were tied to questions of “orientation” and “political philosophy,” rather than power alone. Combating Soviet power might include the need to use power from any source, including, as it would turn out, states that were less than model democracies.<sup>27</sup> But the aim was to create unity out of nationalist diversity; to tie the expansiveness of American

power, called into being by the crisis in European security, to the reconstruction of their identities under U.S. protection. The aid policy worked out by U.S. planners thus endorsed the JCS's definition of reciprocity. It led Defense Secretary Louis Johnson to give Acheson a list of “urgent” base requirements that should be negotiated bilaterally using “as appropriate the principle of *quid pro quo* in all countries where military or economic aid is provided.”<sup>28</sup> The program enabled the JCS to ensure a division of labor was established that reconstituted European national forces without challenging American priorities. Truman officials, in fact, envisioned the program being “based” on just such a division of labor. It would avoid waste, but the tag of “efficiency” concealed an interest in establishing a certain hierarchy: it called on the United States to provide the strategic air offensive, and the continental powers the burden of ground forces, all induced by military aid. NATO's division of strategic functions grew out of this JCS condition.<sup>29</sup>

### **NATO's “Strategic Concept”: The Bomb and the Division of Labor**

After the Washington Treaty was signed on April 4, 1949, the Europeans expected a significant U.S. contribution to their defense. They were disappointed but would have been still more shocked at U.S. war plans. The JCS revised their old plan in light of NATO, but the new one, with the sporting code-name OFFTACKLE, did not represent much change. It was the first plan to benefit from political guidance, which stated U.S. security “requires . . . the holding of a line containing the Western European complex preferably no further to the west than the Rhine.” OFFTACKLE then concluded “the accomplishment of this purpose is infeasible with the forces which will be available” in 1950. The U.S. war effort remained a “strategic air offensive against the vital elements of Soviet war-making capacity,” followed by a counteroffensive within two years.<sup>30</sup> While it was only an emergency plan, it gave every indication that some members of the JCS expected the atomic air campaign to be enough. As pressure from Washington mounted for NATO to construct its own war plan in the fall, the JCS made the uncooperative declaration that the United States would not reveal to any NATO country other than Britain its plans for U.S. forces in Europe. They wanted to avoid being used as a shopping cart. U.S. diplomats could sing the praises of a Rhine defense if they wanted, but the JCS position was that a Rhine strategy “will become gradually more feasible . . . through receipt of



military and economic aid." It only promised to launch a "strategic air offensive with atomic and conventional bombs." The purpose of bifurcating the two projects, they conceded, was to get the allies to accept OFFTACKLE without having its rather grim conclusions "shake them badly."<sup>31</sup>

NATO's Military Committee thus had a hard time developing a "strategic concept" for October. The JCS were the first to oblige, drafting their own prototype in August.<sup>32</sup> It predictably stressed that each NATO country must "contribute in the most effective form, *consistent with its situation, responsibilities and resources*, such aid as can reasonably be expected of it." Moreover, everyone should do things for which "it is best suited. Certain nations, depending on their proximity or remoteness from the possible scene of conflict, and on their capabilities, will emphasize *appropriate* specific missions." Put this way, the division of strategic responsibility was a function of immutable geographic conditions rather than preferences. That the United States might have offered ground forces was precluded by the "facts" of location. This incasing of what were ideational desires in a shell of materiality was vital to making the policy seem, to Americans and Europeans alike, unassailable. It provided the United States with one strategic role: it would "insure, as a matter of priority to the common defense, our ability to deliver the atomic bomb promptly," while the Europeans would provide "the hard core of ground power."<sup>33</sup>

The JCS were aware of the delicate ground they were treading, so their draft of the strategic concept was vague.<sup>34</sup> A real picture of their aims emerged when Bradley told the British later that month that the United States was not willing to commit troops to Europe, nor even disclose a "rate of build-up" after war. It would see if the Rhine held first. Bradley thought that the British, on the other hand, were closer to the front and had an interest in sending troops. The British replied generously if the Americans "were not prepared to put their troops straight into France, they should use the United Kingdom as a base." Bradley "cringed" at trying to stage another Overlord against an enemy with the bomb. So what would he tell the continental allies? If neither the United Kingdom nor the United States was interested in strategy that offered token resistance at the Rhine, NATO offered the continentals little. Bradley suggested if they could convince France to hold the Rhine for as little as three months, the United States would reinforce their position through bridgeheads at Brest or Bordeaux. The British agreed this would be their position too.<sup>35</sup>

On October 19, 1949, the NAT's military executive—the tripartite Standing Group—circulated a draft of the strategic concept, known then

as MC 3. It was identical to the JCS one. Opposition from continental members emerged immediately. Denmark urged the American atomic task be reworded to reflect “other priorities”: the United States should ensure “the ability to carry out strategic bombing *including* the prompt delivery of the atomic bomb.” France argued that while it knew it would provide the “hard core” of ground forces, others—that is, the United States.—must “give aid with the least possible delay.” This was especially important to the smaller powers that were asked to alter their forces, to become, in effect, a subfield of collective defense. This was the genius of integration. In the name of efficiency, national defense establishments could only build forces commensurate with their “role.” Norway and the Netherlands feared that balanced *collective* forces would leave them *nationally* imbalanced, that is, without a navy or an air force. Such a risk could only be taken if NATO provided actual not hypothetical, protection. The Standing Group noted these fears but did not alter the paper presented to the North Atlantic Council (NAC) on November 29.<sup>36</sup>

The division of labor was going to be a political problem. If it had been simply a question of efficiency, there would have been little fuss. But it affected each ally differently depending on the demands it made on their self-image. Of all of allies, for example, Britain believed most in a “special relationship” with the United States, and was the most prepared to endorse leaving the continent to the continentals. Yet the division of labor was also an impediment to Britain’s desire to construct itself as a peripheral atomic air power. The Labour government quietly approached Washington about planning the strategic air offensive “centrally.” The JCS answer, steeped in what one can only assume was unconscious irony, was that “since planning of major offensive operations as contemplated in strategic air warfare are [*sic*] contrary to the spirit of the Treaty, it appears highly undesirable to discuss this phase of planning within the framework of the Treaty.” Atomic warfare only involved “telling the other signatories what would be initiated at the outset of a declaration of war by the US Congress.” Did they really mean to suggest that their war plans were “contrary” to the spirit of NATO? Did planning for a counteroffensive violate collective action? Or was this an excuse to keep atomic plans out of NATO’s hands? If so, the United States in effect rejected multilateralism in principle, preferring to emphasize designated areas of strategic responsibility.

There were deeper problems. Most British and U.S. intelligence assumed that, although the Soviets did not want total war, they likely expected that the West “would not permit areas to be overrun singly but, regarding the conflict as world-wide, would attack the Soviet Union

from wherever possible.” Soviet leaders would therefore “decide to launch full-scale offensives in a number of areas simultaneously.” This meant that because NATO wanted to deter war by communicating its intention to retaliate against a Soviet aggression, if that deterrence failed in a crisis, NATO had to assume war would be total because the Soviets had to assume it also.<sup>37</sup> America’s preparations for deterrence, in other words, eliminated other options, producing the war for which it was preparing.

When the “strategic concept” was approved by the Defense Committee on December 1, 1949 and the NAC on January 6, 1950, Acheson thought it “ingenious” in facilitating agreement without accomplishing anything substantive.<sup>38</sup> But it was institutionally important: it hardened the division of labor espoused by the JCS. Acheson’s zeal was thus not shared by the continentals. France’s Edgar Faure caught something of their disillusionment when he mused that the concept “had probably been inspired by the famous book entitled *On Anglo-Saxon’s Superiority*. The Air Force would be American, the Navy, British while France would provide the cannon-fodder for the infantry, the queen of battles.”<sup>39</sup> Faure’s quip spoke to the way cultural identities saturated not just the way the allies perceived each other’s motives, but how *types* of military power acquired a cultural authority of their own. Infantry was at the bottom of this chain of being. But the technological superiority of atomic air power, coupled with its ability to distance states from the violence of combat, made it an indispensable, modernizing, prize in the symbolism of NATO politics.

### **“The Most Beautiful Dream World”**

By late 1949 NATO planners assembled their first war plan based on the new concept. The key for American negotiators was to push NATO’s planning horizon ahead. The “strategic concept” told NATO’s five regional planning groups to make short, medium, and long-term plans, but U.S. officials discouraged short-term planning since it automatically raised “the question of [the] deployment of U.S. forces.” Instead, NATO was told to concentrate on the medium-term because this gave time for U.S. aid to leaven European efforts. The JCS thought that four years, by July 1954, would provide “*time to initiate and implement a program of mutual military aid*” and “produce a balanced military force.” This target date was set prior to NSC 68’s 1954 “year of maximum danger.” The JCS affirmed NATO’s date had “*no significance other than setting an initial objective for the development of military capabilities.*”<sup>40</sup>

The Medium Term Defense Plan set targets for a “progressive annual increase in military strength.” The JCS made their requirements for NATO in February 1950 but, consistent with the disembodied character of its planning, did so by simply adding together “unilateral service compilations” for each European region. Their tendency to look on Europe as an untapped manpower reserve was misguided, and produced “irreducible” requirements that would never have been allowed if funded by Congress. The JCS could afford to be “optimistic” about a land defense they were not planning for anyway. If inter-service rivalry and Congressional parsimony produced an air force bias at home, no such pressures existed in dictating requirements for others. The JCS thus thought it would be possible to get between 59 and 82 divisions, and 3,800 to 4,500 aircraft six months after a war in 1954. Since the military did not have to present this to Congress, it also did not have to resolve internal disputes about the relationship between air and land power that had divided them on their own plans.<sup>41</sup> Acheson was more blunt:

this was the most beautiful dream world in which a fellow can possibly exist, because you looked at the map of Europe, you looked at what everyone knew was the power of the Soviet Union—175 divisions, 30 deployed in the forward front, and God knows how many else in reserve—and then you looked at forty million French, ninety million Germans, and . . . you just dreamed from then on, without the slightest restraint of any kind whatever except deploying troops on the map.<sup>42</sup>

For the United States, the map of Europe was a space emptied of political and strategic identity, to be remolded and harnessed the same way European governments looked wistfully at American money. The difference was that the United States could control the flow of information about their forces that the Europeans, as supplicants, could not control about their own. The JCS postponed their disagreements about “balanced forces” versus atomic air power because the “strategic concept” provided NATO with both at no real cost to the United States. When, in March, the JCS received the draft of the MTDP, they were untroubled by the lack of coherence that resulted from amalgamating five separate plans. Since the regional groups had made goals “to insure their own defense without pre-assigned limitations as to forces,” NATO admitted the plan “may contain duplications and an excess of total force.” There was also no statement about the impact of the American atomic offensive in Europe, something about which the JCS had not, in any case, reached full agreement.<sup>43</sup>

When the MTDP was approved for the NAC as DC 13, it was publicly known to include the two principles that governed NATO strategy: balanced collective forces and a forward strategy.<sup>44</sup> The MTDP was otherwise an American design, with the forward defense inserted for public measure but rejected by the United States as anything but a distant goal. In spite of this, the U.S. delegation reported to Washington that the NAC's meetings were conducted in a spirit of "optimism tinged with urgency."<sup>45</sup>

The United States was still under some pressure to offer an emergency plan until the MTDP could be reached. U.S. representatives were given OFFTACKLE as their guide "pending the development of increased allied capabilities." They were advised that the British and American governments had an emergency plan of "sufficient flexibility" to be acceptable to them. This "concept of alternatives," as it was known, called for ground forces as far forward as possible "with various alternatives to provide for less favorable circumstances." The plan was thus a repetition of an earlier American concept of "successive withdrawal."<sup>46</sup> Bradley tried to head off a crisis by bravely recommending that the JCS reconsider OFFTACKLE in light of "psychological and political factors." His colleagues flatly said no: OFFTACKLE was sound until the Europeans had finished rebuilding. They made a classic distinction between the veracity of military knowledge, and what they saw as the subjective biases of political life. Politics, unlike strategy, was warped by emotion, values, vested interests, social strain, and ideology. "[P]olitical and psychological factors should not be permitted to over-influence the strategic factors," the military argued, "and thus result in . . . a military plan incapable of achievement; one that would result in piecemeal frittering away of US forces without accomplishing even limited objectives." "Undesirable reactions" could be "minimized" by reminding the Europeans of the scope of U.S. help, as though the overall generosity of the United States might compensate for the lack of real protection. Besides, they reasoned, the United States had global interests, including the western hemisphere. This bias toward hemispheric defense made no sense in light of everything that the JCS had argued was in American interests in Europe. But it surfaced periodically as an argument in support of America's "national" prerogatives. The "globalness" of American interests thus made the MTDP's military division of labor by "proximity to the conflict" favor American peripheralism. French and British global interests, on the other hand, were less compelling because France and Britain were closest to the central front. American negotiators were told by the Pentagon to convince the Europeans that the "immediate initiation and conduct of

a strategic air offensive against the Soviets . . . will materially reduce their capability of sustaining offensive operations in all areas. This will contribute substantially to the defense of Western Europe.”<sup>47</sup> How substantially it would contribute was still, of course, a subject of considerable debate in the Pentagon.

### NSC 68, the Korean War and the MTDP Rearmament

Into this world of calculated ambivalence came two events that shook NATO’s foundations. The first of was the top secret call-to-arms known as NSC 68. The second was the Korean War a few months later that gave NSC 68 life. NATO’s history claims that the Truman administration’s plans for rearmament under NSC 68 were made possible by the Korean War; and that the militarized threat drove the rearmament of NATO to culminate in Lisbon two years later. The history of the MTDP shows, however, that NATO’s rearmament ducks were in line well before NSC 68 or Korea. Neither altered the division of labor in which nuclear weapons played the predominant—if still unofficial—role. Moreover, Korea’s impact on the MTDP’s force goals was not decisive. Consider the numbers: in its January 1950 estimate, the JCS put NATO’s 1954 D-Day goals at 59 divisions, 30 percent *higher* than those that would be approved at Lisbon in 1952. The D + 30 figures (from 63 divisions to  $89\frac{2}{3}$  respectively) did, it is true, represent a dramatic 41 percent increase under Lisbon. But the JCS’s January estimates for D + 6 months were only 8 percent lower than Lisbon’s.<sup>48</sup> What changed between early 1950 and 1952 was not the aggregate strength NATO called for, but the extent to which its vision of the next war altered the time available for mobilization. In January 1950, the Americans wanted a larger standing force under NATO; by 1952, they wanted quicker mobilization for a shorter war.

Why we have misread this has to do with not reconstructing the political dynamics of the MTDP. Having said that, the Korean War provided an enormous spur to the MTDP that it might otherwise have lacked. But it did so because it called into question the credibility of the American commitment to NATO. Soviet capabilities had not changed, so the new doubt was whether the West had underestimated its intentions.<sup>49</sup> Yet, although the United States felt more pressure for expressions of its determination to defend Europe, it still resisted reevaluating its war plans. If Europe were about to fall, why not use the manpower purchased by NSC 68 to reinforce Europe? That is what the United States seemed to do at the end of 1950. But here too we have misread the strategic

rationale: the decision to reinforce Europe with U.S. troops had more to do with facilitating German rearmament than ending American peripheralism. Indeed, German rearmament was vital to that peripheralism.

The link, then, between the MTDP and NSC 68 was largely circumstantial. The MTDP was driven by military austerity. The JCS deliberately inflated NATO's force goals in late 1949 because it could be indexed to the military assistance program, which in turn would preclude a change in American commitments. Thus, while the architect of NSC 68, Paul Nitze, could claim that the Korean War rearmament failed to reach its target, Army Chief of Staff General J. Lawton Collins assured the French only two weeks after the outbreak of the war that the "initial list of forces produced by the Standing Group [in the MTDP] was *greater* than what was needed."<sup>50</sup>

Although it spoke exhaustively on military issues, NSC 68 was not a reevaluation of strategy so much as a highly figurative statement designed to weaken bureaucratic resistance to military spending. Its architects were candid about the importance of style in their arguments. NSC 68 was rich in rhetorical excess, making sure that the nature of the Soviet threat was not understood in banal balance of power terms, but as a struggle between two antitheses, "freedom" and "slavery."<sup>51</sup> The ideological message carried because it rode inside identifiable cultural vehicles: the importance of establishing an American national identity that stood resolutely behind a new world order, a projection of American history onto a global future. "The potential within us of bearing witness to the values by which we live, holds promise for a dynamic manifestation to the rest of the world of the vitality of our system."<sup>52</sup> Acheson knew that this was overblown, though he never doubted it was substantially true. What he was trying to do, he claimed, was "get people to move into action." When Korea came along, "which had nothing to do with this except to prove our thesis, it created the stimulus which made action, and the action was all made on the basis of a thought which I think was a sensible thought."<sup>53</sup>

Acheson wanted to move ideas into concrete actions, a process that could only be done by linking the nation's anxiety with a deep cultural threat to American values. Beyond stimulating action in itself, the aims were indeterminate: on strategic questions, NSC 68 offered inchoate military positions, arguing that a massive build up of forces (conventional and atomic) would stave off a Soviet atomic attack, lessen the risk of piecemeal aggression by giving a credible alternative between capitulation and atomic war, and usher in a more "dynamic" U.S. foreign policy. The growing confidence of the Soviet Union in the wake of its own

atomic test weakened the resolve of the Europeans. NSC 68 believed that power operated mechanically but on a frail collective psychology: emboldening aggression, filling vacuums, and creating not just insecurities but debilitating impotence. Should the *belief* grow that the Soviets could execute an offensive in Europe, “free countries will tend to shift to the defensive, or to follow a dangerous policy of bluff, because the maintenance of a firm initiative in the cold war is closely related to aggregate strength . . . readily available.”<sup>54</sup>

NSC 68 was deliberately vague about its costs, although it suggested in vague Keynesian terms that the Second World War proved a war economy would not hurt the American standard of living.<sup>55</sup> This was what received the most criticism (from the Bureau of the Budget). Who would object to it strategically? It offered so much to so many, particularly the military, albeit over the apoplectic objections of Johnson. Although it guardedly doubted the ultimate effectiveness of the atomic air offensive, these were no more serious misgivings than voiced by the 1949 Harmon Report, which still managed to press for a massive expansion of the atomic arsenal.<sup>56</sup> This, and that all services would benefit, earned its wild approval in the JCS. Yet while it warned of piecemeal aggression and the possibility that atomic weapons may prove less useful in the future, it did not offer any suggestions as to how the West might respond to limited aggression.<sup>57</sup> The absence of contingencies ignored the questions that had divided the services since military unification in 1947. Budgetary expansion would not resolve choices so much as put them off in a new era of super abundance.

A sense of this can be gained by looking at appropriations after the Korean War. Truman requested huge increases for all three services to cope with the war and the postwar balance of power. Bradley told Congress that the United States needed “an even greater flexibility of military power . . . to give us a ready, highly mobile standing force which we can bring to bear at any threatened point in the minimum of time.”<sup>58</sup> This implied a commitment to balanced forces but this was not borne out by the appropriations. Two years of remobilization of all services had doubled their forces except the air force, which was still 43 wings short. It was given a longer horizon during which its forces tripled. Service infighting reemerged when this became known. The air force response was predictable, because it considered itself the only service “essential” to security. Chief of Staff Hoyt Vandenberg stated—at the height of the Korean War—that a “blind adherence” to an “unattainable balance” in U.S. forces was dangerous, that “until we possess unlimited resources and are able to provide adequately for all military tasks, WE MUST



EVALUATE OUR TASKS IN TERMS OF THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO OUR FUNDAMENTAL OBLIGATION, AND BE PREPARED TO ACCOMPLISH THE MOST ESSENTIAL BEFORE ALL OTHERS.”<sup>59</sup> The physical defense of Europe was not a “fundamental obligation” to the United States Air Force (USAF), or to those who preferred air power. Vandenberg, moreover, failed to answer the question: what spending on air power would satisfy “essential” tasks before money could be spent on other contingencies?

Although NSC 68 had been associated with limited war, the defense community did not extrapolate this from the Korean experience. In early July, the NSC concluded that the Soviets would “not be inclined, with the Korean action now in progress, to commit its own armed forces to actions which might be expected to break out in a new world war.” The assumption that they did not want war “may be wrong,” but if it turns out that they did want war, it would *not* be limited: “they will attack simultaneously, within the limits of their capabilities, in Germany and Austria, in the Near, Middle and Far East, and against the United Kingdom and the North American continent, in order to derive a maximum advantage of surprise.”<sup>60</sup> Because of these expectations, U.S. planners clung to a total war concept—a worse case scenario—that kept it spending on atomic air power. JCS deliberations over their own medium-term war plan REAPER, which more accurately reflected U.S. strategy than NSC 68, confirmed this. REAPER posited a war on July 1, 1953, and so was not under the financial restrictions that had inhibited the agreement before. The JCS changed the date to July 1, 1954 to mesh with NSC 68’s year of maximum danger and NATO’s MTDP. Yet agreement still eluded the services. The JCS were so unable to resolve “a number of divergent views” they forwarded an incomplete plan to U.S. representatives in Europe. What they eventually agreed on in November was not optimistic. It hoped NATO’s forces would *eventually* be enough to mount a forward defense, but it offered no real changes to the pessimism of OFFTACKLE.<sup>61</sup>

In Europe, the Korean War came as a blow to NATO’s confidence. Once the fear that it might presage a Soviet thrust into Germany had subsided, the Europeans became gripped by the reverse anxiety that Korea would so distract the United States that its attention to Europe would wane. The State Department’s Charles Bohlen, advised Truman not to forget the Europeans, urging a “rapid build-up of the United States military position,” and an expansion of military aid to help NATO. Truman took this to Congress in a climate of strategic expansiveness.<sup>62</sup> “No one can say,” Acheson wrote in 1951, “what would have come of these projects if the North Koreans had not marched south on the

25th of June, 1950.”<sup>63</sup> This is a matter of speculation, yet since rearmament did not stem from the war itself, it is hard to imagine what would have become of NATO when the MTDP went to the NAC in the fall. It is unlikely, given the importance of Europe to U.S. internationalism, that it would have accepted the failure of rearmament without risking the collapse of its entire postwar policies.

Yet it was the persistence of American strategic peripheralism that was most striking than the boost inaugurated by the war. When the United States came under fresh pressure to offer forces for NATO’s emergency war plan, the JCS insisted that no new forces could be promised until the Europeans had built theirs (i.e., until no new forces were needed). The air force thought the U.S. response in Korea ought to be enough proof of American intentions. The JCS concluded in language that coolly distinguished the psychological (European) from the militarily rigorous (American) position:

While it might be politically and psychologically desirable from the European point of view to assign US forces to each region, this feature is outweighed by the adverse military implications; however, those US forces which become available as mobilization progresses should be considered as available for employment in Western Europe if the situation existing at that time will allow their fruitful employment to maintain a foothold on the continent.

The problem involved in present US relationships in connection with NATO short-term planning does not appear at this time to require a change of US strategy in regard to Europe and NATO planning. Instead, this problem appears to be one of insuring that the NATO representatives of other nations are given a clear understanding of the present major contributions of the US to the defense of Western Europe.<sup>64</sup>

So the entire problem, as the JCS saw it, was one of education. The Europeans failed to appreciate American efforts, either because of poor cognition or ingratitude. Yet the JCS did see something new after Korea. “Some positive action by the United States,” they observed in mid-July, 1950, “is required in the light of the need for vigorous US leadership to stimulate and consolidate the efforts of NATO.” The time had come for a change of method. The “present policy of ‘participation as appropriate’ [in NATO defense planning groups] imposes a restriction upon US membership which curbs both our influence and leadership.” It was

unrealistic not to participate in preparing plans that would involve U.S. forces.<sup>65</sup> This sudden awareness that influence was peddled through leadership, opened the way for the decision later that summer to expand the U.S. troop commitment to Europe, and to institutionalize NATO's military around a permanent general staff. It also underscored the nature of the commitment. There was no concurrent change in U.S. strategic thought. The object was to increase American authority in NATO so as to control the direction of European strategic planning.

This decision came as the war broke the resistance in Europe to the economic demands of the MTDP.<sup>66</sup> What this meant for strategy was unclear. Samuel Huntington observed years ago that the expansion of conventional forces during a limited war "did not imply a decision to maintain indefinitely in peacetime similar forces to deter similar wars in the future." There was no agreement within the U.S. military that Korea was "the kind of war for which it existed to fight." The paradox was captured by General Maxwell Taylor, who claimed that the "ultimate effect of the Korean experience, oddly enough, was not to weaken faith in atomic air power but rather to strengthen it."<sup>67</sup> For some, Korea was an opportunity to pursue existing policies rather than revise them. But this strategic retrenchment came at a time when Korea called into question America's commitment to defend Europe.

Of all people, Dean Acheson most understood the psychological dimensions of NATO. In May 1950, Lewis Douglas cabled him with the idea that U.S. command of NATO might be the only way to create the "balanced collective forces" the MTDP called for. The suggestion had come from Montgomery, who spent the spring of 1950 grumbling about the incompetence of the French. He was engaged in an intense feud with General Jean de Lattre, and so urged the Americans to take command of European forces and tell the French that unless they worked out their "defects," no aid would be coming. He knew that only the Americans had the authority to coerce this and hoped that it would be used to secure Britain's privileged position next to the United States. It was no small irony that General André Beaufre argued for U.S. intervention to compel the British to mend *their* defects, namely their congenital reluctance to place troops in Europe.<sup>68</sup> Douglas convinced Montgomery that "the use of persuasion was better than the use of a shillelagh," then relayed the idea to Acheson of a central command, led by an American, from which Washington could direct the reconstruction of Europe's defenses. Part of the problem, he pointed out, was that the continentals treated strategy in "purely nationalistic compartments," which produced national "shopping lists" rather than an integrated plan.<sup>69</sup>

While the plan was not acted on before Korea, the administration faced a problem with NATO in general. At a cabinet meeting in July, Acheson lamented that Korea had called into question NATO's ability to match word with deeds. “People are questioning whether [the] NAT really means anything, since it only means what we are able to do.” His answer emerged on July 22, when he announced that Washington would undertake a significant increase in its military effort, and expect “that other free nations will undoubtedly want to increase their defenses” too. The allies were told that Congress “will scrutinize most carefully” all requests for funds, and will “inquire as to [the] extraordinary action taken by countries for which aid is intended.” The expectation was obvious. As Nitze recalled:

our initial telegram . . . merely told them that we were going forward with this large domestic request; if they really did want to increase the European defense effort concurrently, we would have to know within a couple of weeks time what the order of magnitude was, so that we could hook the two bills in concurrently; and, as I remember it, they didn't react very rapidly, and then, finally, we sent them a stronger telegram, in which we said “we do propose to go forward with the four billion dollar request, and how about coming up with the justification therefor.”<sup>70</sup>

This broke an impasse that had emerged when the French complained that requests for force commitments were impossible without knowing Washington's willingness to pay. “It is the old question of what came first, the hen or the egg,” lamented General Collins. The Europeans would not make commitments without U.S. largesse, and the administration would not go to Congress without commitments. After the war, both Congress and the JCS appeared to accept a wider role for the United States in leading the alliance. On August 10, legislative leaders even warned Truman that “a bold new program involving herculean efforts to achieve some form of closer political ties among free nations” would make “foreign aid programs easier to sell” in Congress.<sup>71</sup> There was never much doubt that the allies would come out in support. Bevin had once said that proposals for rearmament “seemed to rest on the totally false assumption that we could undertake enormous unknown and unlimited liabilities,” but his resistance crumbled after Korea. He told Cabinet that Britain must make NATO “the kernel” of its foreign policy precisely because the Americans had made it theirs. Britain could not resist the coercive logic of its economic and strategic dependence; it would have to

reorient itself toward Europe in the form of a transatlantic alliance led by the United States. On August 1, the Chancellor, Sir Stafford Cripps, presented a rearmament plan for 1954 costing £3.6 billion.<sup>72</sup>

At the end of July, the United States called on the NAC to solicit commitments from its members. It was clear that these were symbolic gestures designed not to unsettle the passage of aid through Congress. No attempt was made to determine how far the allies would carry their efforts. No resolution was offered on who would pay. U.S. officials knew that without a "clear and comprehensive picture" of the scope of the MTDP, the NAC could only think "in general terms." They did suggest that initial pledges appeared to fall short and that it was safe to assume that a "deficiency of large order will remain."<sup>73</sup>

This represented something of a change of heart in the U.S. military. In May 1950, the JCS fretted that the MTDP might take on a life of its own. Aware that it was incoherent and old-fashioned in how it tabulated force levels, the JCS feared that the plan might acquire "great stature" if its goals were held up as irreducible.<sup>74</sup> But with greater demands on U.S. forces in Korea, the military decided that it should do all it could to make sure the MTDP was met. Sensing that movement by the Europeans needed U.S. leadership, the JCS finally allowed their mobilization figures to be seen in NATO. This did not mean that increases in U.S. forces would be sent to Europe, but it was "reasonable to assume that under certain critical conditions a large percentage of those increased forces available for global deployment would be assigned directly to the defense of the NAT area."<sup>75</sup> There was something odd about this since the JCS were adamant that these figures *not* undermine the willingness of the allies to fulfill the MTDP. It was as though dangling mobilization numbers before the allies would be taken to mean something unspecified. Lest the allies think the United States might close the gap for them, the JCS urged the NAC to consider "broadening the basis for support of this effort" by looking to include Sweden, Spain, or West Germany in NATO.<sup>76</sup>

Since Sweden was neutral and Spain fascist, this left the long forestalled question of West Germany. The relationship between German rearmament and NATO strategy is a complex one. Prior to the Korean War, the military went on private record endorsing German rearmament, urging U.S. diplomats to take this to the NAC in May 1950 on the grounds that NATO was infeasible without German forces.<sup>77</sup> The JCS secured the link between Germany and the MTDP just after the outbreak of the Korean War. The service secretaries told Johnson they wanted German rearmament because either "the immediate strengthening of defense forces is of overriding importance or the United States is

guilty of mass hysteria.” For this, the United States might have to pay a price: “The presence of American soldiers and American planes in force is probably a pre-requisite to German rearmament to the extent to which Germany is capable of contributing.” The JCS believed four U.S. divisions “would contribute more to the European will to resist than a great portion of the additional military assistance we now envisage.”<sup>78</sup> But this was an unintelligible proposition without grasping the persistence of the desire to evade a continental commitment. Washington promised in the autumn of 1950 to become a full partner in European defense *only* if the allies acquiesced to German rearmament, a project the JCS openly saw as the main means of giving U.S. troops an exit strategy from Europe.<sup>79</sup>

There was no suggestion that the new troops were themselves *strategically* important. The strongest support came from the army and navy; the air force dissented.<sup>80</sup> In any case, the rationale was instrumental, a stimulus to NATO unity so that more could be done by the Europeans and less, in the end, by the United States. The troops decision resided in an expedient desire to pry open German rearmament not a conversion to a conventional strategy. A modest U.S. contribution to NATO would, it was argued, “increase our ability to persuade, if not do more than persuade, the European countries, including Britain and France, to correct some of the fundamental defects in their present system,” meaning their tendency to prefer economic over military reconstruction.<sup>81</sup>

Having resisted being drawn into NATO’s decision-making, the JCS embraced the opportunity to construct a new strategic identity for Europe. They pressed to have German rearmament, American leadership in a NATO, and commitments to the fulfillment of the MTDP, all combined into a single bundle. Acheson thought the military’s “one package” proposal was “murderous,” but saw it as the “necessary price for Pentagon acceptance of unified command.”<sup>82</sup> The JCS recommended Dwight Eisenhower as Supreme Commander for the proposed military structure, a choice that conveyed Washington’s commitment to Europe. The German rearmament bombshell induced the French to counter with their “Pleven Plan,” a way of using German resources without re-creating the German army. Most of NATO saw this as a stall tactic—which it was—but for the Americans it contained more insidious implications: it threatened to “turn over to a purely European (probably continental) group the responsibility without US participation for the vital question of [the] German military contribution,” in which it might “be difficult for us to intervene successfully.”<sup>83</sup> The French plan for a European Defense Community (EDC) was troubling not because it was militarily suspect—meaning that it would not make good use of German

manpower—but because it weakened the ability of the United States to sustain rearmament. Truman saw NATO's supranational institutions as a way of interfering in the internal processes of member states, reorienting them toward American conceptions of what was in the West's interest. Acheson spelled out precisely what this meant:

What you had to gain was the entire success of NATO and the security of Europe, and what you had to lose was exactly that, if you didn't do this sort of thing. . . . therefore in order to get forward we had to take a chance, which seemed to me not very great, of creating the command, strengthening our forces, and then using the whole NATO business as an instrument of foreign policy in and of itself to get the French to do internal French things. That I have always thought was one aspect of NATO which was quite overlooked and a very powerful one, because in connection with NATO meetings and discussions, you could quite properly intervene very seriously in French internal affairs, because they weren't French internal affairs, they were NATO internal affairs. And the French budget and the French attitude toward Germany and everything else became a matter of common concern.<sup>84</sup>

The ability to reorient NATO nations was hardly an “overlooked” aspect of the U.S. policy, as Acheson claimed: it was the reasoning behind its willingness to integrate its forces into NATO's institutions. The United States wanted to prevent Europe from becoming a dependency, but it was more than willing to use that dependence to induce correct thinking. One should not suggest that this influence was exercised with impunity; the Europeans wanted America, and saw it as a benign if not vital presence. But the use of NATO institutions to exercise that power in ways that served U.S. definitions of strategy was unmistakable, certainly palpable to the allies, and determining in how it limited the range of strategic options available to NATO later. On the German question, U.S. officials tried to accommodate French anxieties, while never relinquishing German integration as their goal. Nitze captured the rationale in explaining Acheson's eventual conversion to the EDC: “the EDC . . . was merely a façade under which you put together the Continental forces into something that really became part of the NATO forces, and this was all welded together. But it was a way of getting over the political hurdles of France so that you could bring in Germany.”<sup>85</sup> That the French saw the EDC in the opposite terms was not yet a problem if the process could be controlled from within.

### Raising the Sights of Congress

Eisenhower was the MTDP's cheerleader in 1951. But the NAC still had to settle some unresolved force goals issues. The JCS wanted NATO to produce 89 divisions by 1954, 99 if German troops were included. These figures formed the Standing Group's proposed revision of the MTDP (submitted as "DC 28") to the NAC at its Brussels meeting in December.<sup>86</sup> These numbers were consistent with those of the JCS in February 1950, but with one important difference. Since REAPER had the same time frame as the MTDP, it assumed that targets called for in DC 28 would be met. Thus, it finally rejected OFFTACKLE's pessimism about a "forward strategy" and argued that a Rhine-Alps line *could* be held by July 1954.<sup>87</sup> Subsequent discussions on the problem of burden-sharing suggested that the JCS were still overly preoccupied with their freedom of action, defining NATO reconstruction in terms of it. During the Truman-Attlee talks in early December, when the issue of an "equitable" burden of rearmament came up, the JCS retorted that a fixed formula could not take grasp the "disparity of commitments" of members, and the "indirect beneficial effects to NATO of the support of these commitments." This qualification privileged NATO's imperial powers, whose global interests competed with NATO's. It granted U.S. resources exemption from NATO scrutiny. Similarly, Washington hotly denied the British claim that it had "improper" control over funds for military aid. But in fact the State Department privately complained that there ought to be a central institution to insure that "the money is wisely spent."<sup>88</sup> And this institution should be controlled from Washington.

How this power would be used was made clearer during Attlee's visit. He went with an entourage of experts on the Far East to discuss Truman's press remarks about using the bomb in Korea.<sup>89</sup> Acheson took the opportunity to warn the British that unless the United States was "convinced that the British are doing all possible in the direction of their own defense effort, the British have not accomplished much here." On the other hand, it would go a long way in undercutting domestic resistance to foreign aid if Britain could make the right noises. The British "understood."<sup>90</sup> Attlee asked his Cabinet to authorize another increase in military spending. He told his colleagues, wrongly, that he persuaded the Americans "to accept Anglo-American partnership as the mainspring of Atlantic defense. Much of the advantage we had gained would be lost if we were now to be treated as merely one of the European countries which were being urged by America to make a larger contribution to the common defense effort. We should align ourselves with the Americans in



urging others to do more." Attlee was supported by the COS, who had also advanced the target date for the completion of their own military plan from March 1954 to December 1952.<sup>91</sup>

For two days, the discussion was dominated by the German question and not by the NATO war plans per se. The NAC formally asked Truman to appoint Eisenhower as Supreme Allied Commander in Europe (SACEUR) whereupon Acheson launched into an appeal to solemnize the event with proof of everyone's willingness to build the MTDP. One by one, the ministers pledged their resources under Eisenhower's command.<sup>92</sup> The NAC approved it as part of a basket of agreements between the United States and the Europeans of which German remilitarization and U.S. leadership were parts of a whole. For the Europeans, who committed to a significant rearmament plan, there was less trepidation than one might have expected. The continued goodwill of the United States, including its difficult Congress, depended on enthusiasm for a land-defense program. The Canadian Minister of Defense, Brooke Claxton, understood this when he noted that the Europeans "were expecting to get financial aid from the United States. For such countries, disregarding financial limitations was not unrealistic. There was, moreover, an incentive to put figures at a high level in order to get as much aid as possible." The United States, Claxton believed, encouraged this practice so as "to raise the sights of Congress when questions of assistance were under consideration."<sup>93</sup>

## CHAPTER FOUR

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### *Mind the Gap*

#### *The Paper Divisions and Cardboard Wings of the Lisbon Force Goals*

In the unseemly maneuvering over money at the December 1950 Brussels meeting, the strategic content of the MTDP, such as it was, faded from view altogether. Its real significance in any case lay in its installation of a division of labor in which American professions of ardor for NATO's ground forces concealed that its strategic thinking was still atomic and unilateral. The MTDP, NSC 68, and the Korean War, pointing as they all did toward more reliance on conventional forces, concealed this paradox. The Europeans meanwhile had no incentives to call the bluff because to do so would have unraveled a relationship they desperately needed. Not until the end of the Korean War, was it obvious that the MTDP was a shell.

In the short term, of course, the Europeans had seemingly coerced four more divisions out of the Americans. But the decision to send U.S. troops to the Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers in Europe (SHAPE) was not the breach of American strategic tradition its critics thought. It facilitated—or was intended to—the freedom to pursue an atomic strategy because it gave American planners influence over European defense production. Creating a central institution dominated by American officers enabled Washington to bring collective pressure to bear on everything from the allocation of national economic resources to the types of forces countries ought to produce. SHAPE became the means by which European strategic identities were reworked in directions that suited U.S. conceptions of warfare. SHAPE was the institutional locus of a new collective identity. Its meetings and press conferences emblemized

cooperation, proving in practical and symbolic terms that *national* military practices were atavistic. In SHAPE, European militaries had access to American power and prestige; outside, they were deprived of influence, status, and knowledge. In SHAPE, the United States could cultivate the irreducible terms of rearmament.

### The American “Great Debate”

None of this was obvious to either the allies or Truman’s opponents at home. On the contrary, the troops decision triggered an outpouring of hostility toward internationalism. It was attacked as a betrayal of American sovereignty, a sell-out to allies who failed to assume the moral responsibility of their own defense. That U.S. officials saw their decision as a means of facilitating the German rearmament they needed to keep the United States from bogging down in Europe—of acquiescing to the anxieties of the French in other words—could not have been openly discussed in Congress. Truman officials, in other words, were caught between the demands of nationalism and internationalism, between reconciling a suspicious Congress with nervous allies. The compromises involved in the approval of the MTDP had to be downplayed since Truman’s critics had been arguing for German inclusion as a way of avoiding sending more troops to Europe. Eisenhower, for one, returned from a quick tour of NATO capitals in January, filled with sympathy for the allies. He even thought the United States might send *ten* U.S. divisions, but he was also aware of the risks of overcommitment. “We need to help encourage Europe . . . but we should not *over-emphasize* the favorable consequences of assuming the responsibility for command. It is always possible that this act *might* create even a greater European tendency to sit back and wait, in a renewed confidence that the United States has assumed an inescapable and publicly stated responsibility.”<sup>1</sup>

Widespread opposition to the troops’ decision did not surface until after the November midterms.<sup>2</sup> The election shifted power against the Democrats and the successes of some conservatives, namely Richard Nixon, John Butler, and Everett Dirksen, vindicated their attack on bipartisanship. The loss of Arthur Vandenberg to illness also gave Taft a chance to take over the Republican Party leadership.<sup>3</sup> And, the Chinese intervention in Korea threw Truman’s entire policy on its heels. This volatile mix provided the basis for the 1951 “Great Debate,” consuming the administration until late spring. While it failed to divert America’s Europe policy in the short run, as a counter-cultural assault on the

worldview of liberal internationalism its effects were more enduring. It provided gravamen to the attacks on "containment" that culminated in the 1952 Republican victory.

When Congress convened on January 5, Taft opened the session by reminding Acheson of his 1949 denial that the United States would send troops to NATO. Acheson could only reply that circumstances had changed.<sup>4</sup> Unimpressed, Taft insisted that U.S. aid should be contingent on demonstrations of allied capacity to "create a sure dam against the red flood."<sup>5</sup> This had been the premise of U.S. policy from the outset; the administration always linked its aid to the MTDP, and the JCS had done everything to resist pressure to commit U.S. troops to a continental strategy. What was different was the threshold at which this resistance could be maintained without calling into question America's policy altogether.

Truman's critics never denied the psychological value of sending troops to NATO during the Korean War. What riled them was their assignment to an integrated command that might be permanent. While Democrats portrayed Taft and McCarthy as strategic knuckle-draggers, the views Taft expressed ran throughout the U.S. defense community. When he said the United States should rely on its military assets—sea and atomic air power—as the "greatest deterrent to war" which alone "can furnish effective assistance to all those nations which desire to maintain their freedom on the continent,"<sup>6</sup> he expressed the basic desires of postwar U.S. strategic doctrine. What was different was that his nod to the allies was more conditional. He proposed cooperation with the United Kingdom in Asia, for instance, but on deeply self-interested terms. "I believe we should try to work with Britain in a military alliance in the East, but not one in which they possess any final veto against our policies."<sup>7</sup> Taft's thinking shared something with the military, but his failure to understand what an alliance entailed was indicative of an undisciplined nationalism.

The Truman administration could not afford to find common ground with Taft. For NATO to work, unilateralism of this sort had to be expunged from American political rhetoric. This produced a measure of duplicity. Yet, it also eroded credibility with Congress, forcing Truman officials to rely on the authority of their military men.<sup>8</sup> The Council on Foreign Relations observed: "the civil authorities seemed to have no clear-cut ideas and . . . their standing with Congress was not sufficient to dispel confusion and wrong headedness. [The military] gave the leadership that was lacking."<sup>9</sup> The administration thus found itself defending the troops decision on strategic grounds, raising the issue of whether a continental commitment was militarily feasible. This, of course, had not

been the point. The JCS never wanted to endorse a continental commitment but nor could they fail to champion a land defense of Europe. The allies watched the debate closely: if the administration recommended a conventional strategy, it raised pressure to deepen integration with NATO that would, in turn, arouse the resistance of American conservatives. Eisenhower tried to find middle ground, arguing that the U.S. contribution to NATO was neither permanent nor fleeting. "We are trying to generate a morale." Once the threat subsided, or NATO rebuilt its defenses, the United States might be able "to withdraw from Europe," even if the "wall" might have to remain until "signs of disintegration within the Soviet dictatorship."<sup>10</sup>

The administration was not helped by its refusal to disclose the MTDP's targets. Eisenhower told the cabinet that 50 to 60 divisions would be "adequate if Russia should want to start any trouble." In Congress, he dropped that to 40. In any case, government witnesses downplayed the idea that NATO was aiming for some "arithmetical ratio" to discourage speculation that four divisions were either the start of a bigger commitment or a drop-in-the-bucket to be swept aside in the early hours of a war. Nor did they wish to tie their hands with Congress if it weakened their bargaining position in NATO.<sup>11</sup> The open-endedness of the commitment was part of the incentive program for Europe.

The administration implied that the allies would fill the gap in the end. So the willingness of the Europeans to do this became the focus of much of the Great Debate.<sup>12</sup> This, in turn, looked at European moral tendencies. Here conservatives suspected that the U.S. taxpayer was being suckered. One claim was that Acheson had signed a series of secret deals with the "Red" British to deliberately avoid winning the Korean War in order to keep U.S. soldiers defending Britain indefinitely. The British "habit" of appeasement prevented it from undertaking a "whole-hearted pro-American policy," even though it was "indicated by British self-interest."<sup>13</sup> Even moderate voices claimed that America's burden was due to "the unwillingness of other nations" to carry the fight. Europe's contributions, wrote General Bonner Fellers, were "trivial."<sup>14</sup> The *Chicago Tribune* insisted that the United States was defending Europe while the allies diverted "their own forces to wars of colonial subjection." European imperialism then forced these parts of the world to turn to communism. Truman's troops decision, therefore, *encouraged* the spread of communism. All pointed in one nauseating direction: a treacherous alliance between global communism, European imperialism, and "internationalist doctrines" in the United States.<sup>15</sup> Internationalism will not heal Europe's chronic divisions, McCarthy wrote. Far better to rely on

America's "overwhelming air force," because "Big air and navy are our own primary defense, which is something to be thought of."<sup>16</sup> A constituent of Iowa Senator Bourke Hickenlooper put it in elemental terms: "of first importance is planes; swarms of them, and military equipment in huge quantities. I think we will walk right into Russia's trap by sending a tremendous army to Europe."<sup>17</sup>

The air power enthusiasms of conservatives were a well-known feature of the Great Debate. Yet how do we account for the affinity between ideology and air power? The answer lies in how conservatives linked Fair Deal liberalism, the Korean War and a host of other foreign policy disasters from Yalta, China, the UN, and the Soviet atomic bomb. What was lost in each case was the purity of older ideals. The nationalists wanted a "re-traditionalization" of America around religious values, individualism, and political independence from foreigners. Hoover captured this in a letter to William Knowland: the "secret Yalta agreement of the New Deal planted the Communist hob-nail boot in China." All of our foreign woes, he went on, were due to a loss of faith and values: "Might I suggest that we need some old and tested codes of ethics applied anew to public life. There are the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, and the rules of the game which we learned at our Mother's knee."<sup>18</sup> Blanche Ballagh thought MacArthur's stand in Korea was rooted in American character: "Our Republic, which stands for human dignity and for social, economical, political and spiritual freedom, was founded and is destined to lead the world toward this achievement. Our history and progress points logically to this conclusion. . . . The inclusive formation and pattern of this nation . . . was not by idle chance, but designed by Superior Intelligence and Wisdom." It was no accident that America's interests were being threatened by "the shoals of England's interference."<sup>19</sup>

The connections between ideology, culture, and strategy were often imprecise. Yet there were patterns of symbolic usage that suggest ideology enjoyed an elective affinity with some strategic positions. Conservatives differed from liberals in their preference for "American" over multilateral action, in their belief that there *was* an "American way of war" at all. American power could be wisely projected around the world if it were anchored in America's moral habits, and its privileged military possession, the bomb. This was not a question of expense, although the costs of armies did link Truman's strategy to his fiscal irresponsibility: atomic weapons offered moral separation from a corrupt world. Bluford Balter wrote an angry letter to George Marshall in May, endorsing MacArthur. "It is my opinion that if we drop atomic bombs on Manchuria,

Stalingrad, and Moscow . . . the war will be at an end JUST LIKE WHEN WE BOMBED Hiroshima and Nagasaki.” This was more than wishful thinking:

WHY DID THE HEAVENLY FATHER, CREATOR WHO HAS CREATED EVERYTHING THAT HAS BEEN CREATED AND EVERYTHING THAT WILL BE CREATED, GIVE US THE ATOMIC BOMB, THE INTELLIGENCE, THE MONEY, AND MACHINERY TO MAKE IT? The only thought I have is to use it judiciously to destroy COMMUNISM.

I pray our God-given beautiful nation of intelligent men will not go down in history as being COLLOSAL APPEASERS, PRODIGAL SONS and the SERVANT OF THE BIBLE who buried his TALENTS OF GOLD and never used them. If we do not use the atomic bomb to destroy the Communists, when history is written in the future the TALENTS OF GOLD will be comparable to the atomic bombs, the PRODIGAL SONS comparable to our nation, and COLLOSAL APPEASERS comparable to our nation.<sup>20</sup>

Balter’s Biblical entreaty was not unusual. Although it expressed an untutored joining of faith and patriotism, its insistence on a link between American history, its providential virtues, and its willingness to use atomic technology to deal with enemies, could be found in expert quarters. General Fellers put it in a way that anticipated John Foster Dulles a year later:

Rather than rely principally on ground armies and manpower, we must turn our genius to produce superior weapons. *Air power best reflects this American and allied genius.* A superior air force would enable us to strike in Eurasia from bases outside the mainland which we know we can hold. Air power, thus, is the war deterrent in which we must place our principal reliance. But it is also more. It is a mobile force which can hold the initiative. No inferior ground army can do that. And our ground armies must be inferior—and tied to one sector.<sup>21</sup>

Truman ultimately “won” this argument (the troops stayed), but the debate sharpened the edges of U.S. foreign policy. The malevolent rhetoric of the 1950s was built on an antagonism over the soul of America. At the Republican convention in 1952, Hoover told the party it was not meeting to nominate a candidate “but to save America.”<sup>22</sup> This temper had been building for some time (it was the centerpiece of McCarthyism)

but the NATO debate gave a strategic dimension to what had mostly been an argument about loyalty. The Great Debate was severe enough to indicate that U.S. support for NATO's plans would almost certainly be contingent on evidence of European willingness to make sacrifices as great or greater than those of Americans. This mathematics of hardship was part of the language separating American nationalists from liberal internationalists. As long as U.S. troops remained in Europe, it would be suicidal to accept any attenuation of the MTDP.

The irony of the Great Debate was that the only *strategic* argument for the troops decision came from Acheson. His Congressional testimony is frequently used to explain rearmament. He argued:

One reason we cannot continue to rely on retaliatory air power as a sufficient deterrent is the effect of time. We have a substantial lead in air power and in atomic weapons. At the present moment this may be the most powerful deterrent against aggression. But with the passage of time, even though we continue our advances in this field, the value of that lead diminishes. In other words, the best use we can make of our present advantage in retaliatory air power is to move ahead under this protective shield to build the balanced collective forces in Western Europe that will continue to deter aggression after our atomic advantage has been diminished.<sup>23</sup>

Pressed to elaborate on the future decline in American atomic power, Acheson refused. As Robert Osgood asked, "If more ground forces were needed to compensate for the declining deterrent power of the Strategic Air Command, what kind of contingencies would they be designed to deter?"<sup>24</sup> Acheson claimed that they were needed to reinforce the bomb's existing deterrent by reducing the chance of a Soviet "rabbit punch"—a quick grab of Europe before air power could work. But since NATO called for an atomic strike as an *immediate* response to Soviet aggression, why did the size of NATO's forces reduce the likely success of this retaliation?<sup>25</sup> It hinged on assumptions about Soviet motives, which were held to be tenaciously, almost mechanically, opportunistic. The West's weakness alone gave the Soviets incentives. But Acheson never said how many divisions were needed to deter a "rabbit punch" because he was more concerned with gestures than strategy. The problem, as one of his colleagues put it privately, was that "in order to make the gesture effective, you had to appear to make a firm move, and in the process you were drawn toward a more expensive gesture than was justified." Harriman joked privately that administration witnesses simply



“fuzzed up the testimony to Congress; in any event, we could just as well have fuzzed it up in relation to a well worked out plan as we did to the plans that we put forward, which were utterly unrealistic.”<sup>26</sup>

Acheson may have based his testimony on a JCS memo written a few days before. The JCS saw a State Department study on the “severe psychological depression” gripping France that had recommended the United States reassure the French somehow. Sensing an attempt to delay German rearmament, the JCS insisted that the “objective of the United States is to accelerate the rearmament of the Western World, including Germany, so that the Western World will be in a position to meet aggression by armed force *at the time when US atomic superiority becomes insufficient to deter the USSR.*” The thread running through the memo was to *use* this pessimistic view of U.S. atomic capability to spur West Germany’s inclusion in the MTDP: “Delay in German rearmament may result in forces in being inadequate for the successful defense of Western Europe at a time when United States atomic superiority is insufficient to deter World War III.”<sup>27</sup> Yet there was little other evidence of the military’s declining faith in atomic deterrence. The JCS argued elsewhere that in terms of U.S. atomic production time was “on our side.”<sup>28</sup> Without a consensus that decline was inevitable, there was no corresponding support in the JCS for a comprehensive “balanced” strategy. As Samuel Wells, Jr. noted:

It has become part of the mythology of the Korean War that the purpose of the rearmament drive begun in the summer of 1950 was to lessen American dependence on nuclear weapons. Paul Nitze, for example, has argued in the winter of 1950 he and the other members of the State-Defence Policy Review Group who drafted NSC 68 . . . had identified the dangers implicit in complete reliance on the threat of atomic retaliation against the Soviet homeland to deter aggression. That much is true. But the corollary to Nitze’s argument—that the buildup of American military power undertaken during the Korean War to implement the directives outlined in NSC 68 emphasized conventional forces over nuclear weapons—is highly misleading. The Truman administration did build up conventional forces. But, just as important, it poured money at a furious rate into the improvement of American strategic nuclear forces and into the program for the creation of tactical nuclear weapons.<sup>29</sup>

Acheson could hardly have said to Congress that the United States put its whole faith in atomic weapons, as Taft suggested it should, while telling NATO to sacrifice its recovery to rearmament, so he simply fudged. And

he offered other purposes. He drew a lazy parallel between Korea and Europe, even though there were no real parallels. Then he argued weakness might “paralyze the will to resist,” as had happened in Czechoslovakia. This was central to NSC 68’s preoccupation with the psychological effects of power, but the size of the force was still not related to the task. How many divisions would furnish the “will” to resist? Nitze conceded it did not matter: you make the effort and worry about when to stop later. There was no objective relationship between military power and security, only contingent estimates, calibrated by what sense the United States could make of Europe’s brittle state of mind. Even then psychological security was not related to the decline of U.S. atomic superiority, since the Czech coup occurred when the United States had a monopoly.

By April, the Great Debate faded into a nonbinding resolution restricting the commitment to four divisions unless authorized by Congress.<sup>30</sup> Acheson gloated the debate was “more critical than serious,” but opponents had drawn blood.<sup>31</sup> They defined the boundaries of America’s NATO policy, sensitizing the government to opposition to its open-ended commitment to Europe. It had not been the administration’s intention to sanction such a commitment, but it was vital to bargaining. Using integration to foster European rearmament thus came with a domestic price. Staking its credibility on militarization, the administration tied itself to a plan of unknown strategic coherence.

The fractures in U.S. culture became more visible as the war strained the home economy. The months after the Great Debate saw a resurgence of economic nationalism. Truman found it difficult to give aid to NATO while imposing wage and price controls and raising taxes at home. In January, he turned a corner and announced that aid would “now be used to accelerate rearmament rather than raise living standards.” He moved the ECA under the new International Security Affairs Committee (ISAC) in which former Marshall Plan officers sat with representatives from Defense and State to make foreign aid.<sup>32</sup> The prospect of a more conditional flow of largesse caused European enthusiasm to falter further.<sup>33</sup> Yet the failure to match U.S. efforts weakened chances of extracting money from Congress. The answer was to continue exaggerating commitments. This drove the Lisbon program.

### Minding the Gap

Were NATO’s goals wildly exaggerated? Some U.S. insiders suspected estimates of Soviet power were “vastly over-rated.”<sup>34</sup> At face value, the

numbers were imposing: 175 divisions overall, 33 in Soviet-occupied Europe, and 51 along the western border.<sup>35</sup> That said, in the Great Debate, both Taft and *New York Times* journalist Drew Middleton noted that Soviet divisions were much smaller than American ones: 25 NATO divisions “represent about forty-five Soviet-size divisions.”<sup>36</sup> The JCS officially paid no mind to these differentials. If true, NATO needed 97 U.S.-sized divisions to match Soviet *global* forces. Since the enemy would only mobilize divisions near Europe if it wanted to attack before mobilization, 84 divisions would be available, or 47 U.S.-sized ones. And how much warning NATO could expect without prior signs of mobilization? Some thought the Soviets could muster only 24 divisions in an unpremeditated attack. In a deliberate attack, with a warning time of between 7 and 30 days, they could produce 60 divisions at best, or about 33 American divisions.<sup>37</sup>

These were still formidable numbers. But every capability assessment after 1950 was prefaced by the rhetoric of NSC 68 and its description of Soviet malignancy. All assumed the leadership wanted “world domination” and was restrained only by force.<sup>38</sup> The habit of assuming that Soviet intentions were not self-limiting meant that the United States could self-servingly equate peace with its chosen doctrine. The Air Force Director of Intelligence put it this way: “the primary reason why the Kremlin has not resorted to military action against the United States to date is the fact that the Kremlin has believed, and still continues to believe, it is operating from an inferior power position.”<sup>39</sup> The dialectic nature of the security dilemma was lost. This suggests deterrence rests on *evaluative* descriptions of the states in conflict. States have an interest in this absolution of responsibility, since it affirms their legitimacy, and indeed links their identity with such legitimacy.<sup>40</sup> If there is peace, it is this prior assumption that fills in the motivational blanks of the adversary, “proving” without preparedness there would have been war.<sup>41</sup> Peace reinforces the idea that the enemy’s malevolence was tamed by policies that can, by their nature, produce no evidence of their *effect* unless such malevolence is assumed in the first place.

This does not mean that in 1951 NATO forces were “adequate.” But the numerical gap was not as vast as NATO’s leaders lamented. U.S. estimates in 1950 put NATO’s numbers—those committed to Europe—at 28 divisions.<sup>42</sup> Not all these were *in* Europe because the big allies had other commitments. On the continent, NATO had only 15 divisions by mid-1951, a modest percentage of its overall strength.<sup>43</sup> More U.S. and U.K. troops would come *only* after the central front held. This alone prejudiced any attempt to count NATO’s forces by denying planners access

to forces put elsewhere. British and U.S. officials pointed to NATO's scant forces as proof that more effort was required, rather than diverting resources from other interests. This made sense: if the United States viewed communism as a global threat, it had to reckon with 219 Chinese divisions. But they all made a *choice* and their choices were defined by their identities as "Great Powers" whose status determined their allocation of resources. As it turns out, the global forces of NATO in 1950 totaled 4 million, not "wholly inadequate" as NATO leaders claimed.<sup>44</sup> Yet, as late as March 1951, the JCS believed that the central front would collapse in a Soviet assault, so there was no point in sending more U.S. soldiers "since there would be no area to which they could be deployed." If NATO failed to rebuild, there would be no point; if they did rebuild, there would be no need. In either case, the United States would not tie itself down. This logic was put in terms of the indivisibility of the global threat, not the arc of U.S. expansion across the world.<sup>45</sup>

This globalism was sewn into the criteria used to determine who would contribute what to the MTDP: "financial-economic, defense productivity, geographical, mobilization potential, extra-NATO commitments, manpower, and others of equal importance such as . . . the tasks assigned to each nation."<sup>46</sup> These criteria were a blessing and a curse to the United States: extra-NATO commitments, and geography helped, but "mobilization potential" and "defence productivity" made the United States wide open. The JCS denied the Standing Group statistics on its mobilization potential, citing "far reaching" security concerns.<sup>47</sup> Until proper forces were in place in Europe, NATO should not expect new U.S. divisions on the continent.<sup>48</sup> This was as good an indication as we have that the troops decision did *not* involve a shift in U.S. strategic doctrine toward a common conventional defense for Europe.

For further proof, we need only look at the exponential growth of American air power in 1951 and 1952. The MTDP coincided with two watershed moments in U.S. strategic policy. One was war plan REAPER, which affirmed America's long-term peripheralism; the other was an appropriations debate that confirmed the ascendance of air power. It is impossible in light of these to see Lisbon as a strategy designed to *reduce* NATO's dependence on nuclear weapons.<sup>49</sup> REAPER predicted that 250 Soviet bombs would "inflict serious damage on the United States and possibly . . . render the United Kingdom unusable as a base of operations." Since 1949, the United States had diversified its overseas bases to accommodate this proliferation. REAPER, cognizant of NATO's planning, still called for a massive atomic air campaign from offshore bases as the centerpiece of U.S. strategy for years to come.<sup>50</sup>

Even then, it was too much of a compromise for air-war enthusiasts. Former Secretary of the Air Force Stuart Symington criticized it for *downgrading* air power. Holding the Soviets at the Elbe was conceptually “out-dated,” as though protecting Europe was a type of idealism rather than the *raison d’être* of NATO. He wanted a “balanced” strategy, favoring “strategic air, air defense, tactical air, and naval forces” and “relatively less future contribution of ground divisions by this country.”<sup>51</sup> He also recommended that the United States wage nuclear war against China. He offered little to the allies, but his reasoning was in line with what was in vogue among nuclear nationalists.

REAPER did not entail movement away from air power. NATO’s ground forces would be supplied by the rearmament of the Europeans. The U.S. role, after fleeing Germany precipitously, was to bomb Russia. According to David Rosenberg between January and July 1951 a decision was made that precluded any change in this relationship. SAC commander Curtis LeMay, who had criticized the targeting in OFFTACKLE that emphasized “retarding” the Soviet offensive, argued that a lack of reconnaissance made this impossible. SAC would only concentrate on strategic, city busting. This position was the baseline in all future discussions, circumscribing others from criticizing the orientation of U.S. strategic thinking.<sup>52</sup> It went deeper still. The air force was losing interest in air-ground support altogether, putting it third in its list of priorities behind “control of the air” and “interdiction.” Army officers routinely complained that the USAF defined air superiority only in terms of “strategical counter-offensive.” Army studies were bitter about the “virtually non-existent” air support NATO’s forces could expect.<sup>53</sup> When Vandenberg apportioned his 138-wing air force in September 1951, half of it was for the atomic offensive. Only 26 wings were designated for tactical support of the ground defense of Europe.<sup>54</sup> The impossibility of NATO conventional position owed much to this inversion of resources toward atomic air power in 1951.

By 1950, the United States had base rights in Britain, Iceland, Newfoundland, and Okinawa. But the most rapid expansion of overseas bases occurred *after* the outbreak of the Korean War. In late 1950, the JCS pursued bases in Canada, North Africa, Libya, Cyprus, Greenland, the Azores, and Turkey.<sup>55</sup> Under cover of rearmament, the United States intensified its devotion for atomic air power. SAC needed allies for bases and concluded it was “in the interest of the U.S. to obtain adequate support from other nations in carrying out these tasks, especially since the overseas bases most necessary for the conduct of the strategic air offensive are controlled by other North Atlantic Treaty nations.” The

advantage of linking SAC to NATO would be “greater assurance of obtaining satisfactory military operating arrangements, including bases, facilities, etc., from the other Treaty nations.” The only catch was a “loss of full power of decision and freedom of action in the timing and conducting of the strategic air offensive,” and a likely “increase of demands for diversion of strategic air effort to support the land battle.”<sup>56</sup> There was nothing in SAC’s mind that saw NATO *other* than in terms of these objectives. In the end, SAC kept a healthy distance from the Europeans, concluding that strategic bombing was “an activity which NATO should support rather than control.”<sup>57</sup>

This, of course, denied the allies information that could have helped them interpret the strategy designed in SHAPE (mostly by U.S. air force officers) on their behalf. In October 1951, the first studies of the effects of new low-yield, or tactical, nuclear weapons came to Washington. At SACEUR’s request, the JCS prepared a “U.S. eyes-only” study for SHAPE on how they might affect NATO.<sup>58</sup> Eisenhower, who asked that he be apprised “so that he could plan a modern war,” doubted they would lead to a change in SHAPE planning for 1954. It would, in any case, be hard to integrate information into NATO without violating the McMahon Act, and he knew “unilateral action could have very harmful results on the present harmonious working arrangements within NATO agencies.”<sup>59</sup> The quiet integration of tactical nuclear weapons into NATO in 1951 took place parallel to highly public battles over burden sharing. “Modernization” of war, in other words, had a trajectory: NATO was going nuclear regardless of whether it reached its force targets. Indeed, the same U.S. officers bringing nuclear weapons into NATO were pushing loudly for the MTDP. In their minds, there was no offset between nuclear weapons and rearmament. The real strategic fight in 1951 was not between countries but between the U.S. military services over which of *them* would dominate nuclearization. This rivalry greatly accelerated nuclear proliferation because the air force and army raced to capture U.S. nuclear forces *in NATO* as a way of affecting the distribution of resources at home.

Organizational rivalry had hobbled American strategic thinking for years. It surfaced again in NATO in December 1951 when scientists working on a top secret study of tactical nuclear weapons at the California Institute of Technology, code-named Project VISTA, flew to Europe to present their findings to U.S. personnel. They wanted most to see Eisenhower and air force Chief of Staff Lauris Norstad. The scientists had had an icy reception by the USAF in Washington, and hoped Norstad would be receptive to the idea that “the tactical employment of

our atomic weapons resources holds outstanding promise” for Europe. They even suggested that the United States consider withholding the strategic offensive for up to two years after the outbreak of war. This was a grave rejection of air force thinking, and Norstad dismissed it immediately. The scientists returned two days later with a new version that eliminated “any suggestion that strategic air offensive and tactical application of atomic bombs are mutually exclusive alternatives.”<sup>60</sup>

Norstad saw the growth and diversification of the atomic arsenal as an opportunity to ensure the predominance of air force thinking. The problem was how to keep this from the other services, who undoubtedly saw a similar opportunity. He proposed to Vandenberg that the USAF in Europe lead an *ad hoc* group to look at tactical weapons in NATO. “I must point out,” Norstad cabled, “that unless I grab this one immediately and with an impressive group of people, someone else will and the results will fall within the scope of already accepted strategic concepts,” by which he meant balanced forces.<sup>61</sup> Just as he received Vandenberg’s approval, he discovered U.S. army officers at SHAPE working on a similar plan. He then tried to repress discussion of the issue at SHAPE claiming, without basis, that “this subject falls into the field of my direct responsibility.”<sup>62</sup> The revised VISTA report was rejected by the USAF at home, and Secretary Thomas Finletter had it suppressed. Portions leaked, however, and it filtered into the hungry strategic environment of the army. It moved back to Europe and, as the new technology came online, became the engine of a full reappraisal of NATO strategy in 1953–54. In the meantime, SAC’s conception of warfare was dominant.<sup>63</sup> In Europe, some officers began to assume that tactical nuclear weapons could augment but not supplant existing strategy. Neither the idea of withholding the strategic offensive nor of developing a ground defense around low-yield nuclear weapons had taken hold anywhere.

One of the myths about Truman’s strategic policies, laboring under the rhetorical fog of NSC 68, was he was reluctant to deepen U.S. dependence on nuclear weapons, a reluctance rectified under Eisenhower. These events show that the foundations of Eisenhower’s New Look were, in fact, sketched before the Lisbon force goals. The final stage of America’s nuclear addiction began with the review of NSC 68 in October 1951.<sup>64</sup> By then, the United States had made impressive progress in rearmament. Still, the JCS thought “the general world situation has unquestionably worsened.” On August 8, embracing this pessimism, the NSC adopted NSC 114/1, arguing that NSC 68 *underestimated* the willingness of the Soviets to risk war.<sup>65</sup> NSC 114/1 also guided appropriations for 1953: the army should grow by 28 percent, the navy by 3 percent and the air

force by a staggering 61 percent, from 87 to 140 wings by 1954. Vandenberg claimed that the "Air Force is . . . is the only thing that has, up to date, kept the Russians from deciding to go to war," but was still operating on a "shoestring."<sup>66</sup> In August, the JCS reached agreement on goals for 1952: 21 army divisions, 408 vessels, and "possible expansion" to 138 wings by the end of 1954. The air force's position was improved again in the fall. Truman endorsed a 143-wing air force for both years.<sup>67</sup> When he left office, the air force was unchallenged as the architect of American strategic doctrine.

### The Symbolism of Rearmament

The contradiction between the deepening nuclear appetite of the United States and its insistence that NATO spend more on conventional forces was not always obvious. Rearmament limped ahead under waves of American lectures on the virtues of effort. Why the Europeans consented is not so hard to fathom. It stems from the antagonism between residual American nationalism and NATO cohesion. Without visible signs of European sacrifice, U.S. nationalists were prepared to push their foreign policy toward what many saw, rightly or wrongly, as isolationism.<sup>68</sup> The allies accepted the MTDP as a trade-off between them and the United States by which they succumbed to Washington in exchange for promises of aid to offset economic dislocation. Anything less would rile the beast of isolationism. Strategy was not the issue because it had been answered with military authority in 1950.

Here the structural ability of the United States to control information exerted real pressure on the internal choices of states. There was no real multilateralism in the exchange of information. The Standing Group got its guidance from the Pentagon. The Pentagon guarded information about U.S. forces, but expected the allies to lay bare the smallest details of their economies. This was a creditor-debtor relationship. The "gap" that plagued NATO in 1951 was the result of the private accounting of the U.S. military. Fearing that voluntary contributions would not be coming, Admiral Jerald Wright asked the JCS in February to help obtain "additional forces necessary to 'fill the gap' " between commitments and the MTDP. The United States was "in the best position of all nations to produce a sound and constructive paper on allocation of national forces to 'fill the gap.' " (No one else was asked.) But Wright wanted guidance for U.S. officials only, lest it "produce the unsatisfactory impression of unilateral US action in this highly important field."<sup>69</sup> Nitze admitted that the Europeans were



“unlikely” to do this themselves. “Closing the gap” then became a symbolic problem stemming from a fear that failure would unravel NATO. “We are quite worried whether we can continue to let this problem drag,” Nitze fretted, “and at the same time make the necessary presentation of our [military aid] program to Congress.” When he and the military met they still thought it better to make some progress and hoped that the “improved spirit and morale coming from such progress will itself provide a basis for the additional efforts required to fill the gap.”<sup>70</sup> Any growth was better than fights over doctrine. The task of uplift fell first to the director of ISAC, Thomas Cabot. Since his mandate included dispensing the remains of the Economic Cooperation Administration’s (ECA’s) funds, Cabot, in a key recommendation, argued even if the United States “cannot commit aid in advance of fiscal appropriations” an understanding should be reached with the allies conditioning aid on their “*assent* to undertake mobilization programs to raise and equip the forces required as their share of the MTDP.” This nod would help in Congress.<sup>71</sup>

The JCS declined to give ISAC more than those U.S. forces committed to NATO as of January 1, 1951 but they produced *their* own list, by nation, of what was needed to fill the gap “purely from a military point of view.” NATO’s capabilities were determined by gathering information on the *others*, and applying pressure on them to produce more. U.S. potential was off the table because it would cause others to drag their feet. The JCS said the largest increases in NATO’s forces should come from France and Britain: France an additional 5 divisions, Britain  $2\frac{1}{3}$ , Canada  $1\frac{2}{3}$ , the Netherlands and the United States one each. The United States would provide the largest increase after 90 days (its existing 4 divisions), but these were pegged to SACEUR’s “strategic reserve” in northern Europe.<sup>72</sup> This looked like Taft–Hoover isolationism. One U.K. newspaper wrote in December 1950 that if Europe could defend itself without American aid, then the Americans would only have to worry about their own coasts.<sup>73</sup>

Pressure was mounting however for the United States to take into consideration the political costs of rearmament. This was a real concern after elections in Italy and France revealed a dramatic polarization. Britain had agreed to its effort only because it thought the U.S. appeal in July 1950 was an offer “to meet the whole of the additional cost of any expansion beyond what the British government would have sanctioned unaided.” In January 1951, Chancellor of the Exchequer Hugh Gaitskell told Cabinet rearmament would lower living standards, worsen terms of trade, and induce inflationary controls, though he and his colleagues

were compelled to support it.<sup>74</sup> The French were feistier. Hervé Alphand complained that “the budget estimates designed to meet the requirements of a specific rearmament programme had been rendered completely inaccurate by the rise in prices, to such an extent that, in certain cases, the very implementation of such programmes might be imperiled.”<sup>75</sup> These pains caused the NAC to conclude it was now impossible to distinguish between the military and economic dimensions of NATO. Washington’s answer was to create a Financial and Economic Board (FEB) composed of NATO representatives from the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC). Acheson wanted the FEB to “become a body with real power to influence national economic policies along lines consistent with US objectives in NATO,” a mechanism by which the United States could expose free riders:

If the FEB has some voice from the outset on the division of US economic aid, it will be in a position to . . . conduct useful cross-examinations . . . that will highlight the main respects in which each country is not pulling its weight and . . . make recommendations [on] common economic policies that will potentially have the weight of US aid behind them. The “Teeth” thereby provided should enable the FEB to develop from the beginning along the lines [of the original] US proposal.<sup>76</sup>

Cabot, though, feared “pressure for unattainable goals would result only in impairing US leadership and causing discouragement in Europe.” At the same time, the JCS reacted angrily to an initial costing of the MTDP that looked like the Europeans wanted the United States to “foot about 90 percent of the total bill.”<sup>77</sup> ISAC’s only answer was to continue toward the MTDP on the assumption that promises may be “*somewhat in excess*” of feasibility. If the United States could increase aid by 30 percent and find a way to reduce the total cost of the MTDP from \$72 billion to \$63 billion, Europe could then make ebullient pledges and the United States would answer by making ebullient promises to fund those pledges.<sup>78</sup> The positive energy might loosen the resistance each nation was encountering at home.

There were reciprocal hopes at socialization here. Americans, liberals and conservatives, had a stake in European integration. If it worked well, it would preclude a U.S. presence in Europe. For the Europeans, integration might get American internationalists past the hurdles thrown up by conservatives. It was a fragile process sustained by considerable elusion. One of the best examples came at a Paris meeting on NATO’s air force

requirements. France and some smaller powers accepted JCS targets enthusiastically. U.K. Chief of Air Staff Sir John Slessor was aghast.

For France [the acceptance of the U.S. figures] involves a doubling of their DC 28 contribution about a five-fold multiplication of their existing air force in a period of just over three years. France, while maintaining that their increased contribution was physically possible, made it quite clear that this would only be so if they were given very much increased external aid in money and material, and if their air force was given the necessary priority at the expense of their land forces. . . . with the exception of the Netherlands and Denmark all these nations claimed that it would be physically possible for them to meet the figures, but subject to a variety of caveats regarding external aid, finance and man-power (in relation to priorities as against other services).

It was unfortunately clear that, except in the case of the RAF, plans for increased and accelerated air contributions to the Supreme Commander's integrated air force are on paper only—and, in the case of the European Nations, so hedged about with assumptions and provisos about external aid, priority for air as opposed to land or naval forces and so on to be almost valueless.

Canada's Brooke Claxton caught his own air force making pledges at Paris without the authority of its government. The whole episode, he thought, "was an attempt by the [Canadian] Chiefs of Air Staff to do an end-run around the NATO Military Command so as to bring about pressure for substantial increase in the over-all aircraft strength." Some national militaries, in other words, saw rearmament as a bureaucratic opportunity.<sup>79</sup> The pledges were strategically meaningless, but they played an important political role. The USAF, after all, believed that NATO's strategic choices would help build the necessary infrastructure for a massive air force in the United States.<sup>80</sup>

To bring some reality to all this, Washington wanted to have NATO focus on the FEB's first report, and its "non-military objectives," at an NAC meeting scheduled for Ottawa in the fall. The aim was to relieve pressure by cultivating a benign image for NATO that emphasized the culture of the Atlantic "community." Identity building was a precondition to deep economic sacrifices and required softening America's image as a military taskmaster. The timing was also critical. Congress was replacing the ECA with a Mutual Security Administration (MSA) that placed more emphasis on, of course, mutuality and security. The State

Department worried that “pessimism” on “the gap” could, if publicized, prove “highly embarrassing” as Congress scrutinized the MSA. The Standing Group, therefore decided not to attend and Eisenhower declined to send Gruenther to report on SHAPE’s strategic work.<sup>81</sup> At the next meeting scheduled for Rome, U.S. officials hoped to present a full military agenda that would be harder to evade precisely because the FEB would have rafts of information on what the European economies could afford. Meanwhile all discussion of attenuating rearmament was “firmly squelched.”<sup>82</sup>

Sadly, the FEB failed to play the “aggressive role” Acheson hoped because it came under the influence of British diplomat, Sir Eric Roll. It turned into a platform for the allies to vent their grievances. Its members were all finance ministers, who traditionally “reflect more skepticism” about military matters. The FEB tautologically concluded that “the feasibility of undertaking greater economic burdens in the common defense effort can only be appreciated in the light of the political and military implications of failure to undertake such increased effort,” an improvement over what could have been worse.<sup>83</sup> Yet if the United States wanted better promises at the Rome meeting, the Europeans wanted clarification on aid. Robert Schuman told Acheson that unless the United States agreed to reduce the MTDP, France would present its budget under the assumption that no new funds were coming. This, Acheson knew, was a threat to renounce the MTDP unilaterally.<sup>84</sup>

### The Temporary Council Committee

Acheson therefore reluctantly accepted a French proposal for an *ad hoc* committee, headed by Harriman, to clarify how much NATO could afford.<sup>85</sup> The European economies faced reinforcing problems in rearming. Defense production meant importing large quantities of raw materials from the dollar area, made more expensive because of demand from American rearmament. The conversion of European industry meant a loss in export potential to the United States, and thus fewer dollars.<sup>86</sup> The Europeans hoped that a new study would prove there were “only two ways of closing the gap . . . namely a large increase in the American effort or a downward reassessment of the requirements of the [MTD] Plan itself.” The United States clung to the inverse hope that Congress would leave enough aid to encourage a “pattern of defense production favored by the US.”<sup>87</sup>

Acheson was thus pessimistic about the Ottawa meeting.<sup>88</sup> The world situation had stabilized, yet as long as the war drew U.S. resources, and

Britain cultivated ties with China, conservatives in the United States threatened the balance between Washington and Europe. The administration thus rejected any hint that NATO could relent. The “risk of war is greater,” John Spofford told the NAC, because the enemy might “strike while its strength is greater.”<sup>89</sup> Pressure for retrenchment still grew. The United States tried to balance between applauding accomplishments and stimulating progress by underlining how little had been accomplished. NATO had to be reassured, too, that the United States did not consider it little more than a military tool. It would be important to show in Ottawa Washington’s compassionate side, Acheson told Truman without irony, to “pave the way for the acceptance . . . of a solid military plan.”<sup>90</sup> In Ottawa, though, the Standing Group’s absence drew sharp criticism. *In absentia* it manage to urge more spending which Belgian Minister of Defense Édouard de Greef found “frightening.”<sup>91</sup> The allies pinned their hopes on the new Temporary Council Committee (TCC), designed to reconcile “a militarily acceptable NATO plan for the defence of Western Europe with . . . the realistic politico-economic capabilities of member countries.” Yet the TCC’s terms of reference were undercut by pressure toward a fixed military schedule, told that it must not “interfere with the urgently required further steps to fulfill present national commitments.”<sup>92</sup> The “Three Wise Men” who headed the TCC’s Executive Bureau—Averell Harriman, Jean Monnet, and Hugh Gaitskell (replaced by Sir Edwin Plowden after October)—were not in any case concerned with strategic doctrine. It was clear that the military goals were given.<sup>93</sup>

Borrowing from NATO and OEEC secretariats, the TCC created its own Economic Analysis Staff to look at improving efficiency on a national and collective basis.<sup>94</sup> Starting in Paris on October 9, 1951, the committee had less than two months to report. To help, the United States opened bilateral talks to get the allies to cooperate with the TCC. Some wondered if this prejudiced the TCC, but the State Department thought it only made sense “that some differences in our generosity as between countries may be justified by the amount of military effort any given amount of dollar aid will produce in the various countries.” NATO countries would be “greatly inhibited” unless they knew what they could expect from Washington.<sup>95</sup> This said there was no shortage of hostility toward the TCC in Washington.<sup>96</sup> Many loathed the idea of a foreign body poking inside U.S. decision-making, as if the purpose of NATO was to fix something wrong with Europe.

The U.S. reply to the TCC’s initial questionnaire candidly explored this as a problem endemic to the diverse expectations of U.S. citizens, and the nature of international cooperation. The American people had come,

for example, to accept progressive taxation because of the “long-established bonds of common interest, mutual trust, and sense of unity of purpose that characterizes the successful national state.” Neither the people of the United States nor of Europe saw NATO “as that kind of institution.”<sup>97</sup> Burden sharing worked only to the degree that a new community overcame the attachments of nation. Shared institutions went toward creating the “bonds of common interest,” but there was no likelihood the attachments of nationality would whither away altogether, least of all in the United States. The problem there was that not all Americans had come to see the benefits of internationalism. “There continues to exist in this country,” the paper conceded, “a strong isolationist sentiment.” Even if isolationists were never more than 20 to 35 percent of the population, they could mobilize support on issues that touch “sentiments and grievances” shared by others. Citizens who are neither internationalist nor isolationist, moreover,

feel vaguely that the United States should participate in world affairs until such participation begins to hurt. They do not advocate withdrawal from international affairs and they give at least intellectual support to the principle that the United States should contribute to the strengthening of other free nations. However, they lack a firm emotional conviction that such a contribution is truly vital to American security. They feel somehow that the United States is capable of defending itself against any possible attack and tend to associate foreign assistance measures with idealism rather than self-preservation.

Others believed internationalism was only temporary. They “believed sincerely that the United States must make both a financial and a troop contribution, but . . . were also extremely critical of the European effort and the European attitude.” Their lack of patience translated into a desire for a “decisive solution” to “international difficulties” that might “unnecessarily provoke the Soviet bloc.” Government efforts to “arouse public opinion” must be “carefully tempered with caution to avoid the overstimulation of this sentiment.” Exaggerating the threat to stimulate NATO rearmament could incite the intolerance of the very Americans who were least patient with the Europeans. The threat to internationalism was a “peculiar” alliance between these capricious internationalists and hard-line isolationists, creating what the press referred to as an “all-out or get out” disposition: the United States should withdraw “into a shell” or take “drastic steps” to insure “absolute security” without allies. Political

power in Congress rested in neither the hands of the isolationists nor in this middle group alone, but in their cooperation.<sup>98</sup>

The formal U.S. response to the TCC was a candid and nuanced account of American political life, conceding that economic limitations were less constraining than political ones, which its authors knew were laced with “sentiments” and “dispositions.”<sup>99</sup> What held the United States back were ideological variances within its society that circumscribed its internationalism. The reply played up these axes, which Harriman told it to do in order that its potential for further increases be “demolished” by alluding to “political impossibilities in an election year,” and the inflationary effect expansion would have on European dollar earnings.<sup>100</sup> But the U.S. reply is significant in its recognition of the fragmentation of the nation itself around the “national interest.” It recognizes that interests were not exogenously given by the anarchy of the world: *competing* definitions of interest, ones that put real influence on foreign policy, existed because of divergent claims on what it means to be American. The paper made the argument, of course, that those who opposed internationalism were driven by “sentiments,” and “emotions.” Isolationists lived in the past, and those who wanted “absolute security” reached to a world in which cooperation with foreigners might some day be avoided. In this group, xenophobia could be awakened by evidence of European dissipation: their reluctance to accept Greece, Turkey, Spain, and Germany into NATO; their failure to integrate properly; their willingness to place “domestic political and economic considerations above the need for security.” That is, *American* nationalism was aroused by the failure of the Europeans to put *their* nationalism behind them. This hostility was of course due to “a lack of information,” but it was a serious obstacle the government had to face. The strategic choices gap between Europe and the United States could only “be reduced if the great majority of the public clearly regarded the *defense of other areas as completely indistinguishable from national defense.*”<sup>101</sup>

Could the TCC create this integrative spirit? Aside from opposition nationalists, the TCC faced hostility in the U.S. military.<sup>102</sup> Defense, as Ridgway Knight complained, simply refused “to consider that our NATO relationship and commitments could at any time modify US decisions.” The military “viewed with genuine fear any NATO interference in its own planning.”<sup>103</sup> The JCS refused to give the TCC information about its global deployments “in the interests of national security.” This was plausible, but not a defense available to others. It also protected U.S. peripheralism. The military could not avoid the TCC forever, Harriman argued, “otherwise the British and possibly the French would not

disclose information requested them." So the JCS gave sanitized bits of information but little more.<sup>104</sup> The final reply said U.S. global forces could not be counted in the MTDP, but it promised that in the event of a war, forces would be available "one way or another."<sup>105</sup> This had a predictably negative effect on other responses. The French were "burned" about U.S. aid.<sup>106</sup> Monnet told Harriman that the United States must do more or "there would be a serious disintegration of the French NATO program."<sup>107</sup>

At the Rome meeting the TCC's interim report was shunted to the bottom half of the agenda. The force goals approved by the Military Committee as MC 26/1, ones based on JCS numbers, were the main item on the table.<sup>108</sup> NATO ministers approved them with no discussion. (How could any ally call into question the fundamentals of the plan while awaiting the outcome of the TCC exercise?) MC 26/1 demanded commitments through to 1954: 46 ready divisions, with 96 available at "M + 30" days.<sup>109</sup> When Harriman spoke to the NAC on November 26, he bubbled about the partnership between Europe and the United States, ritualistically underlining the cultural differences between the East and the West. At the TCC's inaugural press conference in Paris, he dismissed Russia as the most "economically backward of the European countries; backward in terms of the education of its people; backward in terms of its productive ability; backward in terms of the skill of its workmen." The people of the North Atlantic community, in contrast, were of "far higher education, scientific ingenuity and production availabilities." In Rome, he repeated: *we* were more numerous, possessed more "genius," were more hardworking, and contained the most "resourceful" people in the world.<sup>110</sup> He carefully, if not always consistently, balanced the "urgency" of the threat with an unmistakable confidence in the cultural triumph of the West.<sup>111</sup> Eisenhower seconded this, claiming that one of the admirable features of the TCC exercise was that it had been undertaken "willingly, without any thought of being subject to the processes of the inquisition." No country "even thought of this work except in the form of a cooperative, beneficial effort."<sup>112</sup> This was patently untrue, of course. The TCC was a "monumental" accomplishment, but dissent was everywhere.

The most public protest came from Belgium, which had ironically been congratulated by the TCC for its efficiency. But this produced the conclusion that it ought, for that very reason, make up for the deficiencies of others by making "startlingly high" grants to its allies. Harriman called the Belgians "first-class traders," which was why "we consciously put up a tough target for them." Though flattered, Brussels presented him



with a sharply worded protest, focusing less on Belgian culture than the behavior of the TCC's Executive Bureau. "It cannot be the duty of a Committee of the North Atlantic Treaty to recommend one of the member countries to make free grants to other member countries, nor can it claim the right in this way to impose on a member country a unilateral effort." The intent of the Ottawa Resolution was to create a multilateral committee. But the Executive Bureau assumed the function of a "Directory," drafting important documents, convening the larger committee for short periods, and submitting their own countries to truncated examinations that did not include members outside the Bureau. While Belgium was told to "collaborate," the terms of U.S. assistance were "outside the scope of the North Atlantic Treaty." Since this aid was based on special bilateral treaties, the U.S. effort was not subject to NATO interrogation. The Belgian government saw these procedural inconsistencies as the cause of the Bureau's deeply "subjective appreciations" of national economic indices, which made "discussion both impossible and pointless." Subjectivity would not have been so intolerable had the other nine members been allowed to examine the United States, Britain, and France. The result was an extraordinary imbalance in demands. The TCC argued, for example, that economic efficiencies might allow the United States, Great Britain, and France to increase their GNP by 5, 3, and 3 percent respectively by 1954. Their defense increases in the same period would thus consume 54, 61, and 61 percent of that growth. Belgium, on the other hand, was expected to spend 123 percent of its anticipated GNP over two years on defense.<sup>113</sup>

The Belgians eventually dropped their objections, told what NATO needed at this critical time was "bold and imaginative action." If they accepted the idea "politically," the "morale effect on the whole community would be tremendous."<sup>114</sup> The material benefits of integration would follow. The Belgian outburst was an exception; few countries were prepared to break with the TCC. It was obvious that a number of them buckled under the pressure exerted by the threat of cross-examination. They feared recrimination, framing their interests in the "normative expectations of the community."<sup>115</sup> The TCC's report embraced an increase in military spending and provided a detailed country-by-country examination of those efforts. Harriman's advisor Lincoln Gordon conceded:

what could be achieved by the weaker members, or those not significantly dependent on North American aid, was a matter for practical political bargaining, but bargaining greatly assisted by the

process of mutual examination and consultation which NATO made possible. In the intragovernmental debates on their defense effort in each member country, these international pressures clearly had a major effect in tipping the scales toward larger contributions.<sup>116</sup>

The TCC report included recommendations for improving Atlantic terms of trade, restraining inflation in Europe by curbing “non-essential” consumption, establishing priorities for coal, steel, and electricity, liberalizing immigration to ease Italy’s surplus manpower, promoting a better distribution of costs to guard against “internal subversion,” and raising mortgage rates to restrain demand on housing.<sup>117</sup> Balance of payments would be eased by an expansion of Europe’s exports to nondollar areas, “in the interests of the economic development and social stability of the underdeveloped countries . . . [for] which certain European countries bear a direct responsibility.” In this way, NATO rested on the conceptual and economic unity of the entire noncommunist world, even the colonial sphere the United States had long sought to liberate. The key, said the TCC, was to promote the indivisibility of the effort: each had to grasp that its failure in any one of these areas could damage its partners.

The TCC also made far-reaching organizational recommendations. The aim was to provide NATO with viable “operational” machinery that would grant it authority over national resources. “It means, from the standpoint of the NATO structure as a whole, improved methods for bringing together on a more tightly knit basis the political, military, production and economic factors which enter in the making of realistic plans and in the effective carrying out of such plans by NATO and the individual and collective actions of governments.”<sup>118</sup> While the TCC was created to restore civilian authority, its assumptions, accepting a priori demands for military efficiency, led it to propose that the members integrate their economic functions into an architecture driven by the imperatives of collective warfare.

In the short term, the TCC’s most controversial claim was that “the proposed rearmament programme should not constitute an undue burden” on NATO’s economies.<sup>119</sup> Only the United States and Portugal were “making an effort commensurate with their capabilities.” American power was “the major present deterrent to aggression against the free world” and “until Western European strength is adequately built up, would be the main factor in successful resistance.”<sup>120</sup> The U.S. economy was so powerful it could sustain more spending without pain: the main obstacles were political, and they were decisive. NATO alone could achieve a “striking increase” in military power in 1952, and then construct

“an annual re-analysis of defense plans and capabilities” known as the Annual Review (AR).<sup>121</sup> The TCC openly differentiated between the United States and Europe, conceptually and materially. The U.S. global effort counted; France’s war in Indochina was applauded (the United States shuffled its aid to France by paying more for Indochina so France could meet its NATO targets), but was a drain on its priorities in Europe, and an impediment to the rearmament of Germany. The U.S. strategic contribution was mostly in air power, but its war plans were concealed. Its economy was robust, but the terms of its relationship with Europe—the persistence of conservative scrutiny—made transatlantic integration impossible.

Harriman knew this was irksome, but he also felt the depths of domestic opposition. The problem, he told Congress, was the United States had to avoid raising Europe’s own nationalist hackles. The key was making sure the allies *wanted* to do what America needed them to do:

When you get certain conditions put on [U.S. aid]—you have the same reaction as with our States against restrictive Federal legislation. If conditions are not very carefully considered from [the] standpoint of political psychology (certain legitimate conditions excepted), that is, if political conditions are put on, the resulting local resentment would defeat our objectives—we *want these people to do certain things for our own security*. We can get certain things done—not everything we want—else we build up a Mossadegh situation, of extreme Nationalist leadership, which leads the country down the drain. You can only go so far—without making satellites.<sup>122</sup>

American power in this sense was not an *imposition*, but a relationship; the empire rested on carefully cultivated consent not mere force, however much dependence was used to extract concessions. The sour taste of aid conditions was palpable and politically volatile. Monnet had his acceptance of the TCC disclaimed by his Cabinet. Eisenhower promised the TCC would not compel anyone to adopt unpopular measures: “it is up to each country to decide what it can do. I am sure that each will make the best effort.”<sup>123</sup> Yet, NATO could not sanction a “striking increase” in military output and the freedom to act how each nation decided without seeing that these were, often, contradictory. And then there was the EDC. Acheson threatened Alaphand that U.S. policy worked on the principle that aid would go wherever it best facilitates defense.<sup>124</sup> André De Staercke, the Belgian representative, told Eisenhower: “there was a growing realization among Western European continental countries that if

they fail to reach agreement on the EDF in time for the Lisbon meeting grave repercussions in terms of US policy toward Europe might result." He concluded that, in the end, the Europeans would probably "reach agreement because of their fear of the US reaction should they fail."<sup>125</sup>

### A Functioning Organism with Its Own Voice

As the Lisbon meeting approached, rearmament was eclipsed by the EDC, which for Americans was the means by which German forces would replace U.S. ones. If the hope of French Europeanists was that integration with Germany would tame its nationalism, Adenauer insisted his "precondition for German participation in European defence was complete equality between Germany and the other European nations." Rearmament was a "way of gaining full sovereignty for the Federal Republic."<sup>126</sup> At each step, Adenauer hiked his demands, knowing how important Germany had become for U.S. policy. For France, the fear of losing control of the EDC, or having it absorbed into NATO, led its military to two conclusions. First, because its intransigence on German rearmament led to this impasse, the government had to accept responsibility for augmenting "the French rearmament effort in order to take a preponderant role in the European army." The military used integration to push for resources at home. Second, if NATO swallowed the EDC, it was vital France maintain its role in the Standing Group, "whatever the degree of Europeanization of its forces."<sup>127</sup> Caught between its own military and a rupture with Washington, Paris had no choice but to accept the increase pressed upon it by the TCC.

The week before the NAC convened, Acheson told Schuman that NATO was at a critical point: it would "move forward or the entire scheme would result in failure." If "we could go into this effort with a great political success coming out of Lisbon, all these things were possible. If we had a political failure at Lisbon, I felt that they would not be solvable."<sup>128</sup> But support in France for integration with Germany was waning. President Auriol feared it would bring the "proud, militarist, and disciplined" Germans to dominate France. Even in the pro-European *Mouvement Républicain Populaire* (MRP), some wondered if a neutral Germany would not be preferable to a militarized NATO one. Bidault defended integration by posing the dilemma starkly: integration versus national fragmentation. "Those who do not want the European Army will force the re-establishment of the *Wehrmacht*." Integration was not just protection against a revived Germany, but a revived Germany that

would then be the “fulcrum” of U.S. policy in Europe. Truculence would cause the United States to put its lot with Germany, or even play into the hands of those Americans “who urge the United States to break its links to Europe” altogether.<sup>129</sup>

Schuman was by all accounts visibly strained when he arrived at pre-Lisbon talks in London. But the United States was relentless. It derided French fears over Germany as “primarily emotional.”<sup>130</sup> This characterization gave normative support to its policy, differentiating America’s sense of responsibility from French emotionalism, exculpating the United States from any heavy-handedness its policy required.<sup>131</sup> Moreover, U.S. policy was about how reintegration would shift the ideological balance in West Germany, enhancing Adenauer’s “prestige,” and undermining the possibility of a “less friendly and nationalistic SPD-dominated government which we would find much more difficult to deal with.” Germany’s inclusion in NATO would force it to develop shared policies, institutionally link it to others oriented to the United States, and change the way Germans felt about their national interest. “The very physical fact,” argued one U.S. study, “that Germans will be participating in an integrated SHAPE command, in NATO committees, in the Council Deputies and in the Council itself will be a most salutary influence in achieving an identity of self-interest between German policies and our own.”<sup>132</sup> Using integration to create a new German identity was something the United States and France both wanted. But the U.S. position was confident that the transformation of Germany could occur in time to allow the United States to withdraw from the continent before American nationalists demanded it. French Europeanists wanted the United States to stay because they were less confident that the change in German character could be accomplished before *French* nationalists abandoned integration. The common fulcrum of Franco-American friction over Germany was the power of their respective nationalists.

In London, Schuman folded. The meeting produced two communiqués: a text for an EDC treaty; and a tripartite statement in which Britain and the United States “recalled” their decision to keep forces in Europe.<sup>133</sup> The next day the NAC met at Lisbon. The psychological side of this meeting—what U.S. officials called its “atmosphere” of progress—was central to U.S. policy. It wanted to approve the TCC report, and to inaugurate the EDC. And, above all, it wanted Lisbon to advance key “psychological objectives.” It had to “exploit” Lisbon “to augment public understanding and support of NATO and to further the foreign policy objectives of the United States.” This involved enhancing “popular confidence” in NATO as a “permanent instrumentality of international

cooperation not only in the military field but in the political, economic, and social, spheres as well." U.S. officials believed the "public" wanted NATO to produce "something definitive" at Lisbon to sustain popular imagination. They also wanted the reporting on the meeting to be "consistently keyed to this theme of continuing progress in an extremely difficult and complex task involving concessions and sacrifices on the part of every participant." These tasks were tied to a specific content: draw an image of a community built on mutuality, democracy, defensiveness, and freedom. Paradoxically, Truman officials knew it was even important to accommodate dissent to reinforce the democratic imagination of the community.

There should be no attempt to imply complete, well-oiled harmony; most of our audiences are politically sophisticated enough to know that international conferences do not proceed without controversy and that most decisions represent compromises. We should not display concern or irritation if the US viewpoint does not always find acceptance. Rather, we should use such incidents as a demonstration of our willingness to compromise and as refutation of any accusations of American domination. As in the past, we should endeavor to strengthen the concept of NATO as a *functioning organism with its own structure and its own voice*, not as a series of occasional conferences comprising separate units each striving to drive as hard to bargain as possible.<sup>134</sup>

This is precisely how hegemony works. The awareness that domination creates resistance, that it was important to allow enough dissent to undercut the argument that sovereignty was being eroded, but not so much to stop integration, was central to the whole project. The United States wanted to replace the "deep-rooted barriers of nationalism and historical prejudice," with "permanent" solidarity and "unity of purpose."<sup>135</sup> Lisbon was a chance to write into public consciousness NATO's "character," "beyond the military sphere," involving a harmonization of interests "without however involving any forfeiture of sovereignty," but always consonant with U.S. objectives.<sup>136</sup>

The Defense Ministers met on February 21 and accepted the force goals that went with the TCC report. France balked on its twelve-division pledge but the U.S. delegation dug in its heels, refusing to discuss it even when Claxton indicated agreement would have to be reached before it could go to the NAC.<sup>137</sup> Private talks produced an agreement. Robert A. Lovett's entreaty to Faure revealed the norms that exerted pressure

on the members of NATO: "from a political point of view, it would be much preferable for the French to plan on twelve divisions in 1952. All the NATO countries envisaged an increase in their number of divisions. It would be very difficult to justify a request for funds from Congress if France did not follow the general rule." The new divisions might be "skeleton" ones, but a commitment had to be made to keep the aura of progress.<sup>138</sup> The French followed the rule, and earned a sizable U.S. grant: \$500 million overall, \$300 million in economic aid with the rest earmarked for "offshore procurement."<sup>139</sup> That afternoon they consented to a 1952 goal of 12½ divisions. Acheson, who considered Lisbon to be Washington's "supreme gamble upon which we stake our whole prestige, skill and power," was finally optimistic.<sup>140</sup> Within half an hour, the NAC closed out the conference. Britain and France opened with extended accounts of their economic woes. When Claxton presented the force goals, however, there was no struggle. In his last cable to Truman, Acheson euphorically reported, "we have something pretty close to a grand slam."<sup>141</sup> The communiqué also exhibited this delusional exuberance. The NAC took the unprecedented step of publishing parts of the TCC report, including its 1952 target of 50 divisions.<sup>142</sup> Whether it wanted to ignite enthusiasm or put pressure on members to comply, it created confusion across Europe. Without a standard for comparison, the goals seemed both unrealistic and insufficient. As *The Times* commented:

Presumably the announcement was meant to impress someone, but it will not impress the Russians, who know very well the true state of affairs and who have the sense to realise that any real plans for real divisions would be kept secret. Indeed, this imaginative total, with still more imaginative promises of 85 to 100 divisions in two years' time, seems to contain the maximum amount of provocation with the minimum of deterrent effect.<sup>143</sup>

Harriman disagreed. When asked whether the rearmament of Germany might provoke the Soviets into "more hasty action" than otherwise have been the case, he said it never entered anyone's mind.

There has been in the past agreement that as long as a rearmed German was integrated into the West and kept within moderate proportions that it was essential to do, that it would somewhat increase the possibility of attack; but that if that was the mood of the Kremlin, they would attack anyway and there was no alternative. It was the

consensus that you cannot live unarmed and be constantly living in a state of fear. So that if it would touch off war—and it was the consensus it would not—but if it did, it would come anyway.<sup>144</sup>

This is difficult to decipher. Prior to Lisbon, NATO was “unarmed” and in constant fear. If, in the process of arming, NATO provoked the Soviets it absolved itself of responsibility since war could only come from the “mood of the Kremlin.” It resided in the characteristics of the adversary, not in any insecurity built into arms races or induced by NATO actions. Yet, if rearmament did *not* touch off a war then it neither absolved the Soviets nor provided anything but proof of the effectiveness of NATO’s rearmament. Whatever happened, war or peace, the policy was the correct one.

The confusion over the communiqué was a fitting dénouement. It was the most politically ambitious meeting in NATO’s young history, and it ratified its biggest military decision. But it exhibited no appreciation of, or interest in, strategy. The Franco-American battle, which extracted  $2\frac{1}{3}$  divisions, indicated France’s resistance to rearmament beyond 1952. The compromise emerged from the interstices of France’s continuing fear of a resurgent Germany and its long-term aim of tying the Americans to Europe until German nationalism was subdued. Neither of these goals sprung from an awakening to the Soviet threat. Indeed, the best military minds in France, preoccupied with Indochina not Europe, concluded the answer to both problems was the U.S. military and its atomic arsenal. Britain also saw rearmament through a national lens. Prime Minister Winston Churchill viewed NATO “as a political instrument for tying SAC to automatic retaliation if Europe were attacked, rather than as a military instrument for the defense of Europe if the deterrent failed.” From his perspective Lisbon’s goals might paradoxically deepen NATO’s reliance on the atomic shield. Churchill believed that without a massive European effort, the “disillusionment of American opinion” would unravel everything. And if Britain were alone while the others carried lighter burdens, its relative economic position would deteriorate.<sup>145</sup> Churchill knew, before the conference opened, that this made the MTDP unrealistic and inevitable. On the opening day, he told the House that Britain’s rearmament would be stretched out.<sup>146</sup> Meanwhile Faure returned from Lisbon and the National Assembly forced his resignation. His successor was told that U.S. aid was conditional on “an adequate French military effort, which had not occurred.”<sup>147</sup> Unable to define “adequate” in ways that carried weight with American conservatives, in November France announced it could not meet its goals for 1953. The Lisbon starting pistol had sounded sharply, but the runners were one by one tripping over the start line.



Things were not going well even in Washington. Aid cuts not only encouraged retrenchment in Europe, they made explicit what Korea had concealed: U.S. strategic thinking was dominated by a *deepening* faith in atomic air power because SAC had captured the imagination of U.S. doctrine. That the bomb enabled America to issue security from offshore bases while not turning its society into a garrison state, or forcing it into relations with weak allies, was a persuasive part of the argument. The bias toward atomic power was not in spite of NATO integration but, indeed, because of it.

Acheson thought at Lisbon the “world that lay before us shone bright with hope,” but its successes were hollow. It was, for the allies, easier to applaud a paper army than risk the evaporation of United States aid or, worse, the removal of its security guarantee. The only arguments against rearmament were economic, and these awakened in the United States those who had always been critical of internationalism’s bias toward Europe. But the pressure conservatives put on U.S. policy—the specter of isolationism they represented to Europe—only fed the nationalism of the allies. Europeanists were terrified of isolationism, but the policies they preferred from the United States were those that revived the health of nationalists in the United States. Only as long as economic support offered the opportunity to recover losses suffered from rearmament, the “unity of purpose” cherished by Washington could be retained. Without it, rearmament collapsed.

## CHAPTER FIVE

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### *Strategies of Peripheralism*

#### *France, Britain, and the American New Look*

The retreat from Lisbon looked simple: U.S. aid evaporated in a climate of retrenchment brought on by the Republicans after 1952, leading the Europeans to plead bankruptcy and demand cheaper security that a fiscally conservative American administration was only too happy to provide. It was not, in fact, this tidy. In this chapter, I look at how France, Britain, and the United States developed *national* reasons for pursuing nuclear independence, reasons that developed outside these budgetary concerns. I will be criticized for underplaying economic distresses. But the material limits to rearmament were pronounced because of the expansive definitions of interest that the Big Three accepted as the foundation of their identities. In France the cost of Lisbon underlined its vulnerability to German rearmament, a fear that provided the strongest argument for an independent nuclear weapon. In Britain, a deepening strategic dependence on the United States at a moment when American politics filled London with trepidation encouraged its extant strategic peripheralism. And in Washington, the pressure for a redeployment of forces away from the strategic frontier in order to provide American war planners with a freer hand in an age of thermonuclear plenty, was the most persuasive argument for changing the strategic relationship between Europe, the United States, and the bomb. Nationalism remained a powerful force in NATO because of integration not in spite of it.

### France and the Grand Failure of Rearmament

To France, its empire and its European policies were intimately enjoined, part of a single search for historic “*grandeur* and security.”<sup>1</sup> But the United States could not fully endorse French colonialism,<sup>2</sup> and both it and the United Kingdom resisted pressure to extend NATO’s strategic horizon beyond Europe where the French were concerned.<sup>3</sup> This, combined with U.S. interference with French policy in North Africa, crystallized the French view that it was an unequal partner in the transatlantic link.<sup>4</sup> This undermined the EDC and rearmament even in the military. The *chefs militaire* had an ambivalent attitude toward these projects in any case. Some, like generals Ely and Stehlin, believed NATO provided a safer framework for Germany’s inevitable rearmament. Others preferred the EDC, which France could dominate.<sup>5</sup> The key was preserving a military balance with Germany. In NATO, it would be possible under certain conditions. The United States would have to commit to continental defense, and France would need help in Indochina. Lisbon was critical to these because France made its support conditional on U.S. aid in the form of procurement destined for Indochina, not NATO.<sup>6</sup> In April 1952, however, General Alphonse Juin argued that Indochina had stretched his forces to their limit. The government had to reconsider Lisbon, especially the twelve-division commitment from Germany, because if France retrenched Germany’s growth threatened the balance of power *in* NATO. Ten months later the military advised that: “it is not possible to reduce the German contribution without compromising western defence. The balance necessary between French and German forces must be sought by maintaining French objectives and not by reducing German forces.”<sup>7</sup> This sustained rearmament, but it produced a search for other means of augmenting French power, namely nuclear weapons forbidden to the Germans under the Western European Union (WEU). The EDC debate in 1952 spurred a band of nuclear *partisans* in the military, providing them with a receptive audience after the collapse of the EDC.<sup>8</sup> Not coincidentally, in April 1954, Charles de Gaulle came out in favor of a French bomb and against membership in the EDC.<sup>9</sup>

Elements of the military had been considering atomic weapons from the outset, but were not as disposed to them as the Anglo-Americans.<sup>10</sup> Only a few articles on the military atom appeared in defense journals in the 1940s. France’s technological limitations, however, meshed with NATO’s division of labor, restricting the army to “conventional tasks.”<sup>11</sup> This was not backwardness but a strategic culture that saw little military utility in the bomb. When physicist Yves Rocard first broached the idea

at a meeting of the CEA in 1951, he was told it would cause the Americans to shut down the French atomic commission.<sup>12</sup> The United States would *not* have been favorably disposed to an independent French force partly because of French communists in government, and partly because it would have encouraged a diversion of resources away from the conventional effort. The French air force was told to concentrate on tactical air. There were officers, however, influenced by the ideas of Guilo Douhet who were determined to see France using nuclear weapons in a strategic mission.<sup>13</sup>

The failure of the EDC saved the *partisans*. In February 1952, Adenauer had pressed for the removal of restrictions on German production of plutonium, restrictions supported by France. With the United States wanting German military units as soon as possible, Adenauer's leverage was better. He had discriminatory passages on atomic material removed, placing the French in the position of having to accept unrestricted German atomic production, or European authority over French production. The "Europeanists" preferred a general renunciation of the atomic bomb if it helped tie Germany to France. "Nationalists," however, preferred "traditional" concepts of security: hold down Germany by forcing restrictions on its defenses while pursuing an independent atomic force. This would assure France's status with the Anglo-Americans, the "independence" of its forces in the EDC or NATO.<sup>14</sup> It was then that Pleven told Paul Bergeron, head of the *Comité d'action scientifique de Défense nationale*, to explore a French nuclear program.<sup>15</sup>

The nuclear question struck at the heart of France's strategic dilemma: the more isolated it felt in NATO, the more inclined it was to pursue an independent path. As Lawrence Scheinman observed, the military atomic program originated with an elite group of soldiers, administrators, and scientists, but "their persuasiveness increased in direct proportion to the decline of French influence and prestige in the international environment."<sup>16</sup> In the months after August 1954, the *Revue de Défense nationale* published a flurry of articles by Colonel (soon General) Charles Ailleret, the leader of the air force group pushing for the bomb. Ailleret's appreciation of French politics was on the mark. For economists and budget-cutters, he said atomic weapons were cheaper than conventional ones (a conclusion based on cost of fire-power, not delivery systems). For the military, he claimed it would counterbalance a superior opponent (though perhaps not an atomically superior one). For those who feared Germany, the bomb restored the equilibrium in Europe.<sup>17</sup> This was the most persuasive argument. Inspector-general of the air force General Henri Valin stated that a bomb would give France a voice in the counsels of

NATO that the division of labor had taken. Because the British detonated their own bomb in October 1952, France's strategic subservience was obvious.<sup>18</sup> As Juin wrote: "The possession of the atomic bomb . . . fundamental to the independence of a nation, is also essential if it hopes to maintain a high place in a coalition . . . If we still figure at the side of the two Anglo-Saxon powers in the military directorate of NATO, we risk to be supplanted there one day by West Germany if we limit ourselves merely to conventional weapons."<sup>19</sup> The bomb's symbolism as a weapon of "the aristocracy," as Juin called the atomic powers, was psychologically vital.<sup>20</sup> For seven years, France had not found this symbolism compelling. What changed was how a growing number of officials interpreted its position in NATO after the rearmament of Germany. The French lived inside a deeply anti-German identity. Their nationalism also entailed the maintenance of an imperial position that sucked resources away from its struggle with Germany, and posed the question of the thinness of French power more starkly. In such an environment, the nuclear bomb was the instrument of choice amongst nationalists.

### **Britain, the 1952 Global Strategy Paper, and the Retreat from Lisbon**

Churchill's government stated its ability to carry Lisbon depended on "circumstances not under the control of the UK," namely its balance of payments.<sup>21</sup> Britain still publicly supported rearmament but Churchill saw this as a means of currying the "special relationship." On the eve of Lisbon, he traveled to Washington with a vague agenda, but was hopeful to extract an affirmation of Anglo-American closeness in the struggle against communism.<sup>22</sup> Britain's informal contacts with the U.S. military led Churchill to think it was important that the United States acknowledge Britain's unique strategic place. On the table was the question left by Truman and Attlee, namely the circumstances under which U.S. bases in Britain would be used.<sup>23</sup> Truman claimed it had "always been his own personal feeling that the allies should be consulted on this matter," though he retained final authority over atomic use. Part of the problem was to figure out under what circumstances war *might* break out and the weapons that *might* be used. Such discussions had been ongoing, spinning on the semantics of the word "consultation," moving to contingencies, and finally being scuttled by the McMahon Act. The Canadian ambassador in Washington, Hume Wrong, wrote to Ottawa that there was a danger

of limiting the deterrent value of the bomb by narrowly defining the occasions for its use.<sup>24</sup> Even among U.S. military officials, there was no agreement on when it might recommend the use of atomic weapons.<sup>25</sup> Face to face with Truman, Churchill got nowhere. The communiqué indecisively stated the use of British bases was a “matter for joint decision . . . in light of circumstances prevailing at the time.” In Britain, Churchill promoted the idea that he had managed to place some limits on U.S. action.<sup>26</sup> In Washington, the question of what claims the allies could exercise over U.S. military freedom started attracting attention.

Churchill did get something tangible in Washington: an “extensive briefing on SAC operations” gave him as much knowledge of U.S. plans as Acheson. Churchill was, according to journalist Charles Murphy, “profoundly impressed” and made “a total convert to atomic air power,”<sup>27</sup> returning to London “convinced that the West possessed, in the combination of atomic weapons and air power, a military resource that, so long as it was steadily developed and perfected, assured the Atlantic coalition the balance of military power in the critical years immediately ahead.”<sup>28</sup> This was not an innovative proposition in itself, and Murphy—who enjoyed close ties to the USAF—was hardly a disinterested observer. It is possible that the briefing simply made Churchill more confident of the strength of the U.S. atomic force, and the ability of NATO to ease its burden under SAC’s umbrella. If so, Churchill’s willingness to sanction Lisbon’s rearmament *only* made sense as a means of tying the United States more closely to Europe, rather than as a strategic end in itself.<sup>29</sup>

Nevertheless, Lisbon painted Britain into a corner. Its goals were based on Attlee’s £4.7 billion defense budget that inflation turned into £5.2 billion by 1952. Dollar reserves had all but disappeared, and metal shortages meant equipment production had to be cut. To solve the balance of payments problem, Britain had to increase its exports, most of which depended on metal; a shift to exports would mean cuts in military production, and a weaker ability to buy U.S. equipment.<sup>30</sup> The only hope rested with more U.S. aid. Washington, as usual, urged the British first to voice more support for rearmament, even if it increased “the over-all NATO material deficiency,” and see how this played out in Congress.<sup>31</sup> It did not seem to work. In March, as Churchill pleaded for help, Congress cut deeply into the MSA.<sup>32</sup>

It was then that Churchill ordered a re-examination of British strategy. Between April 28 and May 2, Marshal of the RAF Sir John Slessor, Chief of the Imperial General Staff Sir William Slim, and Admiral of the Fleet Sir Rhoderick McGrigor, met to design a strategy that would be

affordable without vast American aid. They produced the 1952 Global Strategy Paper (GSP), a document hailed by some as “a classic,” and “one of the most remarkable attempts of its kind to re-think national strategy as far as possible from first principles.”<sup>33</sup> British historians believe the 1952 GSP was the inspiration of the U.S. New Look. American historians rarely mention it. In the 1950s, Alastair Buchan and the GSP’s architect, Sir John Slessor, assumed that the change in Washington’s policy was the gestation of ideas planted by Britain. American scholars have been less aware that the British were capable of their own nuclear concepts.<sup>34</sup> Their apparent convergence, however, misses important genealogical differences that we only notice if we looked at their cultural positions.

The 1952 GSP was the most ebullient statement of faith in atomic air power issued by a government at the time, but this is not proof of originality. Slessor said that Britain could not continue to pay lip service to a conventional strategy that emptied state coffers, while the United States and the United Kingdom possessed a weapon capable of deterring war, and winning one if the deterrent failed:

The main reason why we should concentrate on the new strategy is that it is the one which holds out the best chance of preventing war . . . Even if these 96 divisions and thousands of aircraft could be trained and equipped which we don’t think they could, they certainly could not be maintained without continuing American aid on vast scale. We cannot possibly hope to compete on level terms with Russia and China on the basis of manpower. We can, however, hope not only to defeat them in war but prevent them going to war by maintaining and increasing our superiority in the strategic field . . . We shall not do that if we expend our resources in a 1955 version of the 1914 war.<sup>35</sup>

The 1952 GSP was based on the economic crisis brought on by rearmament,<sup>36</sup> and growing confidence in the U.S. deterrent.<sup>37</sup> Slessor claimed that Churchill’s SAC tour “told us considerably less than we already knew,” but there was unquestionably a new “favourable climate” between the United States and Britain on atomic matters, “a more sympathetic feeling towards us . . . which we should be wise to exploit while it is still warm.”<sup>38</sup> A third factor was that the United Kingdom believed the risk of war was less pronounced than when NATO’s “extravagant” programs were drafted.<sup>39</sup> The danger of accidental war remained but the “catastrophic nature of modern atomic warfare should act as a restraining influence so long as the West retains its striking power.”<sup>40</sup>

Slessor's thinking implied that NATO should aim for strategic asymmetry. The West, he later wrote, could not afford "to stick to the road of traditional strategy and the conventional means to carry it through—the massed divisions and wings of the original NATO concept." Using what would become a favorite rhetorical quip, Slessor argued "we can no longer afford the attempt to superimpose a new atomic strategy on top of the old conventional one."<sup>41</sup> That NATO's strategic concept never claimed to want "massed divisions and wings," or eschewed an atomic strategy, was not important. The formula was useful bureaucratically in a time of economic hardship.

The 1952 GSP made four major recommendations. First, while not all challenges might be deterred by nuclear weapons, notably in the postcolonial world, *European* security could rest on a nuclear base. Second, Britain had to make a its own contribution to the deterrent to avoid dependence on the United States. Third, if the deterrent failed, NATO should expect a short war of extraordinary intensity. The paper was ambivalent about what might follow this, making a concession to the Royal Navy's idea of a long "broken-backed" war. Nevertheless forces for a long war would only be allocated after forces for a short war had been made. Fourth, NATO needed a "complementary deterrent," meaning conventional forces to slow down the Soviet advance enough to make the nuclear campaign work. The longer it took the Soviets to rumble through Europe, the more the pain from the air. For this, conventional forces *higher* than those planned at Lisbon were needed. They would not, however, be made by Britain.

The GSP expected that "the deterrents of atomic air power and adequate forces on the ground in Europe," would ease Britain's "economic position by accepting a smaller and slower build-up of forces, equipment and reserves for war." The reduction in reserves was based on the belief that the next war would be decided by a violent exchange at the outset.<sup>42</sup> Nothing in the substance of the GSP supported the navy's counter claims. Director of Naval Intelligence Sir Anthony Buzzard offered a more trenchant criticism, namely that it tied Britain to using atomic weapons immediately. He wrote that a policy of instant retaliation placed a premium on getting in the first blow, making the "localization" of war "increasingly more difficult."<sup>43</sup> Local forces were thus not complementary but a fallback whose existence was contradicted by the logic of the nuclear plan. These criticisms did not break the skin of the 1952 GSP. The risk of uncontrolled nuclear escalation was never studied.<sup>44</sup>

The army and navy were both cut under the 1952 GSP, but the army not as deeply as one might have expected. The GSP anticipated that the



“army will have to meet the first intense stage of this war. It should, therefore, be at least as well equipped as the armies of our potential enemies, who will in any event be numerically far superior. It is also essential to have some Reserve Army divisions that . . . will be the only reinforcing formations with which to fulfill our treaty obligations.” Reduced in depth, it would consist of  $11\frac{1}{3}$  divisions overall. But under the GSP, there would be a shortfall of  $2\frac{1}{3}$  divisions in Britain’s Lisbon promise for Europe. This was the result of choosing to focus on the Middle East. Army strategy called for  $4\frac{1}{3}$  divisions for Europe by 1954, plus 2 divisions to the Middle East. But since equipment shortages only allowed it to build 4 divisions, the  $2\frac{1}{3}$  shortfall was taken *entirely* from Europe. This choice inhibited progress on what were clearly half-hearted “treaty obligations.”<sup>45</sup> The RAF also saw its forces reduced but mostly in tactical air. Indeed, the majority of cuts affected NATO contributions. There would be a 50 percent reduction in the bomber force, a weakness “offset in some degree by a substantial increase in the proportion of the more effective and economical jet medium bombers” designed to carry atomic weapons.<sup>46</sup> But *effective* in doing what? *Economical* compared with what? Economies to be had by developing what was, in fact, an expensive bomber and atomic program could only be assumed against what were thought to be less *effective* strategies. If deterrence were unstable—as McGrigor feared—the shift in resources could be disastrous.

The RAF long claimed that air power was “*the determining factor in modern war*,” and that the “*basic weapon of the Air Force is the bomber, and the basic strategy of Air Power must be offensive*.” Slessor accepted the MTDP rearmament and the division of labor embodied in Lisbon,<sup>47</sup> but he shared the U.S. view that balanced collective forces only applied to smaller states. “It can only be of limited application to a great Power with world-wide responsibilities,” he wrote in 1953, confusing, as imperial powers are wont to do, desires with responsibilities.<sup>48</sup> The 1952 GSP did not argue that everyone should follow its example and develop an atomic air strategy.<sup>49</sup> It advocated a new division of labor, with Britain joining the United States on the periphery.<sup>50</sup> Slessor saw a common dilemma. “As far as Britain is concerned—and it seems to me that similar, though by no means exactly parallel conditions apply in America—we can neither afford nor do we really need to maintain the whole of the Regular Army on the very high standard of armament and equipment essential for those portions of it that may be required for operations in Europe.” It would be the responsibility of the allies “to blunt the enemy offensive and give time for air power to take effect.” Slessor believed NATO should increase its ground forces, but might build a blunting force with fewer

troops than called for at Lisbon. Increases could be achieved by reducing Europe's commitments in Asia and the Middle East, replacing them there with indigenous troops "so that we can regain the strategic freedom of action which only an uncommitted reserve under our hand can afford us."<sup>51</sup>

What would the GSP offer NATO in exchange for Britain's "strategic freedom of action"? This was one of the Chiefs' biggest concerns. The *political* risks of defaulting on Lisbon were dire:

[A] basic assumption underlying our Global Strategy proposals was that NATO continues to build-up its strength and to consolidate that unity between the free nations which is so vitally important as a deterrent to Soviet aggression, and as the foundation of western military strength in the event of Global war. Inherent in that conception is the need to sustain the interest and faith of the United States in an Organization which so largely stems from their initiative and relies on their support. If NATO were to collapse the whole structure of Western security, including that of these islands, would go with it.<sup>52</sup>

Even without NATO's collapse, reductions in UK forces would "have most unfortunate effects upon the determination and cohesion of the Alliance," convincing others to do the same. The French would certainly view it as another attempt by the Anglo-Saxons to retreat behind an atomic shield.<sup>53</sup> The British concluded that to sell the new plan to NATO they needed to stress its deterrent effect, a sincere belief, but one that underlined the public good of Britain's strategic desires.

We hoped to mitigate the effects of these reductions by convincing first the authorities in the United States and then our other Allies in NATO that the real strength of the Alliance would not be impaired because there would still exist the powerful deterrent in the shape of atomic air power and adequate forces at immediate readiness on the Continent. Nevertheless our proposals were founded on certain assumptions which could only be matters of opinion and might not be thought convincing by our Allies.<sup>54</sup>

Before he traveled to Washington, Slessor had expurgated versions of the GSP forwarded to key U.S. officials, and instructed Montgomery to brief NATO's new SACEUR, Matthew Ridgway.<sup>55</sup> Ridgway had been trying to get information about U.S. nuclear capabilities into NATO since taking over from Eisenhower in April, and the British hoped to influence his thinking. It was an ironic by-product of the Lisbon meeting.

The NAC asked for a JCS study on “the effect of new weapons and techniques on NATO force requirements,” but its early conclusions did not support the GSP. Part of Slessor’s task in Washington was to push Ridgway more into line with the British position.<sup>56</sup> But Ridgway misunderstood Montgomery’s pitch and did not respond to the paper when it was sent to him. He simply affirmed his study would not be ready for another year.<sup>57</sup>

Slessor’s team flew to Washington for two days of meetings with the JCS on July 29 and 30, and then with a joint State-JCS delegation on July 31. The British repeated their economic pains but choose to stress instead that atomic weapons had revolutionized warfare while NATO’s plans were anachronistic. Conventional forces should be increased, “but the goal must be attainable and it must be maintainable when attained.” Unless NATO relied “primarily on atomic air power and reduce the planned build up of ground and tactical air forces to a level which the economy of the free world could sustain,” it would have a doctrine that was “an economic impossibility, a logistical nightmare and a strategic nonsense.”<sup>58</sup> Though Slessor was convinced of this strategic logic, his urgency suggested the extent to which he was feeling pressed by the impending NATO Annual Review. He confessed it would expose Britain to some unpleasant scrutiny, and wanted U.S. support before that happened. He requested that the JCS *immediately* ask SACEUR to reassess NATO’s force goals in light of the British proposal. SACEUR was already doing so, but Slessor thought the JCS guidance on which Ridgway based his work was pessimistic because it argued that NATO’s goals for 1954 would stay put.<sup>59</sup> Bradley’s answer was telling. He agreed “modern weapons” would change NATO forces eventually, but since 1954 posed the greatest risk (here, at least, NSC-68’s logic was evident), NATO had to meet its commitments. There were two concerns. First, the United States was *officially* skeptical of the deterrent and war-fighting effect of the atomic offensive in 1954. Bradley pointed to the German experience during the war as proof of a state’s ability to fight through bombardment but he privately admitted there was no agreement in the JCS on this. His view was that “atomic weapons are going to be effective but they are probably not going to paralyze the enemy.” USAF officials kept quiet, but Nathan Twining told Slessor privately that the USAF agreed with him.<sup>60</sup>

Second, although the United States was sometimes pessimistic about having enough nuclear weapons, it thought “the picture would begin to change” in 1955. By 1956, “it might well be that modern weapons would lead to a reduction in . . . requirements, and [Bradley] suggested that the best plan would be to ask SACEUR specifically for his views on

the minimum force requirements for that year.” With this Slessor concurred, and he reported to London that the United States was “not wedded to the 98 Divisions and 10,000 aircraft” of Lisbon. Bradley also downplayed their differences. “They talk about a new concept,” he told the State Department. “Really there is nothing new about it. We have talked about the effectiveness of strategic and tactical atomic attacks on Russia for a long time.”<sup>61</sup>

The JCS offered no theoretical objections to relying on America’s atomic arsenal. Their actual war plans affirmed the GSP. They said air power was strengthened by large conventional forces in Europe; so did the GSP.<sup>62</sup> If this was the JCS position in 1952, there was no difference between the Truman JCS and the New Look JCS, because what Bradley recommended to Slessor was precisely what happened under Eisenhower. Both the New Look and SACEUR’s 1954 New Approach were premised upon the availability of larger nuclear forces in 1956, not 1954.<sup>63</sup> The Americans did not, in 1952, dispute that nuclear weapons, once in NATO plans, might revise force goals. If the British were only influenced by such strategic logic, they could have walked away from their meeting confident that NATO’s would be changed in the fullness of time. What foiled this in 1952 was the McMahan Act, which Bradley assumed would be amended. In this respect, the GSP neither influenced the Americans in 1952 nor, logically, could it have in 1953 when the strategic landscape had changed.<sup>64</sup>

So where did they differ? Here is where an understanding of culture deciphers the *meanings* of strategy. What separated the United States and United Kingdom in 1952 would be the same in 1953 because they interpreted the utility of nuclear weapons in divergent ways. The United States remained skeptical about Britain’s claim to a special role in NATO’s nuclear strategy. If Britain unilaterally altered its place in NATO it could trigger similar retreats. The purpose of NATO obligated it to provide defense for its continental members, not a delaying force that bought time while the air force pummeled Russia.<sup>65</sup> This defense was to be provided by the Europeans, which included Britain. The Americans thought Britain’s position reduced the chance that “adequate forces on the ground” could be built. Washington accepted its intimacy with Britain, but it was anxious not to see it formalized in NATO strategy.<sup>66</sup>

Nor could the Americans grasp Britain’s economic reasoning. It struck Bradley that converting to atomic power would incur *greater* costs to a fledgling power. The JCS took “a very dim view of the reduction of British troops in Western Europe,” while “they are planning to build up their long-range bomber force and expand their atomic production. The latter two

things will take up a lot of resources which could be used elsewhere." U.S. officials thought the British were "rearranging their strategic estimate to fit their economic situation." This was an ideological judgment attributing ulterior motives to Britain while assuming U.S. preferences were both disinterested and universal. The British tailored their strategic views to fit their imperial priorities. NATO could not "afford to take the position that we don't need something simply because we can't get it. That is a dangerous attitude."<sup>67</sup> Underlying this was the idea that NATO was based on a division of tasks commensurate with a nation's place in the global cosmos, and Britain's ought to be—in the American view—part of what the 1952 GSP called "the complementary deterrent." Since Slessor's justification rested evasively on a shifting combination of political, economic, and strategic rationales, U.S. officials suspected something insidious lay behind its quest for atomic privileges. "I would like to know the reason why [Britain needs nuclear weapons]. Is it so they can tell other people where to head in?" Bradley asked his colleagues. No one was sure, but even the air force believed that "national pride" had as much to do with it as anything.<sup>68</sup>

Whether this was true the U.S. interpretation was framed by intra-alliance competition, a desire to retain authority over nuclear strategy, and a willingness to define the preferences of its allies as cultural habits. In the world of defense intellectuals challenges are most easily dismissed by attributing emotional qualities to them. The United States also saw the GSP in light of the preceding year and a half, as part of the question of whether Britain could interfere with the use of U.S. weapons. In early 1951, London asked Washington under what circumstances it believed war might occur. The Americans interpreted this as an attempt to know when the United States might "go atomic." Bradley's rebuttal showed the extent to which the JCS had moved the United States into irrevocable reliance on nuclear weapons, and in ways that posed enormous problems for NATO's capacity for collective action:

I think we have agreed—correct me if I am wrong—to consult before using another country's bases for launching the atomic attack. However, we hate to have our hands tied. It is our principal weapon and our main deterrent; our defenses are built around it. We have developed a large strategic air force as our main striking weapon. We are developing the bases necessary for this force. Any agreement which would curtail our freedom of action would be bad.

The United States was starting to chafe under the pressure of the coalition. But it also indicates that the United States was ahead of

the United Kingdom in its *willingness* to use atomic weapons. Indeed, the JCS worried that Britain's position implied that atomic weapons were somehow immoral and might be used only in retaliation, a view they rejected. They feared that in a crisis Britain might "depart from us, even in executing NATO plans." Vandenberg suspected that the British were trying to back out of commitments to allow the United States use of its bases.<sup>69</sup> It was this tension between U.S. freedom of action and Britain's vulnerability to U.S. decision-making that divided the two on nuclear strategy despite similar military affections.

The standard difference between the 1952 GSP and the United States (in both administrations) was on the usefulness of the bomb in the "periphery." Britain doubted, along somewhat racial lines, the Chinese could be "physically deterred" with nuclear weapons. They "had been conditioned . . . to cataclysmic disasters," and thus were inured to the bomb. Bradley disagreed: "The Joint Chiefs of Staff did not support the view that the use of the atomic bomb against China would not be effective, nor did they agree with the view . . . that further Chinese aggression should be met only with 'such localised military action as might be practicable.'" A prohibition on atomic weapons in the periphery would induce a "series of Koreas."<sup>70</sup> Britain's dissent here was itself a function of fears stimulated by Korea. The 1952 GSP argued that if nuclear risk-taking made sense in Europe, it was completely out of proportion in Asia. In Britain, it was not more Koreas that made it tremble, it was more MacArthurs. The debate was not *whether* nuclear weapons would dominate European strategy, but who would control them, and where would they be used. On this point the two remained far apart.

Slessor tried to circumvent American resistance by going directly to NATO after he left Washington. But Ridgway's atomic study, which was not due until July 1953, was leaning toward the view that a nuclear war would require *more* troops in Europe, not fewer. Suspecting this, Slessor concluded that American support in the Annual Review would not be coming. Worse, the December 1952 meeting of the NAC exposed Washington's mistrust of Britain's desire to back away from Lisbon unilaterally. Slessor fumed to his colleagues that NATO was being "bedeviled by the irrational attitude of the Americans towards the McMahan Act" and the unwillingness of any American officer to explain how U.S. war plans would affect NATO strategy. The only hope lay in a new administration, because its credibility with the "McCarthy-McCarran" set might make it flexible with atomic information.<sup>71</sup>

But an Eisenhower victory triggered other fears central to the 1952 GSP, fears the COS used in resisting deeper cuts proposed by the

Chancellor in late 1952. "It is no exaggeration to say that default on the scale involved under the Chancellor's proposals might well shake the whole NATO structure: it might even result in the United States falling back on a Taft-Hoover policy of isolation behind a vast Navy and Atomic Air Force."<sup>72</sup> Official thoughts on the "New Look" in Washington were therefore mixed. Eisenhower, while respected, was identified with Lisbon. In early 1952, as Slessor ruminated on the GSP's chances in NATO, he petulantly concluded that Eisenhower had "established this extraordinary position as a sort of military demi-God" and "would never buy it." Yet he also doubted Eisenhower's ability to control the nationalist wing of his party, looking askance at speeches about liberation and brinkmanship. They worried that Eisenhower would appoint Dulles as secretary of state. After Churchill met Eisenhower and Dulles in Washington in January, his secretary, Sir John Colville, dismissed the Republicans as "well-intentioned, earnest, but ill-informed (which can be remedied) and not very intelligent—excepting Dulles—(which cannot). Ike in particular I suspect of being a genial and dynamic mediocrity." Churchill had harsh impressions of Dulles, "whose 'great slab of a face' he disliked and distrusted." These impressions suggest a measure of mistrust at high levels that framed the way the two states understood each other's strategic positions. Foreign Office views of Eisenhower's first year indicate they quietly questioned his administration's internationalism.<sup>73</sup>

These were contradictory fears of course. Some believed the United States would push Lisbon harder. But, the nationalists made it harder for Britain to retreat from Lisbon without provoking an American withdrawal. The COS reminded their government that deep cuts required a wholesale change in British global interests. They steeped their argument in appeals to Britain's historic responsibility and prestige:

The reduction of our national commitments and status . . . is not an alternative at all. . . . We are a Great Power with world-wide responsibilities. British commitments cannot be cast aside like an outworn coat: they are a world-wide agglomeration of political, economic and commercial interests and obligations involving not merely British prestige but the livelihood—indeed the actual lives—of millions of British subjects. . . . All over the world we are under pressure to hand over our responsibilities and our possessions. Any evidence of readiness to quit will start a landslide which we shall be quite unable to control.<sup>74</sup>

The fear of a domino effect in which Britain's imperial interests were indivisible lay at the heart of the 1952 GSP. Whatever the military planned for in Europe, its desire for an atomic air strategy emerged from Britain's world status. It explains why conventional defense in Europe never took hold. It was not just that the costs were prohibitive, or that conventional forces were made redundant by atomic bombs. It was that NATO's two wealthiest members pursued strategies built around other global priorities.

At the same time, the abundance of nuclear weapons on both sides of the Iron Curtain made nuclear use, in the odd logic of nuclear deterrence, increasingly necessary. In the spring of 1951, Chairman of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy Brien McMahon told Truman to fund another expansion of the atomic program but, of course, for the most peaceable of reasons: "a coming revolution in firepower points the way out. It points to a revolution in deterring power. It can bring peace power at bearable costs." Lovett told the press the next day "there is enough truth in both the weapons development stories and in the progress reports on atomic energy to encourage a very optimistic outlook for improved American armaments."<sup>75</sup> This followed on the heels of Truman's approval of the hydrogen bomb. Lovett argued "recent technological advances opened up the prospect of almost limitless possibilities in the use of fissionable material," a reference not only to the strategic potential offered by a huge new supply of atomic weapons, but to developments in tactical nuclear weapons.<sup>76</sup> Then, the JCS, in February 1952—that is *during* the Lisbon conference—affirmed their view that U.S. strategy would be based on the possibilities of atomic energy. They accepted presidential prerogative over their use but expected "the requisite freedom of action to conduct military operations in an emergency with maximum effectiveness." All services were built around them, and any subsequent limits on use could be fatal.<sup>77</sup> Lovett dispelled any doubts:

The objective of the Department of Defense in recommending the program for expansion of atomic energy production facilities . . . is to afford the United States a greater advantage from this powerful weapon in any conflict with the Soviet Union or any other active enemy of the United States. To achieve this aim, we place no limit on the extent of the use of atomic or any other weapons, *nor do we believe that the use of large numbers of atomic weapons against an enemy would have any adverse effect on neutrals or potential allies.*



Lovett's extraordinary assumption that nuclear-use would hardly affect NATO played loosely with the reality. But these questions had not yet been raised in the NAC, and Lovett was untroubled by their implications. He continued:

The expansion program now recommended is the result of a carefully calculated analysis of the role of atomic weapons in augmenting our military capacity. It has been developed from this analysis that, in addition to strengthening and extending the strategic role of atomic weapons, atomic developments in both weapons and delivery systems have demonstrated the feasibility of highly effective tactical application. . . . [which] will go far toward providing the free world a means of balancing the superior manpower and the advantage of surprise and initiative held by the communist forces. Military requirements for atomic weapons. . . . arise, primarily, from the necessity of meeting communist aggression by more extensive use of our superior industrial and scientific resources rather than by attempting to match our potential enemy man-for-man.<sup>78</sup>

These were categorical statements of how atomic plenty would shape U.S. doctrine after 1952. Lovett proposed the U.S. seek strategic asymmetry, using its military strengths to counter Soviet ones. He insisted, as Eisenhower did later, that atomic weapons were no different from conventional ones. Acheson, the author of the build up pushed on NATO, who had publicly justified it on the grounds that the United States was losing its atomic edge, agreed. The expanded atomic program, he told the NSC, was an essential factor in the ability of the U.S. "to deal repeated atomic blows at the USSR," serving as both a deterrent and a means to victory.<sup>79</sup>

The Truman administration's penultimate statement on national security, NSC 135/3, still indicated rifts in the services on the implications of nuclear plenty. It paid homage to NSC 68, and argued that there was enough military power in the West to deter war indefinitely, to furnish forces to counter local aggression in "peripheral areas," and to win a war. It rejected NSC 68's "year of maximum danger" as "impracticable," but limited mobilization was still pursued.<sup>80</sup> It proposed that if the Soviets believed they could launch an attack on the United States without "serious risk to the maintenance of their regime," they would, a reminder that peace was solely the responsibility of U.S. atomic vigilance.<sup>81</sup> NSC 135/3, the administration's first response to Soviet acquisition of a substantial nuclear capability, addressed the chance that neither could achieve victory under these conditions. However, in NSC 135/3, the

scenario of a short, intense exchange was thought *more* likely under nuclear plenty. The only way to survive was to have a large atomic arsenal “to carry out atomic attacks after the Soviet stockpile was exhausted. Such considerations,” NSC 135/3 concluded, “would probably re-enforce Soviet reluctance to initiate general war.”<sup>82</sup> It also postulated that accumulations of weapons could weaken the deterrent value of nuclear forces at “lower” levels. The answer to this was tactical nuclear weapons to work as local deterrents, or as a means of defeating aggression “without resort to general war,” implying, without study of the question, that a nuclear war *could* remain limited.<sup>83</sup>

The other new feature of the landscape was the success of rearmament. Although short of Lisbon’s goals, NATO had built a creditable force.<sup>84</sup> This encouraged the administration to emphasize a tapering-off of aid and the continuation of a strategy based on nuclear weapons. The retraction of aid was initiated by Congress, but many officials were anxious to see it. Truman’s Deputy Director of Mutual Security wrote that the 1954 budget “should be regarded . . . and presented to Congress, as a year of transition—partly because Europe itself is in a state of transition, after having largely adapted itself to the impact of the Korean War and the need for rearmament and reached a *new plateau in defense and economic activity*.” The budget should be pitched to “the development of longer range solutions to the basic problem of the European economy and its relationship to the US.” There would be no time to develop this “‘new look’ “ for the old Congress, but the thought of gearing to the long term was articulated first in 1952.<sup>85</sup>

This continuity between Truman and Eisenhower was exemplified as well by the fact that the JCS wanted to emphasize continental North America and civil defense, both of which reappeared prominently in the New Look. The final report of the administration, NSC 141, embodied all these requests with only vague references to costs.<sup>86</sup> Truman thus left an ambivalent legacy: more spending in all categories but an admission that targets should be pruned in the long run. Yet if there was a clear trend in U.S. strategic thinking by the close of the Truman years, it was toward greater dependence on nuclear weapons, underpinned by the hope that whatever forces were needed for other contingencies would be provided by allies.

### Eisenhower’s New Look in NATO

Still, NSC 141 saddled the Eisenhower administration with more spending for 1953–55. It was incompatible with his desire to cut costs. Much

has been made of his fiscal conservatism, focusing on statements he made linking economic strength with security. He and his supporters called this the “great equation.”<sup>87</sup> The 1952 election, however, and the need for Eisenhower to distance himself from policies he helped to shape, exaggerated the differences between the two.<sup>88</sup> On the other hand, Eisenhower had to win over Taft’s followers, and went to great lengths to accommodate conservatives.<sup>89</sup> The impression was that he would undertake a revision of U.S. policy that would pose new questions for NATO. But it should be clear that Eisenhower’s strategic doctrine and the New Approach adopted afterwards were not in a function of the “failure” of rearmament. Eisenhower had vigorously promoted the virtues of Lisbon. On at least two occasions as SACEUR, he outpaced his bosses in urging the Europeans to spend more, build more, and endure higher taxes. At the 1951 NAC meeting in Ottawa, Eisenhower presented SHAPE force goals *in excess* of those of the Standing Group, an event that perplexed a number of his American colleagues.<sup>90</sup> He was a cautious supporter of atomic power and expressed interest in project VISTA.<sup>91</sup> He said the air force was “the only agency by which we could deliver a major blow against a great land power at the outset of a war,” but rejected the radical claim that air power made other services superfluous.<sup>92</sup> In April 1952, he questioned a campaign plank written by John Foster Dulles calling for emphasis on America’s retaliatory atomic force. He had no moral qualms about it but thought it was incomplete. “What should we do if Soviet *political* aggression, as in Czechoslovakia, successively chips away exposed portions of the free world?” To him, “this was the case where the theory of ‘retaliation’ falls down.”<sup>93</sup>

Eisenhower’s method of cutting defense costs depended much more on rudimentary concepts of efficiency. The claim that he pursued savings through nuclear weapons was not a pronounced feature of his thinking. The 1952 Republican platform criticized the “war expenditures, waste and extravagance, planned emergencies and war crisis” atmosphere used by the Democrats to produce a false and bloody prosperity. But it focused mostly on reducing U.S. overseas commitments to save money. Eisenhower had “retaliatory striking power” replaced with vague references to “such power as to deter sudden attack or promptly and decisively defeat it. This defense,” it continued, “requires the quickest possible development of appropriate and completely adequate air power and the simultaneous readiness of coordinated air, land and sea forces, with all necessary installations, bases, supplies and munitions, including atomic energy weapons in abundance.”<sup>94</sup> This was consistent with containment. Only in light of Eisenhower’s willingness to capitalize on

frustrations with limited war do they take on another meaning. He frequently implied that Truman's unwillingness to the technological asset the United States had "in abundance" was the *cause* of the Korean War. This preyed on the longing for a clean victory without the messiness that restrained a technologically gifted people.<sup>95</sup> The Republican platform even argued Truman *neglected* American defenses, referring to his "disgracefully lagging" military programs built on "paper plans."<sup>96</sup> Nine months in office, Eisenhower was still not sure if the United States might need to spend more on war. He worried that a revision of strategy around new weapons might "involve us in vastly increased expenditures." A deterrent built on nuclear weapons would have to be maintained indefinitely.<sup>97</sup>

The greatest reductions in defense costs were anticipated through an end to the "feast-famine" cycle of containment, tighter control over acquisitions and, most of all, greater reliance on allies to reduce U.S. commitments. Reconciling his pledge to cut spending with programs he otherwise supported put Eisenhower in a hard position. During his pre-inaugural trip to Korea on the USS *Helena*, he explored these issues with his shadow cabinet, including Dulles, Secretary of Defense-designate Charles Wilson, and Wilson's choice for Chairman of the JCS, Admiral Arthur Radford. Eisenhower asked how to provide strength without turning the United States into a garrison state, and Radford replied that the United States was overextended and needed a "mobile strategic reserve" at home. "Peripheral" defense should be the responsibility of indigenous troops, reinforced by the abstract guarantee of U.S. atomic power. To this, Dulles added that SAC should be used to deter at the source—Moscow or Beijing—rather than have the United States drawn into local wars.<sup>98</sup> Eisenhower was receptive to Radford's willingness to look at trimming U.S. obligations. In February, the JCS looked at NSC 135/3 and NSC 141, finding they were valid, but continental defense and the foreign aid could not be sustained without hurting other programs.<sup>99</sup> The next step was to jettison the "year of maximum danger" (which had been anticipated in NSC 135/3): planning would be based on the "long haul." The "radicalness" of this has been exaggerated. Glenn Snyder shows Truman's mobilization was a "long haul" concept itself, based on a partial mobilization from which U.S. forces could rapidly expand.<sup>100</sup> The JCS, in any case, continued to design war plans with target years around which they built their strategies.<sup>101</sup>

In May 1953 Eisenhower initiated his rethink under the code-name SOLARIUM. He proposed three lines of strategy and asked three teams to defend them. Task Force A (containment) continued the status quo.

Task Force B (“drawing the line”) traced a line around the Soviet Bloc and relied on the threat of atomic bombing to deter aggression. It did not mean that bombs would automatically fall on Moscow, but U.S. strategy would “find its military basis solidly in the capabilities of atomic weapons.” Task Force B, the closest to Dulles’s thinking, was at pains to stress this was “a support, not a substitute, for existing policies.” The United States needed allies for bases, and their troops on the ground. The emphasis on nuclear weapons would simplify procurement, but it would not lower costs as much as redistribute the burden. Task Force C (“liberation”) involved inciting changes to the Soviet empire, exploiting rifts between communist states at the risk of provoking war. That risk, along with the inevitable alienation of U.S. allies, would cost more.<sup>102</sup>

The job of sorting through these fell to the new JCS. Truman’s Chiefs were the target of criticism by Taft and since their four-year rotation ended in August, Eisenhower did a house cleaning.<sup>103</sup> The new team reflected wider geographic experiences, something that countered the charge the military was too Europe-centered. Bringing a wider sphere of strategic vision to the job also meant more sensitivity to over-extension. They agreed, *inter alia*, that America’s priorities were North American defense and improving the atomic capability. Beyond that, U.S. forces were overextended, especially in Korea and Japan; its reserves should be concentrated on “maximum flexibility.” The new Chiefs proposed “redeploying” forces home to save money. The risk of weakening the periphery would be offset by handing “responsibility” to “indigenous” forces. The entire edifice of the strategy hinged on extracting more out of the allies. Radford’s ideas thus came under two conditions: that the world situation remained stable; and that Korean and German forces be built-up on schedule.

All of this was helped by two events: the end of the Korean War on July 17, and the explosion of a Soviet thermonuclear device on August 12. These, along with the death of Stalin earlier in March, meant that the United States expected a retraction of its overseas commitments even without a revision in strategic thinking. The Soviet bomb demanded the United States focus more on a Soviet nuclear attack if its retaliatory capability were to remain functional. It was for this reason that the most contentious part of the New Look was redeployment and not the new emphasis on nuclear weapons. The JCS insisted they would maintain their overseas bases and consult with their friends before withdrawing troops, but they knew it was a political problem. The risk that it might be seen as a “withdrawal to Fortress America” was real, Radford noted, but the United States should simply prepare NATO opinion that “the

principle of concentration of forces" would give the West greater flexibility.<sup>104</sup> Even Eisenhower endorsed the *principle* of redeployment. It must be clear that "the stationing of American troops abroad was a temporary expedient." He knew that "any thinking individual, in the services or out, always understood that the basic purpose of so stationing American troops was to produce among our friends morale, confidence, economic and military strength, in order that they would be able to hold vital areas with indigenous troops until American help could arrive." This was not a "new concept," but a "reaffirmation and clarification of what had always been understood," as indeed it was.<sup>105</sup>

Its strategic repercussions for NATO were still unclear. Dulles wondered if it did not *force* the United States into greater reliance upon atomic weapons if the gap could not be filled by "indigenous" forces. The JCS stated reassuringly that tactical and strategic nuclear weapons would be used in major war anyway (Radford wanted a public announcement to strengthen their deterrent effect). But the JCS believed that the conventional rearmament of the last administration was strategically "sound"; what changed was the "atomic factor," which now "looms much larger . . . than it seemed in the summer of 1950." This shifting *nuclear* balance determined Radford's approach to strategy in 1954. Meanwhile, both Ridgway and Admiral Robert Carney rejected the idea that the United States "could prevent war through the deterrent effect of any single military arm." The "new" strategy was thus not a blanket rejection of the past, nor was there a universal espousal of instant retaliation as a viable response to all threats. The budget problems the JCS had been told to consider by Eisenhower did not, they told the NSC, alter their views.<sup>106</sup>

NSC 162/2, the supposedly revolutionary statement of Eisenhower's security policy, was therefore not much of a departure. The JCS criticized its first drafts on the grounds that they paid too much deference to the allies on redeployment and wrongly implied "a balanced budget should take precedence over an adequate defense."<sup>107</sup> The JCS wanted to build a strategy on nuclear use, but under the New Look they pursued *both* high levels of military spending and a nuclear strategy. Only the Treasury and the Bureau of the Budget believed there was a trade-off between new weapons and defense savings. On redeployment, a Defense-State alliance feared a sudden withdrawal "would be interpreted as a diminution of US interest in the defense of these areas and would seriously undermine the strength and cohesion of the coalition," but they still wanted acceptance of the principle.<sup>108</sup> Dulles was the most anxious about the diplomatic repercussions. Redeployment could only work, he proposed, in the context of a wider strategic initiative in which the

withdrawal of U.S. troops was somehow part of a “constructive and not a destructive step.”<sup>109</sup> In the wider context of a new strategic relationship with Europe, the United States might be able to bring its forces home.

On the question of when to use nuclear weapons, paragraph 38-b stated tautologically that the United States should use them “whenever they are required by the national security.” NATO’s approval of this “policy” should also be secured.<sup>110</sup> As a statement of contingencies, this was useless. It can only be interpreted as an effort by the JCS to gain prior approval from the president for access to nuclear weapons. The NSC meeting at which the question was discussed made Eisenhower’s position clear:

The President suggested that securing this approval and understanding of our allies should precede the use of these special weapons, which was not the case in the present text of paragraph 38-b. Mr. Cutler, however, pointed out that in their written comments the Joint Chiefs had been even firmer in their insistence on the use of these weapons. The President commented that however that might be, nothing would so upset the whole world as an announcement at this time by the United States of a decision to use these weapons. Secretary Wilson said he saw the President’s point, but that nevertheless the Defense Department must know whether or not to plan for the use of these weapons. Do we intend to use weapons on which we are spending such great sums, or do we not? The President replied that after all, he had to make the ultimate decision as to the use of these weapons, and if the use of them was dictated by the interests of US security, he would certainly decide to use them. Admiral Radford replied that he was nevertheless very worried about this problem. Can we, he inquired, use these weapons from the bases where the permission of no foreign government is required? . . . The President reiterated his belief that *we should issue no statement on this point until we have given our Government officials a chance to convince our friends as to the desirability of using these weapons.* So far, however, as war plans were concerned . . . he thought that the JCS should count on making use of special weapons in the event of general war. They should not, however, plan to make use of these weapons in minor affairs. . . . The President pointed out that there were certain places where you would not be able to use these weapons because if you did it would look as though the US were initiating global war. If, however, we actually got into a global war, we would certainly use the weapons.<sup>111</sup>

The president thus rejected nuclear weapons as an *automatic* response to anything but general war, reaffirmed his authority over their use, recognized the risks of escalation if they were used at lower levels of conflict, and moved cautiously away from NSC 135/3's assertion that tactical nuclear weapons might prevent war. Nothing he said went further than the formal provisions of NSC 30.

Yet it was obvious that pre-delegated authority was crucial for the military. Its version of paragraph 38-b argued "it should be United States policy that atomic and thermonuclear weapons shall be held available for use by US forces in the same manner as other munitions."<sup>112</sup> For NATO, the JCS affirmed that while the bomb remained the "major deterrent to aggression against Western Europe," this did not mean that more troops were not needed. Because U.S. aid would have to end, it was vital that Europe, "including West Germany, build and maintain maximum feasible defensive strength."<sup>113</sup>

It was hard to insist on having *more* control over nuclear weapons since JCS plans had been built on that presumption since 1948. Radford wanted, rather, to clarify the difference between *planning* and *authority*, arguing if the United States really wanted to reduce expenditures it could only be done if it planned for one type of war. As Deputy Secretary of Defense Roger Keyes put it: "We must reassess our strategic planning . . . in the light of technological advances, and have the courage to discard outmoded procedures and weapons which will no longer serve more than tradition. We can no longer afford to prepare for every conceivable kind of war."<sup>114</sup> In this inversion, "tradition" was replaced with modern technology, which promised savings but placed extraordinary constraints on the military if not granted complete freedom of decision. The reality was that no service was still planning for a conventional war. There was intense debate in the JCS over the effect single-war thinking would have on the distribution of resources between them, but the real issue was how a single-war contained in it the logic of pre-delegation. The military tied the question of money to the question of nuclear use this way:

We have now reached a stage where the number, diversity and power of atomic weapons, together with their application to tactical situations, makes necessary the adoption of a general policy for their use in event of hostilities. . . . Up to now our military services have not been furnished with any firm and clearly stated governmental policy which establishes how and when atomic weapons will be used. We have been embroiled in costly warfare for the past three



years. During this period there has been a reluctance to utilize atomic weapons. As a result, the military services when recommending and justifying their forces, have been forced to discount the use of these weapons. I believe that if we correct this fault we can then derive a military posture of defense which falls within the limitations imposed and which—in the long pull—will greatly strengthen the collective security of the US and its allies.<sup>115</sup>

This was, of course, a deeply mistaken account: the military *had* a stated policy on use; it had *never* discounted nuclear weapons in its plans, even if it found, in practice, that using the bomb in Korea was harder than anticipated. But it was a rhetorical diversion that placed the onus on civilians either to expand resources or accept pre-delegation, linking the desires of the military to the known hazards and miseries of the Korean War.

The revised version of NSC 162 was a victory for the JCS in determining that U.S. strategic interests took precedence over fears of a weakened economy. Economic stability was desirable, but the tone of NSC 162/2, and its opening statement that the *first* goal of policy was to meet the Soviet threat, failed to uphold the views of the Treasury and the Bureau of the Budget. On military matters, NSC 162/2 gave three irreducible requirements: a massive nuclear retaliatory capability, sufficient United States and allied forces for defense, and a mobilization base to “insure victory.”<sup>116</sup> Priority was given to retaliation, but it depended on *strengthening* forces on the Soviet line. This was because the deterrent effect of retaliation might lead the Soviets to exploit lower level opportunities.<sup>117</sup> The United States would be unable to meet this, even at “exorbitant cost,” without allies. The air war also needed bases, which “will depend, in most cases, on the consent and cooperation of the nations where they are located. *Such nations will assume the risks entailed only if convinced that their own security will thereby be best served.*” Allies were also needed “to counter local aggressions.” This was a statement of wishfulness rather than reality. The JCS removed a clause from the original that said the United States could not furnish its own forces to counter local aggression but must rely *entirely* upon its allies, saying this was sadly untrue: the United States “can and may have to furnish ground forces despite our desire to avoid doing so (i.e., as in Korea).”<sup>118</sup> NSC 162/2 wanted to be a departure, reflecting the frustrations of Korea, but the JCS knew there was little they could do to change what had happened.

Still the New Look wanted to make some sort of bold departure on nuclear weapons, so it said: “in the event of hostilities, the United States will consider nuclear weapons to be available for use as other munitions.”

Where this involved a foreign base, prior consent would be obtained. Better still the United States would seek the understanding of all its allies in this policy, though public disclosure should be undertaken cautiously.<sup>119</sup> As a statement on the equivalence of nuclear and conventional weapons, this was a triumph for the JCS. But there were ambiguities about how it was interpreted. At later NSC meetings, the State Department thought its purpose was only to allow the military to plan “on the basis of the availability of nuclear weapons,” which was not new. It should not be construed “to be a present decision that atomic weapons will . . . be used in the event of *any* hostilities.” Such a decision “will necessarily involve the gravest political and foreign policy aspects. For example, in cases of limited hostilities, it will be essential to consider whether the use of atomic weapons will widen the hostilities, lose the support of allies, or increase the danger of strategic use of atomic weapons by the enemy.”<sup>120</sup>

The military was willing to be flexible here, but its answer was pitched to the administration’s desperation for savings. “Failing a decision on the use of nuclear weapons . . . it would be necessary in common prudence to develop and maintain armed forces on two bases; one assuming use of such weapons and one assuming that they might not be used.”<sup>121</sup> This way, Eisenhower would have no choice but to opt for a single-war concept because no one ever suggested the United States maintain enough forces for a conventional war. Eisenhower hesitated giving complete license to the military. The paragraph in question, he said, “is intended that the military make plans on the basis of full availability of the use of nuclear weapons.” He wanted “a clearly defined succession” of authority, a claim that negated the New Look’s ostensible first principle that there was no distinction between types of weapons.<sup>122</sup> Believing a firewall could be built between tactical and strategic nuclear weapons made no more theoretical sense than making other distinctions on the escalation ladder. But the problem was to some extent moot: if the military *planned* for a single-war, the president had no choices left.

The New Look’s position on NATO was equally cryptic. In theory, Eisenhower’s strategy might have also aimed to reduce Europe’s dependence on conventional forces. But what was right for the United States meant quite different things for the allies. If NSC 162/2 leaned toward nuclear threats, it left room for limited war elsewhere. It included in its estimate of U.S. military strength “the capabilities of our Allies, for their contribution to the combined might of the free world has direct bearing on the size and nature of our own military programs.” One memo stated that “the *only* hope of keeping the US defense budget under control and

of effecting reductions over the years ahead is to encourage and build up such strength among our Allies that they can furnish the trained manpower and resources for their own defense."<sup>123</sup> The intention was to shift the balance of forces forecast by Truman's last budget.<sup>124</sup> The JCS reminded Eisenhower that these reductions would have to come from U.S. troops overseas. The United States had to initiate a campaign to "educate" the allies.<sup>125</sup>

Public statements, such as Dulles's "massive retaliation" speech in January 1954, muddled the educational campaign even more. It would take time to figure out what it all meant. Glenn Snyder argued that it failed to offer the revolution it claimed. Its willingness to use nuclear weapons was unclear about contingencies, stressing instead the authority of the military to make that decision. This was what the JCS really wanted. More controversially, Snyder detected in the New Look a type of isolationism that did not eschew alliances per se, but was isolationist in its means. Nuclear deterrence was especially appealing to nationalists because it promised security without the risks of entrapment. It needed to "draw the lines" around the Soviet Bloc, but in reducing the links between the United States and its allies to one of bases, the U.S. limited the restraints imposed on its freedom. The first four years of NATO had been a constant source of anxiety for the U.S. military. The New Look expressed the frustrations of limited war, and alliance politics. But it risked turning the allies into hired mercenaries, defending America's expansive frontier, but offering little permanent security in return. Thus, for NATO, the most troubling part of it all was not Massive Retaliation, which they suspected had been in U.S. strategy all along, but what U.S. officials euphemistically called the "principle of concentration of forces." It meant the Europeans were to continue with Lisbon, but alone. The New Look thus made German rearmament look even more dangerous to France and accordingly reduced its incentives to cooperate on Lisbon. It concluded that the balance of power *in* NATO could come only by developing the assets denied to Germany: nuclear weapons. The British had likewise wanted their 1952 GSP to reaffirm the "special relationship" to master U.S. power, not reduce its presence in Europe or encourage pre-delegated authority to U.S. commanders in NATO.

The fear of a U.S. withdrawal under the New Look was undoubtedly exaggerated. Yet the new policy was widely interpreted in Europe as a sign of neo-isolationist currents lurking in the Republican Party. According to the 1952 GSP, the greatest risk of war did *not* come from Soviet aggressiveness but from an underestimation, likely by the Americans, of the Soviet reaction to a crisis or, worse still, from the American "mental

outlook tending to the view that war is preferable to the indefinite continuation of the Cold War and thus to a demand for a show-down." While Harriman claimed that war would only come because of the Kremlin's mood, the British were worried about American moods. Slessor thought the American people were prone to volatility. He gave considerable attention to America's eagerness to "go it alone," or to presume that war with the Soviets was sooner or later inevitable. Responding to an article by Joseph Alsop in October 1951, Slessor wrote to his friend George Fielding Eliot in New York:

Joe is normally a good reporter. But I think during the past 12 months he has rather lost his judgment. He seems to revel in his new role as a prophet of doom—his letters to me and our conversations when we meet usually end with the words "God help us all." I am very fond of him and think he has a damned good brain, but I think he is suffering from the characteristic American tendency to see everything either as pitch black or pure white—no middle course. And he seems to have convinced himself that the Soviets have a fixed intention to attack the West by military action—which I personally do not believe.

MacArthur's "leadership" in Korea, the subsequent ballyhoo on his recall, coupled with the antics of the McCarthy's etc in the U.S., and the various statements by people like Hoover and Taft, shook us to the core. I think we have largely recovered from that feeling. But, as Joe says, we are in the atomic front line and you are still the hell of a long way from it, and the experience of the Korea panic last winter does make us wonder a bit what you are liable to do in another really critical situation.<sup>126</sup>

He was more unguarded in a letter to Sir Roger Makins. The risks of being a U.S. ally go beyond its retreat into isolationism. The menace stemmed from deep cultural deficiencies. "The American people are impulsive and a people of extremes and, though they are fundamentally peace-loving, lets [*sic*] face it, they are capable through ignorance and prejudice of forcing their government to precipitate a war. Isolationism and anti-British sentiment and the 'hell, lets [*sic*] get this thing over' feeling thrives on ignorance, and the ignorance of the British point of view throughout America is appalling."<sup>127</sup>

There was a paradox, of course, in advocating greater reliance on nuclear weapons, controlled by an impetuous ally, by trying to encourage greater restraint by that same ally. But that tension lay at the heart of

Britain's sense of strategic vulnerability, and the 1952 GSP, informed by both the utility and the dangers of nuclear weapons, sought to bring U.S. nuclear power under some gentle control. This desire grew as Britain tried to make sense of the New Look from the utterances of Eisenhower, Dulles, and Radford. The effect was discomfiting. Optimists dismissed the New Look as having "no serious purpose other than to persuade the doubters among the American electorate that the Administration are finally showing signs of determination in foreign affairs and can express it in good straight American terms." But others understood these "good straight American terms" the voters wanted, exposed tendencies that might prove disastrous to British interests in NATO. Makins saw New Look as a form of "disengagement . . . reminiscent of the policy of peripheral defense." Truman officials interpreted the 1952 GSP the same way, as proof of British "non-engagement" in Europe.<sup>128</sup> Between "non-engagement" and "disengagement," a continental strategy along Lisbon lines stood no chance.

## CHAPTER SIX

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### *Two Cultures of Massive Retaliation*

#### *Neo-isolationism and the Idealism of John Foster Dulles*

In 1984, asked what “Massive Retaliation” meant, Curtis LeMay said there were “as many answers to that question as there are people around.” He thought it meant nothing more than what had been U.S. policy all along: have “overwhelming strength so that nobody would dare attack us.”<sup>1</sup> This simple statement of deterrence was not, though, how John Foster Dulles presented it at the time. Coming on the heels of the Korean War, Dulles’s Council on Foreign Relations speech in January 1954 was associated with an attempt to differentiate the New Look from its predecessors’. The war showed, Dulles’s said, that “a potential aggressor, who is glutted with manpower, might be tempted to attack in confidence that resistance would be confined to manpower.” The way to “deter aggression is for the free community to be willing to respond vigorously at places and with means of its own choosing.” The United States should “depend primarily upon a great capacity to retaliate, instantly, by means and places of our own choosing.” The word was “instantly” not massively, and Dulles’s later clarification in *Foreign Affairs* even suggested that a thermonuclear spasm was “not the kind of power that could most usefully be evoked under all circumstances.” The United States would not turn “every local war into a world war.” Even so, Dulles was both criticized for his inflexibility and lauded for stating what was self-evident.<sup>2</sup>

Sympathetic historians see Dulles’s prevarications as an effort to raise Soviet uncertainty.<sup>3</sup> But the range of meanings attributed to Massive Retaliation suggests nuclear power played on a variety of possibilities,

that what is important is not Dulles's real intentions, but their affective capacities. Dulles may have known what he wanted to say—this is unclear from his papers—but the effect on NATO, domestic audiences, and adversaries alike meant Massive Retaliation was understood and presented differently. It was not, therefore, simply an attempt to grapple with the uncertainties of the thermonuclear age: it was also an expression of cultural uneasiness about the American nation, and Dulles's vaguely theological efforts to replace containment.

We associate Massive Retaliation mainly with Dulles's internationalism but it embodied, among other things, strategic interests tied to an embattled culture of neo-isolationism. Glenn Snyder claimed as much in his early study of the New Look.<sup>4</sup> But he could not explain why an otherwise internationalist foreign policy included these countertendencies. Eisenhower ran in 1952 to keep the Republican Party from falling into the hands of the isolationists and retain—with some adjustments of course—the heart of Truman's internationalism.<sup>5</sup> His gestures to conservatives were just that, were they not?<sup>6</sup> Yet, the ties to isolationism were tighter when we look carefully at the symbols, metaphors, and history-driven logic of those especially drawn to Massive Retaliation. However contradictory and short-lived Massive Retaliation may have been, it was run through with threads that gratified the rising tide of neo-isolationism. Consider, for starters, public reaction to the foreign policies of Truman and Eisenhower. Truman's decision to send 4 divisions to NATO triggered a Great Debate over its strategic logic and Truman's constitutional authority. The strategy also pandered to the laziness of the Europeans, endangering the constitution and the American taxpayer. In contrast, when Dulles claimed the United States might *automatically* initiate a nuclear war—a position that usurped congressional prerogative with more drama and finality than the troop decision—criticism was limited to a few liberals, such as Adlai Stevenson and Chester Bowles, defense intellectuals like William Kaufmann, and disgruntled army officers who resented the air bias it implied.<sup>7</sup> We can describe how some Americans favored ground forces while others preferred nuclear power, but we have no obvious tools explaining why these corresponded with ideological loyalties.

One answer lies in Eisenhower's military prestige, and his command of the Republicans, who had been the main source of partisan resistance to liberal internationalism.<sup>8</sup> A deeper answer rests with the way some Americans understood the strategic dilemmas facing the United States in the mid-1950s so as to see nuclear retaliation as a *natural* representation

of American authority. This is confusing because the New Look was supposed to sustain internationalism, just at an acceptable cost. Eisenhower's socialization in Europe made him the consummate multilateralist. But this underestimates the symbolism of the New Look that spoke to another constituency. I prefer the term *neo-isolationist* to describe this tendency, without the pejorative weight that accompanies the term. Liberal historians assume that isolationism was a pathological reaction to the modernized condition of global life, a condition that demanded robust internationalism.<sup>9</sup> Liberal internationalism was itself an expression of particular conceptions of social order that were historically contingent, but in the 1950s, many liberals perceived their triumph as the "end of ideology." Rather than seeing isolationism normatively, as an antimodernist current, I see *both* tendencies as subcultures whose aim was to fix their assumptions onto American identity, capturing the idea of the nation for their particular ideological position.

I apply this to the social sources of the New Look's interest in nuclear weapons. I look at the cultural logic of isolationism, showing how its *domestic* foes were closely identified with internationalism. Its arguments were not about political philosophy as such, but patriotism. Internationalism was changing American culture from the inside by importing alien ideas and compromising the nation's constitutional and moral purity. U.S. foreign policies had to be consistent with values central to the nation's mission. To violate them brought great dangers to the Republic. These values generated ways of seeing the world or rather the *correct* way the United States should be oriented to it. It generated arguments for *appropriate* behavior, a chain that linked individual morality to social cohesion to political virtue and, finally, to policy. It played out, however, in at least two different ways. For Dulles, Massive Retaliation was a search for an absolute deterrent behind which the United States could recover its lost spiritual dynamism, historically the foundation for its security. The other tendency was explicitly unilateralist and pressured Dulles's internationalism with which it had a brief flirtation. It grew from the Taft-wing of the Republican Party and parts of the military. The New Look's basic military texts—Dulles's Massive Retaliation, and the military's occasional public statements on strategy—reveal an uneasy affinity between neo-isolationism and parts of Eisenhower's strategic doctrine. His foreign policy defended internationalism from a full-fledged retreat, but his strategic doctrine was sufficiently nationalistic to build a coalition around nuclear weapons. The tension between Dulles's self-effacing commitment to NATO, and the nationalist texture of his strategic allies caused bafflement in NATO.



**The Culture of Neo-isolationism**

The battles between neo-isolationists and internationalists were to establish the legitimacy of their particular view of American history. They were fights over the “origins” of American identity, to inscribe social or political legitimacy.<sup>10</sup> The writings of Truman’s conservative critics, in virtually every breath, are permeated with references to the “authentic” character of the United States, and about the correspondence between the values of the *internal* world of the United States and the *external* environment. Arguments over national character were constitutive of the interests being defended because they provided the reasons for a citizen’s attachment to the nation. They articulated a sense of belonging that interpreted the experiences Americans faced against the fabric of what it was to *be* an American. Such arguments tended to appeal to “common-sense” ideologies, to narratives that offered a genealogy of the nation in which certain values were enclosed inside clear cultural borders. Neo-isolationists insisted that internationalism was the foreign policy arm of New Deal liberals and the collectivisms with which they mingled. This produced a corresponding strategic culture. The preference that internationalists had for multilateralism was a function of what John Gerard Ruggie calls the “embedded liberalism” of post-New Deal capitalism. This was the view that the counterproductive retreat into autarky characterizing the 1930s could be offset if national economies were given moderate control over welfare to offset the loss of control induced by trade liberalization. A liberal world system could be reconciled with self-determination if states were given a limited social safety net.<sup>11</sup> The behavior thus developed under the New Deal regime produced sympathy for multilateral trade arrangements, as well as expectations of greater social harmonization between states. They fostered intersubjective values of trade, arbitration, and the logic of collective security. Yet New Deal liberalism was never entirely secure in the United States. It conflicted with anti-statist traditions that had their own foreign policy arguments. It is possible, I think, to draw a consistent neo-isolationist map of America’s strategic interests from conservative values by examining the neo-isolationists’ concept of social order, self-image, taxonomy of the international system (who are friends and enemies?), concept of international conflict (the origins of threats, disorder, war, and peace), and what is concomitantly understood to be the “natural” use of military force to manage the international system.

“Isolationism” was used in the 1940s and 1950s to denote a *prewar* disposition toward appeasement. What survived into the 1950s—anticommunism and an endorsement of nuclear air power—was largely

a conservative phenomenon, as most left and pacifist isolationists recanted or were absorbed into the optimism of internationalism. Aided by its ideological content, postwar neo-isolationism was less burdened with pacifism, and so moved from a prewar "theory of impregnability" to a postwar "isolationism of power and preparedness." With its affection for American omnipotence, neo-isolationism not only had an expansive sense of power and national interest, but also an awareness of the need to use this power in ways that protected domestic social values: small government, entrepreneurial and technologically modern individualism, and the ideals of a rich Christian communalism that unified classes, races, and sexes in a retraditionalized nation.<sup>12</sup>

Not all anti-New Deal forces were neo-isolationist, since many conservatives, Eisenhower among them, were vocal internationalists. But conservatism of a type—largely, not exclusively, mid-western—blended an antipathy to New Deal liberalism with a hostility toward "Eastern" values to generate a constituency for neo-isolationism. The origin of mid-western isolationism has been much debated, but it likely had roots in changes to the national economy at the turn of the century, namely the weakening of agrarian power to Eastern capitalists. This gave it links to the Populists and other egalitarian strains.<sup>13</sup> Since Eastern capitalists were seen as supporters of imperialism—something many mid-western Republicans had also backed—internationalism could be equated with the privations of the rural mid-west. Banks, industrialists, elites with ties to Britain, were all antithetical to real American culture. Since what economic prosperity the mid-west enjoyed was built on a largely closed market, it was less concerned with trade. Its self-sufficiency produced its virtues, aligning Western "character" with the ideals of Americanism. They rejected the East as the East had rejected Britain.<sup>14</sup>

Mistrust of bankers and transnational business grew during the Depression, meshing with a hatred of unionism, especially among businesses of the sort that prospered in the markets of the mid-west. Unions were proof of a collectivist creep that benefited certain elites. They were also indicative of the class warfare that socialists preached. For foreign affairs, this meant that internationalism divided the nation against itself. The March 1949 *National Republic*—a "monthly magazine of fundamental Americanism"—was devoted not just to liberal sins, but to rejecting membership in NATO. Its author linked the two by arguing that "small town banks," once "the backbone of a free and growing economy," had been replaced by a paternalistic internationalist bureaucracy in Washington. Robert Taft believed his election "showed that even the American workman will not listen to a class appeal, but proposes to vote

as an American citizen first.”<sup>15</sup> This longing for national unity conflated the enemies of egalitarianism—economic patricians, hoarders of national wealth—with the agents of New Deal collectivism: all of them were cultural and intellectual elitists.<sup>16</sup>

In contrast, internationalism grew from the view that nineteenth-century U.S. security had been a function of British naval supremacy and the balance of power. This led to a rapprochement with Britain under Theodore Roosevelt, but it also flowed from the assumption of a cultural harmony between the Anglo-Saxons, buttressed by commercial and financial ties.<sup>17</sup> In this sense, internationalism was overdetermined by the confluence of material and ideological interests that unified a transnational elite dedicated to domestic and international liberal reform. It was legitimized by racial precepts that saw the “origins” of America in a wider Anglo-Saxon history. Americans had to see this sense of global engagement in familiar terms. On the Second World War, David Lewis Einstein wrote, “We must extend the Monroe Doctrine to England and embrace the foremost American power after our own.” Walter Lippmann’s *U.S. Foreign Policy: Shield of the Republic* advocated close cooperation with Britain (and the Soviet Union) as America’s only realistic foreign policy.<sup>18</sup> His “limited internationalism” was most popular among those who adhered to the idea of Anglo-American values, and least among anti-British hyphenates. His argument drew from a presupposition that England provided the liberal character of American society and, therefore, Wilson’s “internationalism and Monroe’s isolationism were in complete accord.”<sup>19</sup>

This version of national history was antithetical to that preached by conservatives. Even faced with totalitarian regimes overseas, many retained a belief that America had no friends in the world, not even among the enemies of fascism. As Manfred Jonas has noted, mid-western homage to individualism and national self-reliance did not justify *isolation* if it believed cooperation was the only means of dealing with fascism. What made isolationism necessary was the assertion that “all countries likely to be involved in conflict were following selfish aims unrelated to American objectives and antithetical to American principles.”<sup>20</sup> The providential strain of this thinking read history as the divine unveiling of the New World.<sup>21</sup> Little could be gained by defending the decadence of the past. There was, then, a forestalling of the universalism that animated liberal internationalism, even while neo-isolationists continued to believe that the United States was the last best hope of civilization. Wrote Henry Cabot Lodge in 1932:

The picture of a whole world permanently at peace, all the races of which enjoy an identical standard of living, as assuredly majestic, but

so too is the Washingtonian concept of an America at peace, rising pure and serene out of the stormy waters which surround it and enjoying its own prosperity and its own democracy—twin blessings which, in spite of assiduous business effort and a “war for democracy,” it has been unable to vouchsafe for others. The likelihood that the purely American ideal is measurably closer at hand carries little weight with the world Utopians. For they claim for their ideal that it is in harmony with the American pioneering spirit, since it attempts great things which have never been done before. But in harmony, too, is the ideal of “America first.”<sup>22</sup>

While the Second World War weakened isolationism because many of its dire predictions did not materialize,<sup>23</sup> the arguments that fed it remained in tact. After 1945, internationalism was linked to communism; the enemies without now tied to the enemies within.

By the late 1940s, conservative business interests found allies in the Legion and the House Un-American Activities Committee, and carried the fight against the New Deal by charging that labor was infiltrated with communists. General Motors President Charles E. Wilson (and Eisenhower’s Secretary of Defense), announced in 1946 that “the problems of the United States can be captiously summed up in two words: Russia abroad and labor at home.” The Chamber of Commerce, led by Colorado lawyer Ward Bannister, Nebraska insurance executive Francis P. Matthews, and Minnesota Professor Emerson P. Schmidt, launched a campaign to expose “the menace of Socialism in Europe, and its effect upon this country.” They generated a corresponding foreign policy: Matthews, Truman’s Secretary of the Navy at the time, argued that the United States, as the “repository of the Ark of the Covenant,” ought to “declare our intention to pay . . . the price of instituting a war to compel cooperation for peace.” Being the “initiator of a war of aggression . . . would win for us a proud and popular title; we would become the first aggressors for peace.”<sup>24</sup> He was fired for this. But the idea of preventive war—or *just war*, for that matter—was not restricted to frustrated isolationists but was given a thorough airing in the *New Look*.<sup>25</sup>

The career of Robert Taft reveals this trajectory. Liberal historians have been unkind to Taft, although his anti-interventionism gained some ironic support during Vietnam.<sup>26</sup> Liberals criticized his opposition to U.S. involvement in Europe as inconsistent, calling it “political nonsense” because they could not make sense of his voting. Kenneth Thompson thought Taft’s foreign policy lacked a theoretical foundation, but his domestic views were dogmatically grounded in an “ancient creed” that

gave isolationism more cultural bite than collective security had acquired.<sup>27</sup> By his own admission, Taft's consuming fear was the growth of the federal government toward collectivism. International trade interests were unworthy contributors to the national interest. Exports were only 5 percent of the economy so losing them would not hurt as much as being dragged into a war.<sup>28</sup> This produced a resistance to all ventures that enlarged the state. Taft was not opposed to U.S. investment overseas, only *public* loans that expanded federal institutions. He attacked lend-lease because of the power it gave the president to run the war. He objected to U.S. intervention in the Korean War not because he opposed resisting communism in Asia—far from it—but because Truman had usurped congressional authority. As John Armstrong wrote: "Senator Taft's ideal was the preservation of the late nineteenth century American political and economic system to which he attributed this country's greatness." For Taft "to have acknowledged the existence of a serious threat to American security would have entailed compromising his stand against Big, Executive government, for international crises have a way of tending to reduce the role of Congress to that of a ratifying body, and of serving to increase the powers of government."<sup>29</sup> Armstrong's criticism was consistent with the liberal and realist view that external threats demand the attention of a powerful and dispassionate state.<sup>30</sup> But Taft's fear of how liberals wanted to change American institutions was not entirely delusional. From inside a culture obsessed with the disintegration of the American nation, Taft displayed an idiosyncratic fidelity to principle, torn as they were by the limited choices offered by years of Democrat failure.<sup>31</sup>

Similar ideas were prevalent throughout the neo-isolationist community. Douglas MacArthur, appealing to white anxieties over civil rights, for example, told an audience in Mississippi in March 1952 that the "rapid centralization of power" under Truman had left the states "in the position of supplicant" to the federal government. To the conservative, this centralization was part of the debasement of nationalism since it was built on liberal fallacies of "internationalism and collective security." Such concepts offered "seductive murmurs . . . that patriotism is outmoded." He, on the other hand, stood for "nothing but Americanism."<sup>32</sup> Defining "Americanism" was the aim of these interventions since it enabled conservatives to fasten nationalism—in which all Americans had a stake—to values they espoused. In a John Birch Society tribute, Senator William Knowland, champion of the China lobby and self-appointed heir to Taft, took time to include a definition of "*americanism*." It was simply the opposite of what he presumed to be communism. "The *americanist* believes that the individual should retain the freedom to make his own

bargain with life, and the responsibility for the results of that bargain—and that means are as important as ends in the civilized social order which he desires. The same two words, with initial capitals, merely denote the aggressive fighters for those two mutually exclusive philosophies.” Knowland argued that the word *americanist* could become the “standard bearer” of all struggles for freedom in the world. In other words, it was not a description of particular peoples, but a way of life into which anyone could tap if they rejected collectivism. The American nation was an ideological model for all history.<sup>33</sup>

The Bricker Amendment reflected similar anxieties about American values and how international agreements were bringing socialism and desegregation to the U.S. Senator Bricker believed the “power greediness of the New Dealers has led them to assume responsibilities which the constitution never intended.” William Jenner thanked Bricker for “the prolonged effort you have made to stop the destruction of the Constitution by means of pseudo-international agencies designed to carry on the New Deal revolution.”<sup>34</sup> The amendment, successfully opposed by Eisenhower, was supported by the American Association of Small Business Men, the American Legion, the American Farm Bureau Federation, the American Medical Association, the Daughters of the American Revolution, the National Economic Council, the National Grange, and the State Bar Associations of six mid-western, two western and five southern states.<sup>35</sup> They feared the totalitarian “in our midst” using world government and fabricated crises to undermine the Constitution.<sup>36</sup> R. Moulton Pettey believed that the “lawless and unconstitutional acts” of the Democrat presidencies were indicative of “their tyrant-like psychology.”<sup>37</sup>

The significance of these arguments was how they depended on myths and symbols of national heritage. In an address to the Sons of the American Revolution in 1953, George Sokolsky opened his plea for the Bricker Amendment by linking his personal history as the child of immigrants, to Constitutional limits on presidential authority. He saw indelible ties between personal freedom, religious and familial veneration, and loyalty to a nation historically and morally separated from the “Old World.”

In those days, no one questioned the virtues of the Constitution. In the early days of this Century, before One World was synthesized into an ideal, we thought of ourselves as Americans and were grateful for the opportunity and the advantage. Patriotism was then the noblest of ideals. It was accepted that one loved his country as he

adored his God and respected his parents. It was a way of life from which no decent person deviated. We, children of immigrant parents, were taught that in the public schools in my generation—and our schools, of those days, produced no spies.

We memorized the Preamble to the Constitution, perhaps as a stimulus to read all of it. We knew about the separation of powers, of checks and balances, of the rights of the individual and the limitations upon the authority of government. Tyranny and injustice were close to our parents. Those were the reasons why they came to the United States. As children, we learned to treasure liberty because our parents had so little of it where they came from; we treasured the Constitution as the charter of our liberties.<sup>38</sup>

American patriotism at the end of the century was not as Sokolsky remembered it. The wounds between north and south were only being healed by finding common enemies in other races, at home and abroad, and the growth of hyphenated Americans produced serious discussion of cultural pluralism. Only the Great War consolidated support behind a more ascriptive Americanism, and it did so in ways that more closely resembled the tyranny and injustice from which his family was fleeing.<sup>39</sup> Sokolsky's fiction served a purpose, for him and for Bricker. It instantiated a history of a homogenized society, equating freedom with moulding new Americans out of old Europeans, new individuals out of old collectivists.

These self-images delineated conservative identity at home but they worked abroad too. Conservatives inverted the argument they were culpable for appeasement by claiming it was internationalism that weakened American patriotism, and thus U.S. authority in the world. In 1954 Hoover told his home town of West Branch that internationalism “shrunk our freedoms by crushing taxes, huge defense costs, inflation, and compulsory military service,” and created the conditions of weakness abroad that led to the “surrender at Yalta” and the loss of China.<sup>40</sup> Joining alliances merely dissipated American influence for good. Worse still, “fuzzy-minded” liberals were in league with the original enemy of the Revolution, Britain. The taxonomy neo-isolationists used for world affairs thus derived from how *others* related to America's historic mission. This way, they also saw America's technological and economic power as an indication of its moral authority in the world. This exceptionalism sometimes precluded conceiving of the world as a community. What really distinguished conservatives was their cynicism about having worthy friends in the world. They did not think in terms of interest defined by power; friends came only from shared moral commitments.

How else can we grasp why a Taft supporter might attack Britain's pursuit of its self-interest as "absolutely treasonous"?<sup>41</sup> Dismissing Europe as decadent, it also saw the unfolding of liberty toward Asia, an extension of the frontier, primitive but tameable.<sup>42</sup> As one of Taft's biographers wrote, the Asia-first lobby that was his constituency "rested most of all . . . on a strong concept of American nationalism; on long inherited suspicion of the British; on a wish, conscious or not, to have this country go it alone; on an attitude of rejection toward Europe."<sup>43</sup>

Not all conservatives saw Asia in such terms, but China took on symbolic importance because it was a dramatic index of U.S. weakness. By 1949, many Americans believed they were losing the war against communism and, for those burdened with delusions of omnipotence, this could only be explained through some internal failing.<sup>44</sup> Since the enemies of "Americanism" were in Washington, neo-isolationists saw the cause of U.S. insecurity as America's internal ideological derangement. Korea brought these anxieties to the surface, which accounts for the growing influence of nationalists on American strategic doctrine in the mid-1950s.<sup>45</sup> It was especially during the Korean War they came to believe that the United States had few friends. Why? Because many allies, especially Britain until 1951, were led by socialists; they wanted to trade with communists; they were prepared to admit China into the UN but not Germany into NATO; and their foreign policies were not driven by principle. "I lived in England and Europe," wrote Samuel Brooks to Hickenlooper, "and I know their ulterior motives. The French are over one-third communist." For Americans, this meant one thing: "The American taxpayer has been a sucker since Franklin D. Roosevelt first got so cozy with foreigners and it is up to men like yourself to help put a stop to it."<sup>46</sup> Taft's constituents complained it was a "ridiculous farce to call them our Allies. They don't give a hoot [*sic*] for us or anyone else, except when it temporarily [*sic*] serves their purpose." Deference to allies was humiliating. "Frankly there is not one of those countries that would not sell us down the river if it served their own selfish interests."<sup>47</sup> Allies also cost money ("As a taxpayer, I am fed up sending our hard earned money to the lazy socialist and communist nations of Europe."), but it was not parsimony that drove this. Neo-isolationists were disposed to see federal aid with hostility because of what it meant at home. They complained about the "waste," but also the "empire-building by the hordes of paper-pushers in the State Department, MSA, NATO, etc." Their enemies remained internal and thus more infuriating. "I am NOT in favor of the \$5.3 billion dollar foreign aid bill," complained one Texan in 1953. "When shall we concentrate on our own defense?"<sup>48</sup> At the



heart of this rage was Britain, sometimes passing the Soviet Union as the historic villain. One wrote from Iowa: "England is, and always has been, our greatest enemy—not Russia."<sup>49</sup> Another echoed this: "While I fully realize that Communism is bad, I wonder if anyone has ever wondered if there isn't perhaps a worse evil, namely Britainism." Conservatives complained of Britain's "dusty web" of "hoary power politics," its complicity with Yalta and the fall of China, and the habit of its press toward "anti-Americanism." All of this threatened American interests because of the ability of the British "to subordinate our National interest to theirs." They feared that America was reverting to a colony. Are "England and France dictating out policy?" Roosevelt, Truman, and even Eisenhower, were accused of "putting loyalty to Britain ahead of loyalty to the United States."<sup>50</sup>

Taft shared these sentiments. In a March 1952 interview, he claimed that Truman's unwillingness to use nuclear weapons against China in the Korean War was because he "didn't want to offend Great Britain."<sup>51</sup> Shortly before his death, he wrote to Hoover: "I never said that we should 'go it alone,' but I certainly want a freer hand than we have had and don't want to have the British able to bring a lot of pro-communist nations to the support of our position against our freedom of action."<sup>52</sup> Hoover understood precisely, having written angrily in 1943 about Lippmann's *U.S. Foreign Policy*.

The whole book is built upon the premise that the British have been our friends and guardians over 120 years and consequently we ought to do various things with Great Britain. *Lippmann belongs to the great clan developing in the United States who would like to see our re-entry into the British Empire.* The British themselves have recently made proposals to Roosevelt that we should establish common citizenship, common currency, free trade and a military alliance. Roosevelt is afraid to procede [*sic*] before the next election. But we may again see this step by step method to get us into some union with Britian [*sic*]. Lippmann's book feeds this fire by a total distortion of American history. I have never believed that the growth of the United States owed one atom to the helpfulness of the British Empire.<sup>53</sup>

The battleground of foreign policy was American history itself. Liberals twisted it to bring America closer to the British Empire. The past held the story of American character and idealism; it was an epistemic text, delineating friends and enemies, identities and interests. In strategic

terms, Hoover's narrative pointed toward limited options for coping with international disorder. Collective security was out (the UN was a "communistic monstrosity," "the worst booby trap we ever blundered into," a "nest of spies operating against us").<sup>54</sup> Alliances were risky because Europeans were treacherous. The "ancient hate and strife" of Europe was why America's "fathers" came to the "New World."<sup>55</sup> But if not one world or two, then what? The answer pointed to a rededicated nationalism. To neo-isolationists, Americanism meant freedom from foreign influence. "The men who remained true to the traditions of July 4, and who also today take the stand that, if necessary, America has to go it alone, are the only real Americans."<sup>56</sup> While diplomatic historians may doubt the resonance of cultural identity in national interest, Edmond Lincoln from Wilmington, Delaware did not:

Over the past thousand years there has been almost continual strife and warfare amongst the various European countries. Their point of view, their economic and political problems their language, their traditions, their national objectives—all are almost utterly foreign to those of the United States, if not diametrically opposed thereto.

We really subordinate our national sovereignty and our domestic life to the whims and dictates of numerous small nations, which most of our ancestors left behind generations ago in order to find the freedom of individual opportunity which is America. . . .

The pious pursuit of utopian dreams and of plans and schemes which have never worked from the beginning of time, *because they are inconsistent with human nature*—all such policies serve only to confuse and to progressively weaken our country, until some time in the not too distant future we are likely to fall an easy prey to those same subversive elements and political beliefs which we now profess to oppose, but to which, through the Atlantic Pact and similar measures, we are virtually "selling out" the American System itself.<sup>57</sup>

This homage to national solitude was bathed with a religious certainty that tied Christianity to Americanism. The *National Republic Magazine* took the reader step-by-step through the ways communism was actually an attack on the Ten Commandments. Arguing "religion is the greatest bulwark against governmental organized slavery," it concluded with a full page admonition for Americans to "Go to Church." Why? Because "if you will attend church services regularly, you will become better Christians. If you become better Christians, you will automatically become better Americans."<sup>58</sup> That God was on the side of this definition

of America was never much in doubt. "The Lord hates compromising with the devil," wrote one voter to Taft. "So, it seems to me that if I were President Eisenhower, I would either immediately bring all our boys home from all over the world or I would tell the American people, England, France, etc. that we're are going to win." In degrees, those who wrote Taft in 1953, argued in favor of taking the *military* offensive and scrapping the allies. What "this country sadly needs," wrote C.Y. Semple, tying nationalism with masculinity, "is a man who will spread his feet out, tell the world where we stand and STAND THERE. Conciliation is a high faluten [*sic*] word for appeasement."<sup>59</sup>

This rebellion against appeasement and internationalism was what led conservatives toward apocalyptic power. In 1953, the Commonwealth Club of California concluded a study of U.S. foreign policy with a ringing endorsement of a shift toward unilateralism. Three-quarters of the Club believed the "loss of China" was due not to Chinese history but to "erroneous actions by the U.S.," and overwhelmingly supported a "firmer policy as regards Korea and Red China." Eighty-four percent said the United States should "seize the initiative" and abandon "containment." The same number doubted this would caused a "full scale war." Ninety-one percent favored seeking out "weak points of the Soviet armor." Some of these were ideological, but there was a desire to exploit America's atomic superiority while it lasted. Two-thirds advocated "preventive war" against the Soviet Union.<sup>60</sup>

Neo-isolationists reached to the indisputable symbol of American technological superiority, the atomic bomb. At a Republican National Committee lunch in 1952, William Knowland touched the reflex that linked America's scientific genius with its security. Responding to a JCS statement that the United States was losing air superiority over Korea, an exasperated Knowland declared: "This great nation of ours, pioneer in the field of aviation, with the greatest industrial capacity in the world and a nation that has prided itself in research and development had now reached that point where third and fourth rate powers with donated equipment from the Soviet Union might well gain an air supremacy over us."<sup>61</sup> Hoover urged MacArthur to make the same point in April 1951.

Rather than rely principally on ground armies and manpower, we must turn to our genius to produce superior weapons. Air power best reflects this American and allied genius. A superior air force would enable us to strike in Eurasia from bases outside the mainland which we know we can hold. Air power, thus, is the war deterrent in which we must place our principal reliance. But it is also more. It

is a mobile force which can hold the initiative. No inferior ground army can do that. And our ground armies must be inferior—and tied to one sector.<sup>62</sup>

Hoover continued to articulate the connection between piety, tradition, and technology throughout his post-presidential years. In a 1954 speech on his 80th birthday, he exclaimed:

A nation is strong or weak, it thrives or perishes upon what it believes to be true. If our youth is rightly instructed in the faith of our fathers; in the traditions of our country; in the dignity of each individual man, then our power will be stronger than any weapon of destruction that man can devise.

And now as to this whole gamut of Socialist infection, I say to you . . . God has blessed us with another wonderful word—heritage. The great documents of that heritage are not from Karl Marx. They are the Bible, the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. . . . The last few years have seen advances in science and technology which amount almost to a revolution in our life and world relations. If we maintain free minds, free spirits, and direct our steps aright, still other new horizons and new frontiers are open to us. New inventions and new applications of old knowledge will come to us daily.

These new frontiers give us other blessings. Not only do they expand out living but they also open up new opportunities and new areas of adventure and enterprise. They open up new vistas of beauty. They unfold the wonders of the atom and the heavens. Daily they prove the reality of an all-wise Supreme Giver of Law.<sup>63</sup>

This consecration of tradition shared the aspirations, language, and spirit of Dulles's Massive Retaliation a few months earlier. Their common assertion of national genius made air power the naturalized preference of American history, the means by which America might keep itself pure in a dirty world. Under Truman, it was a wasting asset. Douglas Hill summed up the strategic logic:

What to do now? The answer is do something, either fight or quit. Slowly bleeding to death is no good. For my part I am an isolationist. Don't butt into other nations' affairs and stay so strong they wouldn't dare touch you. . . . If Russia is the mastermind in Korea and Russia won't cooperate in the UN and that is what we insist upon, let's hit

Russia before we can't stand up due to defending every misfit nation on earth.<sup>64</sup>

The strategic disposition here points in two different directions. Many neo-isolationists preferred preventive nuclear war to a bewildering stalemate, with enough religious content to bring it closer to just war. On the other hand, the more earthly were convinced that a sufficiently powerful America would deter any attack against it, obviating the choice between nuclear and limited war altogether.<sup>65</sup> Some of these ideas were found in prewar isolationism. After 1945 their clearest voice was Taft's with echoes in Hoover, MacArthur, Knowland and LeMay, when he spoke.<sup>66</sup> In a Senate speech just after the outbreak of the Korean War, Taft declared "that the time had to come, sooner or later, when we would give definite notice to the Communists that a move beyond a declared line would result in war."<sup>67</sup> In the Great Debate, he argued the United States should rely on air and sea power equipped with atomic weapons, as "the greatest deterrent to war."<sup>68</sup> This was a modernized isolationism to be sure. Critics charged Taft was clinging to Fortress America and in one sense they were right: the Fortress concept did mean manning the walls of alone. But it did not say where the walls were built. Taft advocated advancing them to a place where atomic power could be flexed. Bases and allies might, under those conditions, be useful.<sup>69</sup> But neo-isolationist strategy was in a broader sense, deeply counterfactual. It argued about how U.S. foreign policy *ought* to have been conducted, depending on the lessons of Pearl Harbor, Yalta, and China, rather than, as internationalists did, Versailles or Munich. The desire for regaining the initiative also satisfied a psychological need to act rather than be acted upon. Nationalists craved a world that did not involve compromise.<sup>70</sup> Its Asian orientation was sufficiently committed to operating with a free hand that it was there most aligned with the ideals of "rollback," because it was there it imagined it could operate on the *tabula rasa* of indigenous culture. In Europe, this was too easily prejudiced by the imperialist powers to work. The desire to act in Asia was, in the end, what drove the search for a new American strategy in 1953.<sup>71</sup>

**"There is a Moral Law": John Foster Dulles, Nuclear  
Deterrence, and America's Historical Mission**

The neo-isolationist critique found its way into the New Look mainly through Taft's pressure and the U.S. air force's organizational interest in

dominating the strategic debate in the JCS and NATO. But Massive Retaliation was the child of long-time intimate of New York financiers, John Foster Dulles. As an eastern lawyer whose education, experience, and political upbringing were Wilsonian, Dulles cannot be said to have embraced the mid-western, neo-isolationist disposition. Yet he was sensitive to its hostility to liberalism and its critique of containment. Like Eisenhower, Dulles saw himself as a bridge between the nationalist and internationalist wings of American conservatism.<sup>72</sup> In a sense, he epitomized the tension between exceptionalism and universalism, between the protestant communalism of the American nation, and the cosmopolitanism of its world mission. We have not always been able to make sense of Dulles's peculiarly religious strain of nationalism. Diplomatic historians have tended to relegate the "ecstatic" or "supernatural" ideas of religion to the margins, as distortions of otherwise rational processes.<sup>73</sup> If we define religion as the belief in "an other reality" beyond our everyday lives, we see how it poses problems for social science.<sup>74</sup> Although Samuel Huntington's *Clash of civilizations*, and the post-9/11 war on terrorism have drawn attention to the role of religion in central Asian and Middle Eastern (and perhaps Beltway) politics, there is still a tendency to equate religion with primordial ethnicity.

The paradoxes in Dulles's words—his devotion to a loving God and his willingness to court apocalyptic violence—along with this bias against religion as anything but atavistic, has led us to downplay the role played by "sacred" belief in Dulles's strategic thinking. We find it easier to dismiss religiousness as a veneer over an otherwise pragmatic or often ruthless foreign policy, or to call the tension between them schizophrenia.<sup>75</sup> The exception to this is Mark Toulouse's *The transformation of John Foster Dulles* (1985), which shows that Dulles's religion was, in William James's expression, "the habitual centre of his personal energy."<sup>76</sup> But Toulouse is merely suggestive of how religion influenced actual strategic policies. Because there were other influences at play (as there always are), it is hard to see where secular and religious inspirations divide. Yet I contend that Dulles's Presbyterianism was *constitutive* of his strategic ideas, especially how the role of the United States in world history placed constraints on the sorts of power it could exert on the world stage. In understanding the role of religion in his strategy, we get, I think, a better picture of what Massive Retaliation was about, and why it emerged, fleetingly, when it did.

The revival of Dulles's reputation in the last fifteen years has been a function of being able to downplay the ideological zeal that long stood as the mark of his tenure. The trouble is that when we read "pragmatism"

in the restrained and resilient way he worked, we imply that religion *only* acts as a type of extremism or inflexibility. I am not reviving an image of Dulles as a zealot, but rather suggesting that his religious beliefs were a creative part of the way he ordered his world: they gave him his sense of the direction and purpose of history that guided his statecraft. In strategic terms, Dulles's ideals gave him *moral* criteria for differentiating between military choices.

Massive Retaliation was a critique of what he saw as the passivity and costliness of Truman's containment. It proposed that the United States rely on nuclear weapons to threaten the Soviet Union wherever communism challenged the West. The promise of "instant retaliation" against the source, Dulles thought, would prevent limited wars and even bring a resolution of the Cold War by withering Soviet will. But more than any of these things, Massive Retaliation, he argued consistently, could restore America's lost sense of *spiritual* purpose. This is where the traditional tools of the diplomatic historian become ineffectual.

To grasp this, we need to do some back tracking. Dulles would later insist that Massive Retaliation was *not* meant to signify America's intention to turn all wars into nuclear ones; as LeMay affirmed, many believed that it was simply a case of having "overwhelming strength so that nobody would dare attack us," a *realpolitik*, and unimaginative strategic idea.<sup>77</sup> But because the new plan was a critique of the Korean War, its preoccupation was the credibility of *extended deterrence*. This was a more difficult proposition in so far as it rested on making threats that endangered the allies one was trying to protect. Since this protection came in the form of deterrence-by-punishment rather than deterrence-by-denial, the threat of retaliation offered maximum provocation with minimum cover if it failed. It took decision-making out of the hands of the client without providing any guarantees of success. Worse, its credibility rested on the ability to convince the Soviet Union that under such shaky conditions, none of the allies would veto the threat in the interests of self-preservation. A nuclear strategy would have to make the decision-making space of the West indivisible, not merely directed to the protection of U.S. territory. In this sense, Massive Retaliation went further than LeMay realized. Where SAC saw allies as a way of getting bases for *American security*, Dulles wanted a doctrine that unified the "Free World" under American tutelage. What made his version of this unique was that it stemmed from his peculiar narrative about how America's *spiritual* mission to the world was the wellspring of its security.

We should not be surprised that religion played an important role on U.S. foreign policy in the 1950s, even if we do not know how to measure

it. The 1950s saw a dramatic revival in American religiosity, as both church participation and expectations of public piety reached a twentieth-century high.<sup>78</sup> Eisenhower saw himself as the “spiritual leader of our times,” elected, he told Billy Graham, to “lead America in a religious revival.”<sup>79</sup> He made the famously odd pronouncement that America needed to be based on a “deeply felt religious faith, and I don’t care what it is!”<sup>80</sup> This functional need for what would later be call “civil religion,” or in Robert Bellah’s expression, “communities of memory,” underlines the cultural pressures that made unity under God an icon of 1950s life in the United States.<sup>81</sup> Even if Eisenhower’s convictions were hollow, he could not have invoked the spirit of God in America without expecting real consequences for American life.

The reasons for this revival have been much debated, some citing the prospect of mass extinction, others the bureaucratization of life, or how the Cold War put pressure on the need for belonging to a re-traditionalized nationalism.<sup>82</sup> The persistence of the New Deal may also have called into doubt beliefs about the relationship of the individual to the state. This “boundary crisis,” in Kai Erikson’s expression, heightened the need for a reassertion of moral order.<sup>83</sup> For conservatives, if the internal and external enemies of the nation were linked by their collectivism, the foreign enemy was also atheist. As such, the 1950s spiritual revival was mostly conservative. An authentic “American way of life” could not be built on liberal tolerance if it allowed godlessness to grow. Graham made the connection: “Only as millions of Americans turn to Jesus Christ at this hour and accept him as Savior, can this nation possibly be spared the onslaught of a demon-possessed communism.”<sup>84</sup> What underpinned this hostility was a moral critique of liberal culture.<sup>85</sup> The draw of religion was its ability to satisfy a yearning for a unifying “cause” and, as Daniel Bell wrote about ideology, to convert “ideas into social levers.”<sup>86</sup> The connection between America’s real self and its godliness was captured by Justice William Douglas in 1952: Americans were by nature a “religious people whose institutions presuppose a Supreme being.”<sup>87</sup>

The United States was alone among NATO countries in making the claim that its institutions could not survive without God. Its nationalism, even when secular, had long been invested with Puritan notions of separateness. As Anders Stephanson has argued, the providentialism of Puritan thought grafted itself to the republicanism of the revolution and served as a guide to civic virtue. The secular equivalent of destinarianism was the notion that the United States was a “great ‘experiment’ for the benefit of mankind as a whole.” Americans did not find it hard to imagine that their continental empire, unfolding with effortlessness, was an



indication of God's care. But in a covenant Americans had to watch their behavior. In this sense, political and social choices were also moral ones.<sup>88</sup> Many patriots, of course, had little in common with the conservative orientation of these ideas. But what is at issue is the open content of American nationalism itself. Conservatives found an opportunity to secure the *point de capiton* of American nationalism around conservative values.<sup>89</sup> Their identity drew lines around social behavior, sharpening the edges of nationalism by providing quarantine from communism's incipient relatives, socialism, and New Deal liberalism. The idea of covenant, even for those outside the faith, made many Americans sensitive to signs of spiritual decay.<sup>90</sup> As hard as it was for liberals to understand, many believed that America's problems stemmed from a breach with the contract that protected American liberty. For them, the solution to U.S. security lay at home in a moral revival, not in engagement with the world.

Dulles made no secret of how he thought faith was indispensable to foreign policy. Moral principles, which he equated with religion, "can be brought boldly and unashamedly" into international affairs "There is a moral law which, no less than physical law, undergirds our world. . . . It can be drawn upon—indeed *must* be drawn upon—if mankind is to escape chaos and recurrent war."<sup>91</sup> Those who knew him testified to the consistency between his rhetoric and his convictions.<sup>92</sup> It is trickier to trace how this generated real strategic choices. Dulles was not a strategist and took only a passing interest in the details of military power. There was an adjustment between the instruments for which he was responsible, and the global order he hoped to build. But this adjustment was *toward* the pull of his religious ideals; he reconciled himself to the use of military power as a moral act of statecraft, but he chose means congenial to his convictions. It is not that destinarian ideas invariably produce a passion for nuclear weapons; rather, there was an "elective affinity" between Dulles's religious ideas and his strategic preferences.<sup>93</sup> He argued that America's global strength, indeed the strength of all nations, was its religious faith. The founding fathers had "deep religious convictions" that guided their devotion to human freedom.<sup>94</sup> This faith was expansive, shared with the world so that tyranny could be eliminated. The United States was "a great experiment in human freedom" that thus imbued Americans with a world mission.<sup>95</sup> It was this that gave the United States its physical security in the nineteenth century:

We didn't get security out of our material strength, which during the last century was nothing to boast of. We did get security out of

the moral quality that our people had put into their effort. What they did was known throughout the world as the "Great American Experiment" and no leaders in other countries, however hostile and ambitious, could have brought their people to try to crush out that experiment because it carried with it the hopes and aspirations of all the peoples of the world.

Tragically in the twentieth century, with the exception of Wilson, the United States "showed a steady exhaustion of our spiritual springs." This, Dulles believed, was part of a "typical cycle" of Christian history, the ironic consequence of spiritual and material successes. "It was said by Christ that material things would be added unto those who seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness. But when that happens, then comes the great trial. For, as Christ warned, those material things can readily become the rust that corrodes men's souls."<sup>96</sup> The material power of the United States was God's reward for mission, but it contained moral risks as well. The notion of "trial" is based on covenantal beliefs about the American people as agents of divine progress. The Bible teaches that the loss of righteousness leads, in the end, to physical dangers. Isolationism was the sign of such decay, producing a retraction of spirit. Americans believed they could no longer "absorb" the world's needy, nor "expand" out into the world, and so closed off their "political orbit." The rise of totalitarianism ("materialism") was a consequence of this retraction of spiritual authority. This spiritual frontier thesis, that America's continuous *moral* expansion into the world was the source and index of its expiation, should guide foreign policy. "It is no mere accident that we have had to fight two great wars in quick succession," he argued. "We had become rich and materially powerful. . . . Doing nothing, we endangered all."<sup>97</sup>

The teleology here was influenced by bits of philosophy Dulles picked up in his youth. He grafted Henri Bergson and Arnold Toynbee to assert that civilizations either grow or decay. Vitality was central to all faith, he said in 1943, as Jesus "did not teach a purely contemplative religion." He insisted a decade later "practice unsupported by belief is a wasting asset."<sup>98</sup> But how could America "regain" its soul? In a speech delivered in March 1939, Dulles described Germany, Italy, and Japan as "dynamic" states, while the western democracies sat as merely passive defenders of the "status quo."

Unhappily, our own would-be "liberal" government is today the principal exponent of this *status quo* philosophy. Twenty years ago it was France which assumed this leadership. Through alliances and

grants of money and armament she sought to build up a preponderance of power committed to the maintenance of the existing status. As was inevitable, the structure crumbled; pent up pressures burst forth and dynamic influences have now assumed the ascendancy.

I dislike isolation. Current events constitute an almost irresistible challenge to action. But I am compelled to recognize that the official mind still has no conception of a world order other than one which identifies peace with the *status quo*. Were we now to act affirmatively, would it not be to re-establish that order, an order which by its very nature is self-destructive and a breeder of violent revolt? I dislike isolation. *But if our objective is to keep democracy alive, then I would not jeopardize it by engaging in a repetition of the senseless cyclical struggle between the static and dynamic.* Such struggles are but the inevitable, ever recurrent, incidents of any rigid system.<sup>99</sup>

Dulles's internationalism was qualified: if activism means holding the *status quo*, perpetuating a cycle of violence, then the United States could rightly consider quarantining itself. While his optimism varied through the 1940s and 1950s, Dulles remained committed to this opposition of dynamic and static forces. They fed his critique of containment.<sup>100</sup> Although it was a policy of some ambiguity, containment was seen by Dulles as a "Maginot Line" in concert with allies to whom the United States was pledged. By 1951 it was also linked to the war in Korea. Dulles's objections were carefully worded during the 1952 electoral campaign, in part because he did not know whether he would be serving Taft or Eisenhower.<sup>101</sup> What he argued, though, was consistent with the theory of history he developed in the 1930s and 1940s. Containment was based on "*static* defensive forces," "too passive," and therefore ill-suited to American "traditions." It abandoned millions of people to a "piteous plight" behind the Iron Curtain. "That is the moral reason why containment is not good enough."<sup>102</sup> He told George Kennan, containment's nominal architect, that the "past dynamism of our nation has genuinely stemmed from a profound faith in such concepts as justice and righteousness and from the sense that our nation had a mission to promote these ideals." Truman's policy had abandoned that tradition. Containment was "not healthy" because it was "nonmoral diplomacy."<sup>103</sup> His letter to Kennan was based largely on a campaign speech he gave only a few days earlier in St. Louis in which he spoke of the affinity between national character and foreign policy. Americans "do not feel happy to be identified with foreign policies which run counter to what we have been taught in our churches and synagogues and in our classes

on American history.” He repeated his story in which American security stemmed from adherence to a faith that had to be exported to survive. The public’s hostility to Yalta, the fall of China, and the Korean War, was an indication of its moral uneasiness, its sense of the cultural incongruity between containment and real American values.<sup>104</sup>

For all these reasons, Dulles called containment “materialistic”: it rested on the claim that military or economic strength was the source of security. He wrote to Taft in January 1950 that he hoped the GOP would seize the chance “to develop a moral theme which seems to me the necessary antidote to the materialistic theme which seems to me to dominate the [Truman] Administration.” Earlier, in Watertown, New York, he insisted that overreliance on military power was corrosive to the need for greater spirituality.

Today our nation is relying greatly on material and military might. That is dangerous. A nation that possesses a great military establishment is apt to be influenced by the counsel of persons who believe in the inevitability of war or who believe that good ends can be gained by violent means. Our present policy skirts, dangerously, the road to war. Our leaders take that risk because they feel that there is no adequate alternative. . . . But moral power does not derive from any act of Congress. It depends on relations of a people to their God. It is the churches to which we must look to develop the resources for the great moral offensive that is required to make human rights secure and to win a just and lasting peace.<sup>105</sup>

Dulles was not opposed to military power but it had to be proportional to the “spiritual power” of a nation. He quoted Alfred Thayer Mahan that the role of military power “is to give moral ideas the time to take root. Where moral ideas already are well rooted, there is little occasion for much military or police force.”<sup>106</sup> The answer to America’s security was thus a return to orthodoxy at home:

There is no doubt but that our nation has quickly moved from what seemed to be supreme security won in World War II into what is now great danger. . . . Some conclude that because of this peril we should cut loose from the great principles which historically animated our people and enabled them to guide our nation through past perils. That is a counsel of panic. This is above all time to adhere loyally to those enduring principles upon which our nation was founded. This is a time, not to change our faith, but to renew it.<sup>107</sup>

Before the 1952 election, Dulles suggested that the “dynamism” needed to restore spiritual hope to the world could be found in a commitment to liberate the “captive peoples” under communism.<sup>108</sup> But how to do so without risking war in a thermonuclear age? How would Americans convert their spiritual vigor into action when action was fraught with suicidal dangers?

In late 1950, Dulles offered a rudimentary answer to this question. Like some of the conservatives in the Great Debate, he argued that the United States ought to rely more on its atomic superiority and less on its conventional forces. Such a strategy offered the “ultimate deterrent” to war of any kind.<sup>109</sup> He promoted this in his famous article in *Life* magazine, “A policy of boldness,” where he dismissed isolation as appeasement, yet proclaimed a series of “truths” to grant salvation from containment’s “negative policies.” One was Bergson’s idea that “the dynamic prevails over the static; the active over the passive.”<sup>110</sup> This had been the heart of his earliest attacks on containment, reconfigured as a Christian ethic that “every individual, every nation, must make an effort to find opportunities where faith can be converted into action.”<sup>111</sup> His second truth was that America’s unique power was “moral and intellectual rather than military or material.” Its ideas “projected abroad” were “more explosive than dynamite.” He did not pause to wonder how these ideas might be transported freely, but he iterated a view of history as unfolding divine law meting judgment on the world.

There is a moral or natural law not made by man which determines right and wrong and in the long run only those who conform to that law will escape disaster. This law has been trampled by the Soviet rulers, and for that violation they can and should be made to pay. This will happen when we ourselves keep faith with the law in our practical decisions of policy.

Under what conditions this would be visited on the Soviet Union, and whether the United States, in a just war spasm, might be its agent, was open. Dulles simply repeated his plea for a strategic doctrine that emphasized the capacity to “retaliate instantly against open aggression . . . by means of our own choosing.”<sup>112</sup>

It was not obvious how dynamism and morality produced an enthusiasm for nuclear power but we can extrapolate. Some thought Massive Retaliation contradicted the spirituality Dulles advocated. In 1946, he signed a Federal Council of Churches statement advocating atomic restraint as the “way of Christian statesmanship.”<sup>113</sup> But this queasiness at

the end of the war afflicted a number of people—Hoover, among them—who later recanted. By the late 1940s, Massive Retaliation was, in Dulles's mind, more consistent with his desire for a moral revival. Strategy is about ranking preferences for military power. When forced to choose between the "negative policy of 'containment' and 'stalemate,' " and the dynamic opportunities offered by absolute nuclear deterrence, Dulles selected by his history of America and his Christian ontology. For one, Massive Retaliation de-emphasized the military element of statecraft by reducing U.S. forces. Air power was less intrusive in American society than conventional armies, and gave it the chance to advance its spiritual frontier. Second—and here Dulles's views converged with those of Eisenhower's JCS—the ultimate deterrent offered the best prospect for rolling back communism. Dulles wanted to shift momentum westward and only a total deterrent allowed the United States to choose its actions, rather than reacting passively to Soviet dynamism.<sup>114</sup> This made the United States an agent of historical change again, rededicated to "the universal cause of human liberty and just government."<sup>115</sup>

The near "relish" Dulles exhibited toward nuclear weapons therefore did not contradict *his* Christian ethic at all.<sup>116</sup> His passion was that of an idealist who saw new means of escaping an intractable dilemma. In the hands of a confident nation, brandishing apocalyptic power was supremely moral. The real object was the effect this had on the character and security of the United States. His nationalism did not, however, mesh easily with the universalism of his Christianity. This is the hegemonic element to his thinking. Hegemony consists of universalizing a particularity, moving a contingent (national) identity to act as the realization of all historical identities.<sup>117</sup> This involves superseding the dichotomy between the particular and the universal, claiming the interest *our nation* defends is the interest of all. Dulles's writings slide around these loyalties, but return to assume that the United States, while different from other countries, represents the ideals of history itself. This was the moral of his narrative about American spirituality. He believed that in a single gesture Massive Retaliation protected the entire "free world." In 1952 he stated: "striking power, if effective to protect one nation, can protect others without added cost. If, for example, the United States has enough striking power so that the Soviet leaders do not want to bring it into play by attacking Alaska, they would equally not want to bring it into play by an attack upon Norway or Turkey or Japan."<sup>118</sup> This was only true if these states were legally bound to the United States to make an attack on them a *casus belli* for the United States, which even under the Washington Treaty they were not (at Congress's insistence). No one believed for

a minute that Americans could credibly threaten nuclear war to protect *any* country regardless of their stake in that country. Yet Dulles averred that Massive Retaliation provided the conditions for global political unity needed to restore American *national* dynamism.

The usual historical dichotomy between internationalism and isolationism fails to catch their coexistence in the thinking of someone like John Foster Dulles. For him it was not a question of “all in or all out,” but how, exactly, it was best to be “in.” Turning the particular into the universal required not simply a chain of equivalence between the United States and its allies, but an equivalence that allowed the United States to maintain its particularism as it spoke for its allies. This is an abstract way of explaining how Dulles could be an exceptionalist and an internationalist, drawn to the patriotic anxieties of the neo-isolationists while objecting to their autistic answer. It also explains how his internationalism did not yet meet the test of multilateralism. Dulles was dependent on a symbolic universe that always privileged American values.<sup>119</sup> But this solipsism helped reinforce his faith in deterrence. Since America’s enemies were “immoral,” as he told Congress, it followed there had not been war since 1945 because of U.S. power. The frailty of this logic, of course, adheres to nuclear deterrence itself: it has never been pragmatically tested. The inability to check for alternative explanations for Soviet passivity meant that the most *culturally* satisfying explanation filled the blank. Deterrence “worked” because the Soviets were malignant and Americans peaceful. Deterrence is thus “rational” only if prior assumptions are made about the protagonists as moral “characters.” Dulles’s religious universe, and the theory of American innocence it generated, conditioned him to accept the logic of nuclear deterrence unflinchingly.<sup>120</sup>

His attempts to explain himself publicly, however, caused much confusion.<sup>121</sup> Massive Retaliation looked to some like Air Force musings on preemption.<sup>122</sup> If we see the religious roots of his thinking, we know this was wrong. But the appeal of the doctrine among neo-isolationists and air power advocates suggests Dulles’s intentions were not important. Air power theories dominated neo-isolationist thinking because of the way they dovetailed with the need to separate the United States from other states, a surrogate for the effortless security once provided by oceans. In an interdependent world, nuclear air power was antiseptic; but the need for strategic cleanliness was a function of the conservative *Zeitgeist*. The rhetorical emphasis on initiative that Dulles found seductive easily slid toward a desire for a final showdown with the Soviets as a way of “resolving” the Cold War before they acquired nuclear parity. Dulles exhibited no interest in serving the march of history that way. Yet Massive Retaliation,

to be psychologically effective, depended on making nuclear weapons morally acceptable. He complained that the Soviets had managed to convince some people in the West that nuclear weapons were unethical when the *conviction* to use them was the only means of regaining initiative.<sup>123</sup> His flirtation with nuclear weapons forced him to court the logic of a showdown, which in the last years of his life he knew was impossible to reconcile with good statesmanship.

### The Passion of Preemption

The ethic of “ultimate ends” expressed itself in the short-lived era of Massive Retaliation among those charged with using nuclear weapons. LeMay shared Dulles’s interest in dynamism, and favored using nuclear weapons if the Korean truce were broken. This was not tied to a political end, as far as one could tell, but it satisfied a need to be resolute: “In these ‘poker games,’ such as Korea and Indo-china,” LeMay mused in 1954, “we . . . have never raised the ante—we have always just called the bet. We ought to try raising sometime.”<sup>124</sup> Nathan Twining devoted his book *Neither Liberty nor Safety* to attacking limited war as inconsistent with American character. The “passive” policy of containment offered no “*ultimate* resolution of our conflict with the Sino-Soviet bloc,” which was a failure to “face up totally to the challenge.” What was needed was “containment *plus*”—“plus” being “initiative”—in which America ought to have said: “The United States does not intend to initiate military conflict, but it will have to begin it if the USSR and Communist China persist in their attempts to enslave more of the free world. The United States will be ready to fight.” Twining voiced the ultimate cultural argument that this fatal conclusion was strategically better because it was “typically American.” So why was it not sustained? “Possibly it never developed because the American public at large never had a voice in the matter.”<sup>125</sup> The nation’s *natural* inclinations were smothered by unknown forces in Washington, possibly elites who allowed an authentic strategy to be emasculated by moral expediency. Dulles argued the same thing.

Both Dulles and Eisenhower rejected preventive war and Dulles found himself in the NSC urging restraint against his own military, which had taken the message of Massive Retaliation too seriously or had inverted it into something invidiously material.<sup>126</sup> Dulles had to acknowledge that retaliation severely strained NATO. The allies failed to see it as a defense of spirituality, suspecting it was a retreat to a nuclear “Fortress America.”<sup>127</sup> But the main difference between Dulles and military hard-liners, and



amongst neo-isolationists generally, was that Dulles intended to assert the spiritual over the material. Its cultural appeal in the United States, however, rested on its elevation of America. J. Howard Williams of the Texas Baptist General Convention wrote to Dulles:

I thank God for you. . . . Through the years I have read and known of you and your efforts as a Christian statesman and my admiration is all but boundless. Your basic concepts are Christian and your concept of world strategy with immediate measures used as a means to attain a long range goal must and I have faith to believe shall find acceptance with our own and other peoples of the world.

This nation was born in a spiritual revival in which liberty was appraised and evaluated in such terms as to lead men to know it was indispensable to the well being of mankind . . . Since this concept was the outgrowth of Christian principles, . . . I think the Church can serve today to reselling our own and other people on its God-given nature and its indispensable necessity to the welfare of the world.<sup>128</sup>

Without its religious content, Massive Retaliation descended into a materialist posture of raw nuclear competition. Dulles retreated from it sooner than Eisenhower because, as the Soviet nuclear arsenal grew, the United States could no longer convert Massive Retaliation into a perfect deterrence. It is not that Eisenhower and Dulles were closet neo-isolationists, or that other parts of the New Look failed to uphold internationalism.<sup>129</sup> That said, Dulles's attempts to articulate the New Look's strategic principles in 1954 indicate an affinity with many neo-isolationist assumptions. This convergence, despite or even perhaps because of the animosity Dulles managed to invoke in both neo-isolationists and liberals, was a function of his effort to displace the dichotomy between American particularism and universalism the Cold War produced. Dulles confided in his British colleagues that the New Look was "a logical and essentially orthodox extension of existing policy" because his administration had "inherited security policies that had much worth."<sup>130</sup> Yet the architects of the New Look also believed changes were needed. This was often articulated in friendly terms to neo-isolationists. Dulles's coupling of retaliation with dynamism left the impression—with Eisenhower himself—that he advocated a "Taft-like neo-isolationism." Taft agreed.<sup>131</sup> In June 1952, he gave a campaign speech citing Dulles's *Life* article numerous times, emphasizing Massive Retaliation and liberation as consistent with his foreign policy. While the speech aimed to downplay his

differences with Eisenhower, Taft's ideas were consistent with those he made in the Great Debate. After the speech, Eisenhower moved more toward an internationalist position and had Dulles's reference to "retaliatory striking power" removed from the platform.<sup>132</sup> Yet, after his victory in Chicago, he deferred to Taft on a number of issues. Dulles's selection was approved by Taft and greeted with horror by British officials, indicating the extent to which Dulles had made himself look like a unilateralist.<sup>133</sup>

Neo-isolationist ideas colored the drafting of the New Look other ways. While NSC 162/2 retained faith in alliances, a preoccupation with "initiative" permeated it. Strategist Bernard Brodie noted at the time that seizing the initiative dovetailed with "characteristically military ideas" derived from air power theories about striking first. The frustration with limited war was a rejection of the "intolerably wasteful and unsatisfactory" ways the Korean War had been fought. Brodie attributed this to the triumph of military criticisms that had come out in the MacArthur hearings, criticisms that found fertile soil among conservatives more than any group in U.S. politics.<sup>134</sup> Dulles's article in *Foreign Affairs* was a claim that Truman's reluctance to threaten the use of atomic weapons had, if not caused the war, at least led to its prolonging. Eisenhower believed that his attempts at atomic diplomacy broke the deadlock in the summer of 1953.<sup>135</sup> By then he had thus lost some of his scepticism about Dulles's thinking, hoping that the United States symbolically if not substantively had regained the initiative. Massive Retaliation offered savings and was consistent with his conviction that since war could not be limited it had to be either avoided or fought with everything the country had.<sup>136</sup> Both of these found favor with neo-isolationism.

The faith in strategic asymmetry betrayed a self-image of technological superiority and a disposition toward valuing (American) life more highly. Russians and Chinese were not thought to share that value, which gave them a strategic advantage. Morton Halperin thought that air power also "reflected a search for a single solution to a complex problem, which characterizes the American approach to many situations."<sup>137</sup> Coming as a critique of Truman's Korean policy, Massive Retaliation *signified* to neo-isolationists who wanted to hear it and allies who did not, a shift toward an aggressive and more autonomous policy. Brodie captured this when he criticized Massive Retaliation in 1959.

We may theoretically prefer having one big war to fighting one or more little ones. There are few people who do not shudder inwardly when they let their thoughts range on what an unrestricted third world war would be like; but there are many persons, including

some of considerable decision-making importance, who feel under compulsion to reject such unhappy thoughts. It is not that they are freer than others from emotional involvement; it is rather that they abhor other things more than the destruction of thermonuclear wars. They may abhor, for example, the idea of settling for anything other than a good clean win in a fight, or the fact that menaces like the Soviet regime are permitted to continue unabated. An unqualified emphasis on winning goes naturally with impatience of any restrictions, as does a passion for “cleaning house” in the presence of troublesome and disagreeable things. People of such emotional as well as intellectual orientation definitely believe that given an enemy aggression of whatever kind to cope with, the big strike is the preferred solution.<sup>138</sup>

Brodie’s description reads like liberal accounts of McCarthyism, as though there were something outside of reason about these people. Those he portrays here—those who did not shudder at the prospect of courting nuclear war—were among those who supported Dulles’s strategic turn. In 1953, a USAF study declared that the United States ought to choose whether its future was up to “the whims of a small group of proven barbarians”—a description of the adversary serving as reminder of how Americans ought to feel about their enemy and themselves—or “be militarily prepared to support such decisions as might involve general war.”<sup>139</sup> Vulnerability meshed with impatience, and produced a high-level discussion of preventive war.<sup>140</sup> Eisenhower rejected it after some consideration but its spirit lived on in the form of preemption. In the nuclear age the air power axiom that whoever strikes first gains a decisive advantage seemed especially apposite. The JCS view was that the United States had a closing window of opportunity in which to “resolve” the Cold War before the two sides reached stasis. Air Force Colonel Raymond Sleeper’s Project Control in 1953–54 embodied this quest for a resolution of the Cold War by suggesting that the United States ought to force the Soviets into a corner. Words here were important: Sleeper wanted to redefine “aggression” to mean “intent” so that the United States could act under the cover of self-defense, just as the Commonwealth Club suggested in 1953.<sup>141</sup> Radford endorsed the plan and throughout 1954, as the NSC re-debated the New Look, argued for a strategy that borrowed generously from Sleeper. The military constantly reminded Eisenhower that if preventive war was out, there remained “wide latitude between a category of somewhat passive measures which are reactive . . . to Soviets acts or threats of aggression and a category of more positive measures to be

undertaken 'even at the risk of but without deliberately provoking general war.'"<sup>142</sup>

By the end of 1954, these criticisms resuscitated the internationalism of Eisenhower and Dulles. They were alarmed by NATO's reaction and began soft-peddling as early as the summer.<sup>143</sup> The more the United States emphasized nuclear threats, the weaker the cohesion of NATO became. Yet to defer constantly to the allies in turn weakened the credibility of the threats. This paradox set up two poles that divided the subsequent reading of Massive Retaliation. To Dulles the issue had always been the *threat* of use, rather than actual use.<sup>144</sup> And for that allies were as important as bombs. The end point had been to revive America's spirituality by shaking off the materialism of isolation and containment. Failing to liberate captive peoples was one thing; not defending fellow democracies was another. If Dulles's vision had attempted to bridge the internationalist and unilateralist dispositions of Republican strategy, his engineering collapsed under the peculiarly indiscriminate character of nuclear weapons. Yet, as U.S. nuclear threats were undermined by the need for NATO cohesion, a less benign strategist might come to the conclusion the New Look ought to be about developing strategic autonomy *from* the allies. It was this side of Massive Retaliation that drew on neo-isolationist worldviews and provided the earliest military rationale for first-use.

There were two ways in which it did so. First it aimed to reduce strategic "over-extension" by redeploying forces from the periphery. The JCS stated in August 1953 that regaining the initiative required a reorientation of priorities. Placing "our major emphasis in the military field on peripheral deployments overseas," meant that American "freedom of action is seriously curtailed, the exercise of *initiative* severely limited."<sup>145</sup> To the allies, this *was* unvarnished peripheralism, and Dulles knew it. But there was a way out of this trap: lead the allies to accept U.S. nuclear policy as the only possible choice. Then the troops could be brought home without damage to transatlanticism.<sup>146</sup> Allied panic about redeployment was indeed linked in their minds to the New Look's reliance on nuclear threats. The United States, Wilson complained to the NSC, "seemed hopelessly caught between the fear of the Europeans as to the use of atomic weapons, and our own desire to bring our forces home."<sup>147</sup> To maintain cohesion *and* secure the credibility of nuclear threats, the allies had to grant the United States, or SACEUR, pre-delegated authority to use nuclear weapons. But this was not easy. After the Massive Retaliation speech, Canadian Foreign Minister Lester Pearson stated that the allies would only consent if they received assurances of real consultation. And

he wondered if the strategy did not imply a reluctance on Washington's part to share in the physical defense of Europe.<sup>148</sup> This was never Dulles's intention, but he had tapped a nerve of public and military opinion opened by the Great Debate. His vision was, as the *Springfield Morning Union* editorialized in early 1953, an "intermediate position" between containment and Hoover's hemispheric withdrawal. To the allies it was still a "reversal" of American policy.<sup>149</sup> Dulles's extended deterrence depended on a cultural presumption that the United States held the wisdom to make judgments for the Atlantic community. No part of the world "is effectively defensible without relation to the rest of the world," he thought. The nuclear force that protects the United States protects all whom the United States wished to protect with no new burden of engagement or exchange.<sup>150</sup> This was the most powerful claim made by the New Look's nuclear policy: nuclear weapons were like a police force that allowed individuals not to worry about personal protection. But who decided how the police would be used?

## CHAPTER SEVEN

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### *Hegemony Versus Multilateralism*

#### *Nuclear Sharing and NATO's Search for Cohesion*

Under Eisenhower's New Look deterrence rested on transcending NATO's variegated interests. Integration went a long way toward that end creating, as the TCC hoped, one military-economic authority that would weaken nationalism. This process, however, did not fully include the United States. It had to retain enough its own ideals to hold together as a nation, while speaking the language of universalism to represent the interests of "civilization." Creating a self-sufficient security community in Europe actually insulated American nationalism. The uneven distribution of power across NATO worked itself into the 1949 strategic concept, the MTDP, SHAPE, and the TCC report, each differentiating between what was collective (Europe's decision-making institutions) and what was national (the rules of American assistance and its control over nuclear strategic power). Dulles's need to restore dynamism by backing deterrence with brinkmanship posed new questions for this social structure. Massive Retaliation would only work if America's allies internalized it, embraced it so seamlessly that their *national* control over the instruments of war and peace all but disappeared. Even if deterrence worked perfectly—installing Europe under the wing of U.S. protection—the symbolism of surrendering such authority raised the question, as I have from the outset, of whether the nuclearization of NATO was a product of multilateral agreement, or a system of hegemony.

It is complicated by the fact that by 1954 Britain, France, and the United States had all found reason to make nuclear weapons the central component of their strategic doctrines. This apparent agreement was

offset by the way each saw *its* nuclear program not as augmenting NATO power but as the solution to the problems of sharing power at all: for the Americans, to avoid being drawn into Europe by building a global deterrent; for the British, to sustain a semblance of prestige and to constrain American rashness; and for the French, to balance against Germany once the Anglo-Americans made German rearmament indispensable to their own peripheralism. What followed was a rough but seemingly irresistible path toward the integration of nuclear weapons into NATO such that it was left by 1955 with no other options. The long inevitability of this descent is less persuasive when one considers two contingent ingredients. First, the call for a reexamination of NATO's strategy by the European allies came in the wake of a staggering loss of cohesion induced by Eisenhower's election and Stalin's death. Second, the organizational rivalry between the U.S. air force and army over whose strategic culture would influence this reexamination, inscribed features on the new strategy that reflected their competition. This bureaucratic side of the story has attracted little attention but it has provided a powerful engine in NATO's nuclearization though not for the reasons one might think. The desire to influence NATO strategy was located in the organizational reasoning that a new NATO nuclear doctrine would apply *reverse* pressure on the allocation of American military resources. If NATO embraced an all-air doctrine, it weakened arguments for balanced collective forces at home. The U.S. military—all branches—saw the New Approach as a struggle for control of domestic strategic thinking.

The pressure for a strategic rethink in NATO came from the disillusionment of the Europeans in the wake of Lisbon. Their loss of faith in U.S. leadership grew precipitously after the 1952 election, undermining incentives to sustain rearmament. To offset this drift into what some U.S. officials feared might be neutralism, Eisenhower encouraged a reexamination of NATO strategy that allowed it to retain its unity in the face of fluctuating levels of threat. NATO could not be a self-sustaining community if its cohesion was dependent on a constant Soviet menace. Yet, though, even as nuclear weapons came into NATO, U.S. officials pressed for increases in NATO's conventional forces. Eisenhower's "great equation" between nuclear weapons and conventional forces did not apply to Europe. Indeed, as the fight between the U.S. army and air force showed, NATO strategy accepted the substance of a nuclear doctrine before there had been agreement on its impact on the Lisbon force goals. The more intractable problem, namely who had the authority to use nuclear weapons under what circumstances, remained on the back burner, but would be resolved by the doctrine of first-use.

### The Social Origins of the "New Approach"

For NATO, the effect of the New Look's deliberations was initially quite negative. Most allies were frightened by what seemed to be demands for more sacrifice while the U.S. reduced its aid and studied how to defend North America. As far as they could tell, it meant more Lisbon coupled with U.S. desires for greater freedom of action. Although Truman initiated SHAPE's studies on "new" weapons, what really troubled the allies was Eisenhower's evident tolerance of neo-isolationists. The British were publicly sensitive to a U.S. retreat from its NATO commitments, even though their thinking continued along the lines of the 1952 GSP, meaning a high level of military spending needed to maintain NATO cohesion did not preclude greater reliance on nuclear weapons. The COS considered *both* to be necessary. The problem was not Lisbon's abstract inconsistency with the 1952 GSP: the problem was whether Britain would be asked to sustain conventional commitment *after* 1954 when their medium bomber force was to come on-line.<sup>1</sup> This was the heart of Britain's failure to hold its commitments in 1953. Under its "Radical Review" in January 1953, the military took deep cuts but only in an *already* approved nuclear strategy. The debate focused on the best array of forces under the 1952 GSP, whether it would be better to concentrate on forces for the first six weeks of war, or a longer war.<sup>2</sup> The nuclear element was not in doubt. For NATO, though, the 1952 GSP *suggested* fewer conventional forces, but upheld the virtues of "local" troops to provide a forward defense. Could Britain nuclearize while demanding that its allies spend more for troops that might not have an obvious purpose in the next war.

The deepest cuts to British appropriations came in tactical air forces assigned to Europe. This bias was based on a decision the COS made in July 1952 when the GSP expected the medium bomber would allow them to offer this new military capability as their compensatory contribution to NATO.<sup>3</sup> Whether this was politically enough or whether, instead, it would drive Britain to push for NATO-wide acceptance of the GSP's nuclear bias as the basis for a new NATO doctrine, was a question that could only be answered in concert with the new U.S. administration.

Early indications were that Eisenhower planned to retract aid through 1953 and beyond, but Dulles avoided categorical statements except to say that budgetary changes did *not* represent a change in "delivery policy or an inability to carry out that policy."<sup>4</sup> This was still unclear, so the Europeans decided to box Eisenhower into a corner before he had a chance to reevaluate his foreign policy. They suddenly proposed having



the 1953 Annual Review cover 1956 or 1957. The United States correctly saw this as an attempt to get an early statement on its long-term intentions. The cycle proposed meant that if the United States wanted to bring its forces home for a new strategic reserve, it would have to announce it in mid-1953, something that Theodore Draper worried would have a “disastrous impact on NATO and the EDC.”<sup>5</sup>

The death of Stalin on March 5 increased this pressure. Although it was good news for NATO, it was not met by a reevaluation of its policies. Georgi Malenkov’s peace overtures threatened to unhinge an already shaky U.S. leadership transition by encouraging some allies to reconsider the Soviet threat. Secretary General Lord Ismay assured Eisenhower that NATO understood that “as a result of Stalin’s death there would be no vacillation or evidences of weakness displayed” by Moscow.<sup>6</sup> Eisenhower likewise reaffirmed his commitments. He told an audience in April that he welcomed any improvement in East–West relations, but that it would have to begin with a reversal of Soviet policies.<sup>7</sup> These signals were confusing to some NATO governments, especially in light of U.S. cuts to aid. The British and French representatives on the NAC, Hoyer Millar and Hervé Alphand, met with Draper and asked how he could argue that the Soviet threat was unabated while his government slashed its support for NATO? Britain and France tried to use Malenkov’s peace initiative as a means of inducing a quicker response from the United States. They placed the onus of failing to maintain a “united effort” against the Soviets back on Washington’s shoulders.<sup>8</sup>

In response, the administration took modest steps to regain what it called “maximum psychological advantage” in the spring.<sup>9</sup> When the NAC met on April 23, Dulles had already conferred with the British and the French in which he traded-off the thinning of U.S. economic aid for promises of more American military hardware. Dulles then conceded, “as long as the threat of war was not predictably imminent, NATO force levels should reflect the capacity for sustained economic effort rather than maximum requirements.” Emphasis should be on the quality of existing ground forces. This was old news, no different from policy under the TCC.<sup>10</sup> Indeed, at the NAC meeting, Dulles tried to stress continuity, portraying U.S. policy as a change only in method, not goals. The administration “believes by better planning we can have greater strength at lesser cost,” although he wanted “not only to sustain [NATO’s] present force goals, but see them enlarged in coming years.” This should be a “convincing rebuttal to those who believe the new administration has lost interest in NATO or European security.”<sup>11</sup>

Having to work so hard to convince your friends that you have not lost interest in them is suggestive of how the allies saw the new government. There was a change in Washington's rhetorical approach to NATO in the spring of 1953. It represented not so much a new look but a rediscovery of the original intent of U.S. policy in Europe: to wean Europe of its dependence on the United States. This was downplayed by Dulles in the early months of his tenure, but it was a policy rooted in two enduring problems faced by U.S. foreign policy from the outset. The first was how to ensure that Europe was rebuilt without becoming a satellite of the U.S. Satellites, as Harriman understood, could become nationalistic. Europe had to be rebuilt *and* resocialized. The second problem fortifying Eisenhower's conspicuous emphasis on European self-sufficiency was the expansion of U.S. interests. Truman started this, but it had a permanent look by the time Eisenhower moved into the White House. The Korean War was winding down but demanded vigilance; the French war in Indochina was attracting more attention, as was Taiwan, Latin America, and the Middle East. As decolonization spread through the world, the United States found itself confronted with more threats to its sense of global order with no more resources for confronting them. Getting the Europeans to take responsibility for their defense was part of Dulles's argument to the French that they should develop "indigenous" forces in Indochina to cope with *their* overextension.<sup>12</sup> What Dulles wanted was a network of supporting states, held together by sustainable U.S. military assistance and a shared ideological vision. The development of "indigenous" forces was not meant to encourage neutralism or autonomy; it was to further global anticommunism in a self-sustaining way.

Coming when it did, the announcement that the United States would end its economic support for rearmament, as Selwyn Lloyd told Dulles, sent shock waves through NATO. Many predicted, "that withdrawal first of general economic aid and then of special defense aid will be followed by withdrawal of U.S. troops." Paul Van Zeeland saw it as a "radical change of policy involving serious repercussions," and one French official told Lloyd "this is the end of NATO."<sup>13</sup> For the Americans, it must have been difficult to imagine how such a misunderstanding about U.S. involvement in Europe could have happened. Dulles, fought for the Washington Treaty in 1949, and believed that NATO's evolution was toward "*the defense of Europe by Europe with United States assistance.*"<sup>14</sup> But through his first summer, he realized that small adjustments in U.S. policy could have a crippling impact on the willingness of the allies to go along. NATO's identity was still perilously fragile. The administration's ill-defined ties to

neo-isolationists did not help. One can see how Eisenhower's efforts to "rehabilitate" NATO produced confusion bordering on hostility.<sup>15</sup>

The allies' enthusiasm for rearmament had never been strong to start with. The French were fixated on protecting their territory, though they were determined to shift the burden of responsibility for any failure to do so onto the United States. This was a symbolically vital issue for France, a litmus test of the Anglo-Saxon mind, and Dulles's determination to retract aid, along with the NAC's willingness to consider altering the balance between reserves and forces-in-being, reopened the wound. At a Military Committee meeting in December 1952, General Charles Lecheres attacked SHAPE strategic thinking on the grounds that it downplayed "the importance of having adequate reserves to pursue the battle after the initial Soviet attack." SHAPE should "bear in mind . . . that the overall requirements be considered, those for the purpose of blocking the immediate Soviet offensive as well as those later necessary to wage the battle." In January, two more French generals, Amédée Blanc and Jean Valluy, met with Ridgway to follow up a political letter expressing alarm over SHAPE's "standards of readiness" plan. It too emphasized forces-in-being over reserves. The French saw this to mean that SHAPE was "contemplating a peripheral strategy" by putting "everything into the *couverture*" and leaving "nothing for the hard battle which must follow." French strategy was based on the development of "major land forces in the immediate future" for the pursuit of a long-war from which both Britain and the United States were moving away.<sup>16</sup> Paris took the inordinate focus on forces-in-being as a sign of Anglo-American peripheralism. Anglo-American strategic collusion behind a short-war strategy undermined France's incentives to cooperate on matters of strategy, such as building the forces vital to the central front, because it reinforced the fear that France would either be standing alone against the Soviets, or standing alone *with* Germany, while the Anglo-Americans rained down nuclear devastation from their offshore bases.

### **SHAPE Atomic Planning: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking**

Behind this remained continued uncertainty about the impact of nuclear weapons on NATO planning generally. The French military was not authorized to conduct its own studies into atomic weapons until September 1952, but it was already clear that the symbolic question of who possessed the weapons, if tied to changes in the type of forces

SHAPE constructed, would have enormous political repercussions. If France were dependent on Anglo-American plans, deprived of influence over targeting or even the decision to use the bomb, its rearmament process was an exercise in futility, and the embodiment of its alienation from the British and Americans. Fortunately, there was no agreement in the U.S. military over the relationship between the bomb and Europe's force configurations. Ridgway's first sounding of the issue reignited the struggle between the army and air force over whose conception of nuclear war would dominate NATO. In the end, SHAPE's slant, hampered by McMahon Act restrictions and these organizational bottlenecks, called for *both* the massive use of nuclear weapons of all types and more conventional forces. It concluded there was no trade-off between nuclear and conventional forces, and insistently advocated prompt nuclear use in a war. For SACEUR, the problem posed by this was not rearmament, but that NATO had not decided who had the authority to use new weapons on behalf of everyone else. SACEUR assumed for argument's sake that he did, but his study did not openly tackle the question of "pre-delegated authority." This would fall to his successor, Alfred Gruenther, and would become the quiet center of nuclear first-use.

In spite of JCS cautions that SHAPE's atomic study should not be predicated on trying to reduce conventional forces, Gruenther told the JCS that SHAPE would "start out with an assumed number of conventional forces" (those forecast for the end of 1953), "develop one or more strategic concepts as a basis for devising tasks," and then the "assumed conventional forces will . . . be applied to tasks in furtherance of each of the strategic concepts, which will presumably [be] . . . beyond their capabilities. These must then be accomplished by unconventional means."<sup>17</sup> The line between SACEUR's role as collective director responsible to nonnuclear states, and his knowledge of actual U.S. war plans, was here stunningly blurred. Gruenther promised that the results would be forwarded to the JCS *before* being sent to the NAC. SHAPE would use the JCS position to "revise the starting assumption as to the conventional forces required." This minimal-maximal technique privileged nuclear weapons to find a minimal sustainable conventional force. No thought was given to the political limitations or human risks involved in thus optimizing the use of atomic weapons. So three strategic "options" were proposed. The first was a "continuation of the present strategy, with our defense line advanced Eastward into Germany as far as militarily practicable. This concept, since it is tied to the defence of the ground, tends to be expensive, and initial force requirements will not be materially

changed.” The second involved “the provision of defense by offensive means.” This amounted to holding the same territory as the first concept but “with lighter forces than” the old strategy. It also argued, oddly, that if “the offensive operation could be combined with an amphibious operation, this would exploit the one arm in which we have overwhelming superiority.” U.S. planners had earlier dismissed amphibious landings as pointless in a nuclear age; the new proposal implied that retaining forces for such an operation offshore was strategically preferable to retaining them in the central front.

The final option recommended “the holding of strong base areas suitably located on the flanks from which Soviet advances could be countered by air interdiction and by strong counterattacks. These bastions would be essentially air base areas.” This depended “in major degree on unconventional means to offset the lack of conventional forces.”<sup>18</sup> It was not stated to what extent the lack of conventional forces was in fact a function of diverting resources into the creation of flanking air base areas and reserves. It also failed to indicate the strategic appeal of this sort of peripheralism, except that it would be cheaper than “the defense of the ground.” SACEUR’s method thus implied that there was a relationship between conventional levels and nuclear use. But this was misleading. The target date for SHAPE’s study was 1956, two years after the period covered by Lisbon. Nuclear integration was thus not a direct response to the failure of Lisbon (which had not happened yet anyway). It was also initiated before Eisenhower was elected. To suggest that the Republicans opened a radical reevaluation of NATO strategy to fit with the New Look misses this awkward chronological fact. NATO’s formal study of nuclear weapons was the culmination of a secular tendency toward their integration, not the result of conventional failures or Eisenhower’s great equation.

What the SHAPE study did, however, was reopen the fight between the USAF and army that roughly paralleled the ideological rift between U.S. conservatives and liberals. The lines were drawn around whether NATO should privilege air power, or the army’s doctrine of large ground forces armed with tactical nuclear weapons. The army’s interest in atomic weapons was slowed by the air force’s virtual monopoly of the bomb after 1947. The size, clumsiness, and scarcity of the first generation of weapons precluded their tactical application. Still, as early as 1946, Eisenhower, cautioning against “excessive reliance” on atomic technology, urged the JCS to consider “the best kind of army to build around the all-powerful atomic weapons.”<sup>19</sup> By the late 1940s, the army kept trying to break the air force monopoly, but was even prevented from offering

tactical atomic targets for SAC. The determination to use new weapons without an appreciation of their feasibility suggests, as John Midgley claims, that it was driven more by organizational instincts than strategic conviction.<sup>20</sup> Even so, the army's ideas were in many respects better suited to the requirements of NATO than SAC's overbearing air offensive. A 1950 study stated what should perhaps have been obvious after the Washington Treaty:

it is more important to stop the Russian forces in being . . . than it is to destroy at the outset of war the Russian warmaking potential. Strategic bombing with the atomic bomb should be limited to a few bombs for retaliation against any Russian use. . . . The first priority should be the tactical use of atomic bombs to contain the Russian forces in being. After Russian land forces are contained . . . strategic bombing . . . can be conducted.<sup>21</sup>

The army's thoughts were largely abstract here. Its ability to influence strategy was only realized when it produced a battlefield weapon. Research into such weapons—a guided missile and a battlefield cannon—was undertaken between 1947 and the end of 1949, by which time the army spent \$42 million on development. The Korean War finally gave it the opportunity, money, and audience to produce a workable weapon. The two most important to come from this were the "Honest John" rocket, and a 280 mm, eighty-five ton, cannon. Production of the rocket was sufficiently advanced by late 1951 for Frank Pace to tell Eisenhower that the army hoped the Honest John would give low cost defense to NATO.<sup>22</sup>

A 280 mm cannon prototype was not tested until 1951 or outfitted for an atomic shell until May 1953. As with the Honest John, the army's desire to create a battlefield capability predated the decision by SHAPE to study atomic weapons. Its desperation indicates that the idea of a conventional battlefield was never seriously considered by any service, even ones advocating a large ground force for Europe. Once the technology was available, the U.S. army found targets for atomic weapons around the idea of retarding the Soviet advance into Europe.<sup>23</sup> Although the services pursued competing agendas, they shared a devotion to atomic weapons before NATO had moved anywhere on Lisbon. Their conflict, both real and potential, was not about use, but strategic priorities: the army's conviction that new weapons would *not* preclude large forces because their increased destructiveness applied to NATO *and* the Red Army.

It was in light of these army activities that the air force reacted with a mixture of concern and opportunism to the SHAPE study of 1952–53.

Norstad, Vandenberg, and Twining feared the integration of new weapons into NATO would occur along army lines, meaning it would produce a strategy emphasizing the tactical nuclear defense of Europe. For the air force, the issue was not if this would alter NATO, but what it would do to the balance of forces at home. Army doctrine would divert resources from the air force, continuing the trend toward the balanced forces the Korean War induced. Norstad thought there was a real danger that tactical atomic weapons would simply be treated as “heavy artillery” to be used in “accepted operational concepts.” The air force, on the contrary, believed atomic weapons had utterly revolutionized military thinking. Any coziness between the army and SHAPE was discouraged. Referring to the army’s research groups, Norstad cabled Vandenberg:

There are, in my judgment, serious difficulties involved in the consideration of any of these agencies of the significance of atomic weapons. Because of the direct responsibilities that the Allied Air Forces Central Europe [Norstad’s command] has in this field, I think we are in a better position to handle this matter in the first instance than any other group and I am anxious to do so as a matter of urgency. I propose, therefore, to establish an ad hoc working group under the auspices of this headquarters to consider the application and effect of atomic weapons on the defense of Western Europe. . . . *I must point out that unless I grab this one immediately and with an impressive group of people, someone else will and the results will fall within the scope of already accepted strategic concepts.*<sup>24</sup>

Vandenberg approved the working group as long as Norstad was “primarily responsible for tactical air operations, including atomic, in Central Europe.” The group forwarded its reports through USAF headquarters in Washington first, avoiding the other services until the “Air Force first developed its position.” This correspondence was conducted entirely through USAF channels and not via Norstad’s normal Allied Air Force line in order to keep matters away from “foreign nationals.” Norstad had some RAF participation since atomic planning was increasingly conducted on an informal Anglo-U.S. basis. Aware that a unilateral study opened him up to accusations of bias, Norstad feebly claimed that joint work invariably compromised the integrity of strategic planning, hardly a great slogan for an alliance. “The more one thinks of this subject,” he cabled Vandenberg, “the more . . . it appears that we might be on the threshold of very drastic changes in the concepts and philosophy underlying the conduct of war. Changes of a revolutionary nature may

not be indicated by the study we propose but I am sure that evidence of such changes will appear.”<sup>25</sup>

And Norstad would do his best to cultivate such evidence. It was for this reason that the air force responded so favorably to the fact that the SHAPE study was addressed the “effectiveness of the strategic air offensive” explicitly in relation to NATO force goals. “I doubt whether this element of our over-all effort,” Twining excitedly wrote to Norstad in August 1952, “has ever been properly evaluated and related to NATO Western European strategy.” He also told Norstad of Slessor’s visit to Washington, how the new British strategic concept “was exceedingly favorable to the use of air.” The timing of this presentation with SHAPE’s atomic study was the perfect chance for the USAF to fix its position as the arbiter not only of U.S. strategic doctrine but the doctrine of the entire alliance. As Twining outlined for Norstad:

Just completed is a new air concept which has been approved by the Air Force Council and Finletter and will be presented in modified version to the JCS on August 15. In view of the opening wedge created by the presentation of the British concept and some favourable indications from other members of the JCS, *we consider the time most propitious for you to hear this presentation and keep in mind certain aspects thereof when the re-assessment of the force goals is considered. . . .* You will be the best judge as to whether or not it will be wise to arrange that this presentation be given to Ridgway and US members to SHAPE after you hear it. . . . *I consider this whole subject of re-assessment of NATO force goals highly important to the revision of over-all strategy of Western Europe, and with the opening provided by this re-assessment an excellent time to promote our air concept as the soundest and most economical method of obtaining NATO objectives.*<sup>26</sup>

The sequence of Twining’s logic here is important. He saw a reconsideration of NATO forces as an opportunity to sell the air force’s strategic concept, not the other way around. The air force was not looking to reduce NATO ground forces per se but to make NATO’s strategy fall indelibly into their hands. Force goal questions merely provided the chance to argue the economic advantages of an air strategy. Norstad cabled Twining and told him that he had already initiated his own “*weapons requirements study in which USAF representation will be preponderant.*” Norstad was convinced “that this study is an essential part of any study which might result in the determination of a concept which substantially alters the balance of forces or the manner in which forces are employed.”<sup>27</sup>



Norstad met with Slessor later that month. The British desperately wanted a joint paper for the next NAC meeting to get NATO to accept the British position, but Norstad felt that a subject of this importance needed wider military authority before going forward. He was optimistic that any study that looked at the air offensive and the defense of Europe “as two parts of a whole rather than as independent and more or less exclusive projects” would justify the air force strategy.<sup>28</sup> But all was not well back in Washington, where the air force strategy was still seen in proprietary terms. At the end of September, the JCS’s Annual Review group presented a first look at the U.S. 1952 submission.<sup>29</sup> The report set off an interservice brawl on the future of the NATO’s forces. “It is evident,” wrote under-secretary of the air force Roswell Gilpatric to Finletter in bureaucratic understatement, “that any righting of the present balance of forces in favor of more airpower will only be accomplished over army–navy opposition.” The air force refused to endorse goals based on MC 26/1 for 1954 and 1955 if they were only going to be revised by Ridgway’s study later.<sup>30</sup> It was confident that a “correct” appreciation of the atomic air offensive would produce force revisions. This confidence stemmed from the air force’s determination to have Norstad influence the Ridgway study. Finletter met with Gruenther in September and, according to Finletter’s account, was “asked bluntly for USAF leadership in making a new overall land, sea and air war plan which would give such full effect to atomic capabilities of NATO in 1956.” He and Norstad concluded “*this is an opportunity which the Air Force must sieze [sic]*” and “should be initiated at once by the air staff.” Luckily the air staff had already drawn up, “unilaterally,” just such a war plan. If Ridgway could be convinced that air power offered savings and a credible defense of Europe without more burden-sharing flagellation, SHAPE’s strategy could help design the balance of U.S. strategic forces around the globe.<sup>31</sup>

This was an ambitious plan. In an ironic twist on the hegemony question, the air force used the integrative institutions of NATO to bring pressure to bear on its own national decision-making. Although USAF planners knew the NAC wanted to use the Ridgway study to reexamine NATO’s forces after 1956, there was no sense in their private discussions between August and September 1952 that reducing Europe’s conventional forces impelled their desire for a reevaluation of NATO strategy. They took the opening offered by the 1952 GSP and SHAPE’s “new weapons” study as a chance to advance their strategic doctrine against the resistance of their rivals. SHAPE’s atomic strategy emerged when it did because the battle for mastery of *American* strategic doctrine.

The unilateralism behind this collusion was reinforced by the JCS’s decision in early 1952 that only U.S. officers could conduct European

atomic planning. As new weapons were integrated into U.S. forces in Europe there was a structural conflict between their capabilities and those of NATO as a whole. A distinction between U.S. atomic forces and NATO forces was barely sustainable if the aerial delivery of the bomb was the only mission allocated to the United States. Other than the British, the Europeans had nothing to contribute to the air offensive. But if the U.S. military called for tactical ground missions with atomic weapons and insisted this be planned outside of SHAPE, it was saying that the Europeans would have little to do with the conduct of a future war on their own soil.

But as SACEUR, Eisenhower insisted the JCS allow SHAPE to make its own atomic plans. "The employment of atomic weapons constitutes one of the most significant means which SACEUR can utilize in fulfilling his mission."<sup>32</sup> The JCS relented in early 1952 and allowed the three top U.S. officers in SHAPE—Maxwell Taylor, Lauris Norstad, and Robert Carney—to make recommendations for atomic targeting. Norstad's role as coordinator of European atomic plans was reduced, but he remained the only link between SHAPE and SAC. Once the JCS assigned 100 atomic weapons to SACEUR, Eisenhower delegated planning authority to Norstad and his "Group Able," composed almost entirely of Americans (there was one British member).<sup>33</sup> This was the institutional cast of SHAPE's study, with the American military exerting as much authority as possible. Ridgway requested enormous amounts of information from the JCS, but even with a largely American team, the McMahan Act was blocked enough of the flow of information to delay submission of his study until the Annual Review of 1954.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, in July 1953, just before he left to join Eisenhower's JCS, Ridgway submitted a provisional report. As Robert Wampler points out, this was the first *NATO* study to use information on U.S. atomic weapons.<sup>35</sup>

Ridgway's cut at the atomic question was based on the availability of weapons expected to be available in 1956: land- and carrier-based combat aircraft, artillery, rockets, and guided missiles. It accepted the necessity of a forward defense, which allowed it to use an atomic counteroffensive on non-NATO territory. But, for the most part NATO's strategy was built along lines similar to those of 1951: hold strong flanks to the north and south and pursue mixed offensive-defensive movement on the main front. Atomic attacks would aim at Soviet troops, but the majority of targets were airfields. The most remarkable of Ridgway's assumptions was that SACEUR would have 1000 tactical atomic weapons by 1956, 700 of which would be used in the first two days. Add to that 200 to 300 Soviet bombs, and it was clear that NATO was planning to fight a war of unprecedented destructiveness. Ridgway assumed that NATO would

inflict more losses on Soviet troops and aircraft than the allies would suffer themselves, but the attrition of NATO forces would be staggering, sufficient to disabuse any idea that new weapons would drop NATO's force requirements. Ridgway called for increases above Lisbon levels, including an additional seven divisions for the central front.<sup>36</sup>

It appeared as though the U.S. army's concept had won over air power. At least one air force officer at SHAPE, Robert Richardson, thought so, accusing Ridgway of trying to superimpose an atomic strategy on a conventional one.<sup>37</sup> On the other hand, General J. Lawton Collins spoke warmly of Ridgway's model. Tactical atomic weapons "go far in enhancing the capabilities of such forces and in making up for deficiencies that might otherwise prevail if atomic weapons were not available." What "deficiencies" Collins meant was unclear since the plan called for more forces than ever. But then Collins also believed that none of this obviated the need for battle-tested doctrines. Atomic weapons could only supplement, and not replace, existing thinking.

There was more agreement around the more serious problem posed by nuclear integration: how to establish a line of authority for use of the weapons. Officially this was a political question, but the military believed this "grave problem" lay at the heart of an effective atomic strategy. The new plan was predicated on having a "fully ready combat force" armed not only with the means but also with the "*authority to react immediately* to an initial enemy attack by delivering a strong atomic counterattack."<sup>38</sup> Nuclearization thus put unusual pressure on civilians to grant advanced approval for nuclear use to SHAPE. This would be easier if NATO could be convinced that nuclear weapons were *not* revolutionary at all, a claim of course utterly contradicted by air force strategic culture. Treating nuclearization as a normal expansion of the military power, shifted decision-making power toward U.S. forces because they were the ones who had the weapons on the ground. This was central to the claims of the military in the New Look too, which suggests that the move toward full nuclear integration was always tied to maximizing military control over atomic weapons in general by tying them to a single-war strategy for NATO.

### **Lisbon Versus Nuclear Weapons: The Annual Review of 1953**

Before Gruenther took office, the chatter around U.S. diplomatic missions in Europe through the summer of 1953 was about the link between the

attenuation of NATO's build-up and European uncertainty about the policies of the new administration. So troubled were the allies that Lord Ismay initiated his own study that directly challenged NATO's existing strategy by seditiously urging the Military Committee to take into consideration the shortfall of forces in Europe. American officials dismissed Ismay's paper as a "gloomy survey," preoccupied with the new Soviet leadership, and the "deep freeze" afflicting Franco-German negotiations.<sup>39</sup> The administration kept insisting that it had not lost interest in NATO, but privately, U.S. officials worried Ismay could produce "a resurgence of claims for greater United States military assistance," prejudicing SHAPE's review that Washington hoped to point in the opposite direction. The new U.S. permanent representative on the NAC, John Hughes, was instructed to intervene: the offending passages dealing with military strategy were removed, leaving a lengthy and innocuous discussion of the importance of reaffirming commitments to NATO.<sup>40</sup> This was hardly the psychological rallying cry needed to counteract the perception of a leadership vacuum. Even in its watered down form, Ismay challenged the U.S. to answer the rumor that Washington was "losing interest in NATO more rapidly than the gloomiest predictions of a month ago."<sup>41</sup>

This prompted some soul-searching in Washington. In his last initiative, Draper sent Eisenhower a study written by his Paris staff. Its wide-ranging exegesis of U.S.-European relations underlined the importance of European unity to the United States and approved of the gradual shift from bilateralism to multilateralism. However, a policy that recognized the equality of European and American interests in NATO was inconsistent with a concomitant reduction in the authority granted to U.S. representatives in Europe, which was seen as proof that Washington's "interest in Nato and the OEEC was decreasing." The most effective way to "stimulate Europe's millions to increased effort, and to new hope for the future," would be to attack domestic protectionism and open "the American market more widely to Europe's products."<sup>42</sup> Failing this, the gap between requirements and resources would grow and become a major strain. The decisions made by both Britain and the United States to alter their forces, attenuate aid, and lower their rate of military spending gave incentives for the allies to do the same. The fear, frequently expressed in Washington, was not of a "leveling off but a sharp decline in the defence preparations of certain Nato members." Draper concluded that unless the allies accepted higher taxes, NATO should look closely at its strategic premises. Ridgway's study would "unquestionably bring the issue into bold relief."<sup>43</sup>

Draper's paper received a great deal of attention, and was circulated to U.S. missions in the NATO area.<sup>44</sup> His suggestion that the SHAPE study

might provide part of the answer to NATO's malaise became, in the minds of many U.S. officials, an important ingredient in their struggle to offset the leadership vacuum in NATO. This conclusion was not based on the presumption that conventional force levels would decrease as a result of SHAPE's study—the State Department had enough knowledge of Ridgway's recommendations to know this—but they reasoned that *any* “effective program” based on new strategic studies was “essential if a downward spiral in European defense effort is to be avoided.” Draper's idea was that a better justified program “to remedy such an unthinkable situation would be acceptable to the NATO peoples even if it involved larger effort and taxes is believed to be sound.”<sup>45</sup> The implication was that Europe's strategic opposition was basically an educational and psychological problem. The United States needed better ways of teaching the material. The new JCS assumed the allies possessed the aggregate strength to “meet and ultimately to eliminate the Russian threat.” What was needed in 1953 was a way of tapping that potential through a revised military relationship between Europe and the United States.<sup>46</sup> In fact, the JCS actually saw the integration of nuclear weapons into SHAPE as a means of *stimulating* European conventional forces. The United States might later promise, once higher force goals were approved, to “hold available atomic weapons in such quantities as to redress the remaining imbalance between NATO and Soviet forces sufficiently to hold promise of a successful defense of Western Europe.” Such an assurance “might well constitute the stimulus needed at this point to reinforce the corporate NATO will to resist and to instill an impelling confidence that the sacrifices involved in the collective effort will be compensated for by ultimate success.” The JCS claimed that atomic weapons were not a substitute for European defense by Europeans, but they could fill the gap until sacrifices had been made.<sup>47</sup> Privately, though, the JCS did not think Ridgway's study was the basis for a new strategy around which NATO could be rallied.

A preliminary examination of the SHAPE study in its tentative and incomplete form tends to confirm the belief of the Joint Chiefs of Staff that, taking into account all factors both political and military, there is no reasonable premise on which there could be developed, within the present framework of NATO, a radically new and better strategic concept which could be expected to receive universal acceptance and active support by our NATO partners.

The U.S. military recognized the need to maintain the forward strategy as much for ensuring Germany's place in the West as for defending

NATO. The deference that must sometimes be paid to what they called "national desires and aspirations," such as Britain's "unilateral decision . . . to a change in emphasis on the various types of forces which will constitute their national military establishment," meant the United States was obligated to endorse strategies otherwise not considered prudent.<sup>48</sup> But how, one asks, might military prudence be reconciled with a failure to see how the defense of Europe was the very political goal that NATO's military strategy was intended to ensure?

In the end, the JCS retreated from the radical position of the air force and felt that the impact of atomic weapons on NATO was more evolutionary than revolutionary. "The advent of atomic weapons . . . does not . . . presage an abrupt and radical change in either the strategy or the forces of modern warfare." U.S. strategic doctrine for Europe had always been "*premised on the availability of substantial numbers of atomic weapons.*" What was new was the West could expect "abundant" tactical atomic weapons. Even so, this "would neither open the way to an entirely new and different strategy for the defense of Europe, nor permit a reduction in force requirements in support of currently approved NATO defense concepts." What accounted for this? SHAPE's plan used large numbers of tactical atomic weapons while the Soviet Union's "use of atomic weapons in the battlefield would be restricted." The JCS doubted this condition would last for long, and thus could not be the foundation for a permanent strategic position. They quietly concurred with Ridgway's inference that the use of large numbers of these weapons would actually require an enormous increase in forces.<sup>49</sup>

In spite of these concessions, the JCS's response to Draper's letter and Ridgway's study was oddly belligerent. Consistent with the New Look, they argued that the United States faced a window of opportunity that would close by the end of the decade. The time when the Soviets possessed the capability to launch a "second Pearl Harbor" was not far, while the United States would "experience a peak in the NATO defense posture, followed by a progressive deterioration." The problem was "one of imposing upon the Soviet Union, by political and other pressures, solutions to the problems of the cold war acceptable to the West while we still possess in a relative sense the capability to do so." NATO could not accept a subsequent period of "unstable equilibrium . . . indefinitely in the atomic age." Thus, they concluded:

In the light of these considerations, and provided the present momentum can be maintained for yet a while, it appears that the period holding the greatest prospect of attaining a reasonable state

of preparedness in the face of Soviet military power may lie just ahead. The economic effort required to raise the NATO military strength to such a level and maintain it there may well be insupportable for more than a limited period. The Joint Chiefs of Staff therefore believe that the course of action offering the greatest prospect of a solution to the Russian problem by means short of general war is to adopt now a program of intensified effort, both at home and abroad, *to reach at the earliest possible date a NATO defense posture sufficiently strong to support a bold seizure of the initiative in the cold war, with the objective of forcing a reversal of the present rise in Communist military power before it reaches the stage of critical and unacceptable threat to the free world.*<sup>50</sup>

This was the heart of the military's aspirations and it implied that the main obstacle facing the United States was its willingness to use its military strength to resolve the Cold War with boldness.

The pressure for a reexamination of NATO's strategy also came from the British but on less ambitious grounds. Britain felt that the climate in NATO was ripe for re-presentation of its strategic thinking. The possible retraction of its NATO commitments could not be contemplated unless Britain convinced its allies to undertake a review of their collective strategic future. But if Ridgway thought that new weapons would have no appreciable effect on force goals, Britain could not justify its retrenchment on purely national grounds. Nor could it use an economic argument, since the Annual Review panel already said "rightly or wrongly . . . that the defence efforts of all concerned were within their economic capabilities."<sup>51</sup> Without a joint Anglo-American statement, Britain pushed for a *political* appreciation in NATO to induce a change in strategy. As Churchill's Defence Minister Lord Alexander put it to the Defence Committee in March 1953:

The root of the difficulty is that force requirements are at present based upon an assessment by NATO Commanders of the forces they would need to hold the enemy in the initial stages of a war which is regarded as inevitable. So long as this is so, the gap between requirements and the forces which countries can afford is bound to be wide. We may be reaching a stage when some fundamental rethinking of the objectives of NATO defence policy will have to be undertaken. We may have to abandon the purely military approach to force requirements in favour of a political approach,

which must be based upon two main principles:

- (i) the successful conduct of the cold war;
- (ii) the build up of armed forces which, considered in relation to the striking power of the United States Strategic Air Command increasingly reinforced by the RAF medium bomber force, and the power to protect their essential bases, can be regarded as an adequate deterrent to war, though they might not actually be sufficient to conduct a successful holding action should hot war break out. A decision on the size of the forces which could be deemed adequate for this purpose would be political rather than military.

Alexander recommended this first be sounded with Washington and, if found acceptable, NATO would be asked to endorse a strategy that stressed atomic deterrence.<sup>52</sup>

In August 1953, the Foreign Office was prepared to approach the Americans again. Informal contacts between the Foreign Office and the State Department revealed receptiveness in Washington to a fresh look at NATO's malaise.<sup>53</sup> In September, Sir Roger Makins presented the British approach, conveying a desire for a common policy before to the 1953 Annual Review. The United States was cautious:

We are in general agreement on the UK formulation of the problem and NATO force prospects over the next couple of years. However, the British approach glosses over two fundamental problems which must be overcome before it becomes acceptable. We must convince our allies that an effective deterrent does exist for the time being, but that in the longer term further buildup will be required, over and above a German contribution. The exact dimensions of this buildup must await formulation of new requirements taking into account the effect of new weapons.<sup>54</sup>

The deterrent effect of the bomb was simple enough, but if it only served as a shield under which NATO built-up its other forces, then this was no change. But by the autumn of 1953, the Eisenhower administration astonishingly claimed it would use its own "stretchout" as proof of its confidence in the atomic deterrent, creating a "climate of belief in the effectiveness of NATO as a short-run deterrent."<sup>55</sup> This would create a better setting for a reduction of U.S. forces. The JCS reminded Wilson that while there were no plans to do so "it continues to be the hope of the United States that the free nations will eventually achieve by their



collective efforts sufficient defensive strength relative to the Soviet Bloc that it will be possible to reduce the magnitude of US forces stationed in Europe in peacetime." This was consistent with the New Look's claim that NATO had to be prepared for redeployment by understanding that the "concentration of forces" gave it greater freedom of action.<sup>56</sup> In this still unstable environment, Britain "had not yet hit upon [the] right formulation." The new administration had not put the last coat on NSC 162/2, and would wait until it had done so before approaching the Annual Review.<sup>57</sup>

Everyone waited to see what others would do before making commitments toward anything or anyone. As SACEUR's study looked to 1956, everyone thought there was no point in making decisions in 1953. The JCS knew that the Annual Review was being seen as only an interim plan toward an as yet unknown strategy. Their discussions prompted another round of squabbling, out of which came one startling admission: the only change required by nuclear integration was pre-delegated authority to use atomic weapons promptly. "This action should reduce to a minimum the delay attendant upon present commitments, implied or written, requiring the United States to consult with allied governments prior to reaching a decision with respect to employment."<sup>58</sup> Other than that, the air force assumed its normal stand ("the currently adopted NATO strategy is not valid") as long as limitations on the freedom of SACEUR to initiate atomic operations obtained. On this point, traditional air power theories moved into gear: the advent of atomic warfare "placed greater emphasis than ever on the elements of surprise and ability to launch devastating attacks." Presently only the president could authorize atomic use. Once SHAPE had taken into account the use of thermonuclear weapons, there would be changes in the "presently approved force requirements."<sup>59</sup> For them to work, U.S. forces under NATO's command needed the freedom to strike back without extensive political deliberation.

This position was not surprising, but also revolved entirely around the *type* of nuclear war to be fought: the question of nuclear *versus* conventional forces was not asked; the size of NATO's forces was only related to its support of a presumed atomic strategy. All services wanted pre-delegated authority for *the use of* nuclear weapons. There was an inexorable logic in arguing that, once outfitted with tactical nuclear weapons an "atomic division" had to have the freedom to use them in the field. The most compelling reason for pre-delegation was indeed the new vulnerability of NATO nuclear forces. This created a circular rationale: the more NATO depended on nuclear weapons, the more enticing a target they

became for preemption by the Soviets.<sup>60</sup> This provided incentives for faster preemptive attacks against Soviet forces. None of the services discussed the risks in such an escalatory process but only the opportunities it offered to their peculiar institutional dominance of the global strategic environment.

This was not officially the direction NATO was heading. The United Kingdom, intent on introducing its paper to the NAC, felt that the Europeans might now be receptive to its basic ideas, with or without prior American agreement. The French produced their own study that covered the same general ground.<sup>61</sup> Ismay wrote another paper, although the United States thought that its call for more studying (under Ismay's stewardship) would "hinder expeditious action."<sup>62</sup> But it was painfully obvious at the Bermuda conference held in December that Britain, France, and the United States were coming to the problem of the "new approach" from painfully different angles.

The Bermuda conference was called to deal with Soviet peace overtures. But a range of contentious issues was on the menu. Aside from the EDC problem, which by the end of 1953 permeated every statement of U.S. policy, American officials expected Churchill to "argue the case for global planning" (code word for a strategic relationship with the United States). If the French demanded, in exchange for the EDC, a security guarantee from the British in the form of a commitment to maintain troops of the continent for fifty years, London would try to weasel out of it by stressing the need for a NATO new look.<sup>63</sup> The United Kingdom thought that the Americans, of all people, might be sympathetic to Britain's predicament.<sup>64</sup> But Britain's emphasis on a nuclear deterrent force never filled the credibility gap needed by the French. "They have tried unsuccessfully," observed the U.S. ambassador in London with precision and empathy, "to obtain a quantitative military definition of deterrent force, but find [the] problem involves too many political elements to be susceptible [to a] purely military definition."<sup>65</sup> This was the weakness with the British approach. NATO's cohesion was psychological, and the burden of proof rested with the United Kingdom to demonstrate that deterrence through retaliation offered the same confidence as a modest yet symbolic continental commitment. This could be turned with equal force against the United States. But its concern about making sure the United Kingdom focused on the continent rather than shared global planning with Washington revealed the extent to which the 1952 GSP and the New Look worked against each other.

The French delegation, clinging to familiar moorings, also wanted coordinated global planning. Its contribution to the atomic debate was

indifferent, but it endorsed the idea that NATO's ignorance of these weapons, and the affect they might have was a "great strategic disadvantage and unnecessary handicap." They continued to differ on the question of the balance between forces-in-being and reserves, seeing in this ratio much of what troubled them about Anglo-American thinking.<sup>66</sup>

By the time they met in Bermuda, each of the Big Three was thinking nuclear. The U.S. leaned toward their integration into all services to widen NATO's force beyond retaliation, and to use new weapons in the battlefield. This was army thinking, so it also meant bigger conventional forces and European responsibility for them. Britain's fondness for air power was another matter. It did not especially want larger forces, but nor did it advocate automatic use. On this, France sided with it against the Americans. Dulles, who fretted that this reticence undermined the credibility of threats, tried to convince the allies that prior agreement was needed to *prevent* war in the first place. This was a tough sell. He came home after Bermuda grumbling that the allies were still "very stubborn" in their resistance to the automatic use of nuclear weapons.<sup>67</sup> That this continued to surprise American officials indicates how culturally solipsistic strategic thinking can be.

But America's nuclear turn was also interpreted in light of European anxiety about redeployment. In October, an alleged misinterpretation of a Wilson press conference, where he hinted that new weapons might allow a U.S. withdrawal, spread the rumor that Eisenhower planned to reduce U.S. troops imminently. Washington denied it but the picture was hard to remove. Dulles found himself issuing disavowals throughout the fall. He confessed to his colleagues after Bermuda that the problem with denials was they tend to freeze the United States into its position indefinitely. Eisenhower should try to assure the allies that adjusting American forces would take place in a "set pattern regarding our [NATO's] new defense posture." But political difficulties, including the EDC, meant that the United States, as Wilson lamented poignantly, "seemed hopelessly caught between the fear of the Europeans as to the use of atomic weapons, and our own desire to bring our forces home."<sup>68</sup>

Pitching these desires to the allies required changes to the U.S.–European relationship. At the December NAC meeting in Paris, Dulles announced that Eisenhower would ask Congress to amend the McMahon Act, assuming if the allies had more information, escorting the New Look into NATO would be easier. The NAC thereupon officially launched its "new approach," stating it must "press on with the task of reviewing and reassessing the pattern of our defense effort against the background of political and economic assumptions which they have been given" and

take “into account as realistically as possible the effect of new weapons.”<sup>69</sup> There was not much discussion of strategy, but in a restricted session of the NAC on December 16, some issues were broached. And the United States came away with fresh worries that the Europeans did not accept its position. Dulles said that his government would not waste its resources on both conventional and atomic forces. The fission weapons now available had assumed an “almost conventional role.” And what was the use of making them if we “can’t effectively use them?” Since the United States was making them, he implied, the Europeans had to accept that they *would* be used. The United States had already transferred the first 280 mm dual capability cannons to Europe in September. The allies should understand that “the deployment of these battalions should be accomplished in a manner consonant with the policy of treating atomic potential as an integral part of our arsenal, and in a manner best calculated to develop the support of our European allies.” While the cannon was “dual capable,” not all U.S. weapons would be. The cost of duplication had to be considered as NATO introduced more atomic-capable weapons. This was more than a technical or economic question. While the United States would prefer not to initiate nuclear weapons use in Europe, with a military force so dependent on new weapons, the “first to use gains [a] tremendous advantage.” This had grave implications that ought to be handled in the “new approach.” But the gist of his position was that the United States expected NATO-wide authorization to use nuclear weapons. Dulles and Wilson reported that they had “made every effort to get the other NATO ministers to thinking in something like our terms of atomic weapons and of the atomic age. This had not been wholly successful, and the other ministers were still very frightened at the atomic prospect.” From this, Dulles concluded

that the United States would be unable to secure from its allies any agreement by them on the creation of an alert system which could quickly be put into effect if and when war came. Beyond this *our campaign of educating our allies on atomic weapons must go on*, and this little informal meeting was a long step in this direction. Indeed . . . it may well turn out to have been the most significant achievement of the whole meeting.<sup>70</sup>

## CHAPTER EIGHT

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### *“Our Plans Might Not be Purely Defensive”*

#### *Leading NATO into the Nuclear Era*

In the legends of nuclear strategy, NATO's primal scene came at the end of 1954. The EDC had collapsed a few months earlier; two years of Republican rule had unnerved the allies who suspected the New Look was the work of a neo-isolationist ghost moving through the halls of Congress and the White House. And yet, by mid-1954 the formal integration of nuclear weapons into NATO war plans was under way. As the last chapter saw, pressure for a reevaluation of strategy came from many directions. The new JCS saw integration as a way of eliminating obstacles to a preemptive strategy they thought necessary to fight a nuclear war that might be induced by their “bold” plan to end the Cold War. John Foster Dulles demanded a NATO-wide affirmation of Massive Retaliation so America could rediscover its spiritual mission. First-use came out of the confluence of all these forces, but primarily from an inarticulate desire on the part of the United States to universalize its strategic culture in the new Atlantic community. This demanded a resocialized European identity, in which traditional national biases were displaced by an acceptance of the interest the United States had in holding a free hand over the decision to execute a war.

This interpretation is, naturally, at odds with the official version. There, causal weight is given to the strains of rearmament and the promise of cheaper nuclear weapons to offset Soviet conventional strength. Economic arguments were present throughout 1954, but not as much as NATO would like to believe. The alliance was not forced into first-use by political or economic limits, but was pulled toward first-use because for the

United States it resolved the decision-making tangle that came with NATO membership. The only way to overcome the will of the allies, pay homage to their autonomy, and avoid turning them into defiant satellites was to remake their interests. The recent literature on first-use pulls more rationality from these events than was there at the time, missing the contingent forces that made first-use seem so inevitable and coldly rational.<sup>1</sup> It understates the strategic evasions of NATO's largest members; it confuses the desire of NATO to economize as the Cold War stabilized after 1953 with the frantic priorities of the nuclear powers to embrace a weapon that offered unique emotional advantages to their position in relation to each other; and it fails tragically to understand how nuclear weapons contained their own justification, in which once accepted as possible, planning for a robust nuclear war becomes a necessity.

Dulles's speech to the Council on Foreign Relations on January 12, 1954,<sup>2</sup> was the clearest indication that the United States was leaning toward first-use. His clarification in *Foreign Affairs* a few months later tried to improve this credibility by arguing, "if an aggressor knew he could always prescribe the battle conditions that suited him and engage us in struggles mainly involving manpower, aggression might be encouraged." While he stressed this as a way of preventing, not waging, war, the two had to be tied together credibly. If you lack the means or will to win, your threats are ineffective. In *Foreign Affairs* he backtracked, claiming "massive atomic and thermonuclear reaction is not the kind of power which could most usefully be evoked under all circumstances," and that the United States would not turn "every local war into a world war."<sup>3</sup> Yet Dulles never specified how to climb the escalation ladder. The NSC never mentioned this when it reviewed NSC 162/2 in mid-1954. But Dulles was beginning to appreciate the inhibitions of NATO. Could the United States routinely threaten to escalate and retain the happiness of those nearer the Soviet periphery? For Lester Pearson, the only conclusion for NATO was that there should be even greater consultation ("being asked rather than told," he said) than ever before.<sup>4</sup> French theorist Raymond Aron thought that Dulles's musings must have been intended for "propaganda purposes and would not be applied without consultation with allies."<sup>5</sup> He thought the speech was no more than an outgrowth of the bitterness of the Korean experience, a cathartic gesture that might have made sense when the United States held its atomic monopoly but could not be taken seriously now.<sup>6</sup> This was optimistic, but Dulles's personal foray into "instant retaliation" was indeed short-lived. He grew more cautious throughout 1954. "Our 'tough policy,' " he conceded, "was becoming increasingly unpopular throughout the free world; whereas

the British ‘soft policy’ was gaining prestige and acceptance both in Europe and Asia.” By the end of the year, he confessed, “experience indicated that it was not easy to go very much beyond the point that this Administration had reached in translating a dynamic policy into courses of action.”<sup>7</sup> This was precisely the wrong conclusion according to Radford and some of his colleagues. The rest of the year was a struggle between a more circumspect Dulles and an edgy military that believed the New Look was regressing into the same passivity that debased containment.

**“There are Certainly Worse Things than Physical  
Extinction”: Preemptive War in American  
Strategic Thinking, 1954**

The new combativeness in the military was driven by two desires. The New Look’s obsession with America’s vulnerability, combined with its superiority in tactical and nuclear weapons, led a number of United States strategists, including Eisenhower, to contemplate initiating war with the Soviets while the United States could “win.” Eisenhower, as we know, rejected this option but his counselors never lost their interest in preemption. Its persistence in JCS arguments through 1954 gave the rationale for wanting NATO’s to adopt first-use.<sup>8</sup> The fear of another Pearl Harbor, which had taken on special symbolic importance in the nuclear age, reinforced the appeal of a first-strike. It climaxed in Project Control, Colonel Raymond Sleeper’s top-secret air force study from 1953–54. Sleeper was drawn to British colonial ideas about using air power to terrorize indigenous people into submission, thinking the United States had the capability to do the same to the Soviets. But this moved U.S. strategy from defense to offense because in such a “dynamic role,” it had to eliminate the risks of Soviet resistance. Unlike the Empire’s indigenous populations, the Soviets could lash out at the source. This meant the U.S. had to abandon “any prohibition against . . . striking the first blow against the Soviet Union.” Control used historic catastrophes inflicted on the United States to illustrate:

During both World War I and World War II the U.S. gave the enemy the prerogative of striking the first blow. This has resulted in a widespread belief, within the U.S., that there is an unwritten law that prohibits the U.S. from initiating the use of firepower against any enemy. Such a belief, if adhered to, could prove disastrous in any

modern war fought with weapons of mass destruction available today. . . . The point is that in these days of modern conflict the term aggression must be realistically defined if aggressor nations are to be denied the prerogative of the initiative and surprise which increases their chance of victory over the Free World.<sup>9</sup>

There was never, of course, any such law in U.S. strategic thinking, and neither world wars fit Sleeper’s description of military self-denial well. Yet his narrative embodied neo-isolationist claims that blamed America’s engagement in both wars on liberal passivity. Sleeper’s redefinition of aggression to accommodate preventive war as self-defense was critical to air force thinking. When asked if it was realistic to expect the United States to strike first, the “answer to this lies in an understanding of the tremendous power of the initiative in atomic warfare. This power is so great that it is mandatory that we entertain hitting Russia first in an atomic war.” He offered a more general moral case for anticipatory war, which showed the extent to which the United States situated state violence in an ethically positive tradition. Sleeper argued that the Soviet Union’s innate hostility justified redefining *intent*. He drew on a frontier analogy, recalling that it was lawful to kill *if* the victim made the first move but was beaten to the punch by the killer. Sleeper’s use of Wild West legend, apposite in the 1950s when film Westerns had widespread appeal, intended to make a distinction between just and unjust violence, coaxing Americans to overcome their resistance to war by providing its moral innocence.<sup>10</sup> Thereafter, if “intent” signified the “first move,” there was no need for an “imminent” threat: the door was open to prevention but it could be called preemption. The *casus belli* depended not on enemy actions—the prerogatives of a state, such as building tanks and bombers, were proof of intent—but on ideological assessments of the regime.<sup>11</sup> Without advocating war, the United States could build the footing for an aggressive policy to undermine the Soviets, confident that if they tried to save themselves by lashing out, the USAF could beat them to the punch.

Sleeper took his idea to the service secretaries in June 1954, received their endorsement, and then met with Wilson on June 25 and found more sympathy. Wilson thought that the United States lacked only “the political decision to proceed.” The plan did have internal detractors of course. The RAND Corporation argued that its studies showed both sides would be severely “hurt” regardless of who took the initiative. Sleeper’s answer was telling in its fatalism if not its disconnection from reality. “There are certainly worse things than physical extinction,” he said. “It is necessary to realize that we must fight for our vital interests and, though



not an instrument of our policy, we must be willing even to strike the first blow in our own interests rather than accept a bloodless defeat." Choosing suicide over "defeat" was not a strong argument but it worked in certain emotional contexts. Yet the State Department was livid, deriding Control as "simply another version of preventative war."<sup>12</sup> It was not, exactly, because Sleeper *wanted* the Soviets to start something. He wanted the United States to drive them into a corner in which their survival was at stake; he wanted America to have an itchy trigger finger.

The State Department's reaction was predictable. So was the military's. Radford was briefed on August 26 (and the JCS as a whole on August 30), and was so impressed that he was "anxious to see it promoted" over the anticipated objections of U.S. diplomats and their allies. "If the US did not adopt and successfully follow through on a course of action similar to Project Control," he wrote, "in the period mid 1957–1960 there would be either an all-out atomic war or the U.S. would be forced into an agreement which would mean victory for the USSR."<sup>13</sup> This stark choice was brought into NSC discussions in the second half of 1954. The purpose was to review NSC 162/2 in light of two new problems: the expansion of the Soviet nuclear arsenal with implications of reciprocal deterrence; and the nervousness of the allies, whose fears of entrapment were weakening their confidence in American leadership.<sup>14</sup> U.S. intelligence estimates concluded that nuclear abundance would do this, making the allies want influence over U.S. policy "in order to ensure a cautious and non-provocative attitude toward the Communist states."<sup>15</sup> They thought that abundance required caution, the JCS a rationale for ending the Cold War dramatically.

Eisenhower was only beginning to grapple with his own fatalism.<sup>16</sup> He guessed that the outcome of a nuclear exchange would be dictatorships in both countries, but he still believed that the strategic aim of the United States was "victory," that other goals "would have to be subordinated to winning that war."<sup>17</sup> In what sense was "winning" possible if the United States had to wait until the Soviets initiated a nuclear war? In December 1953, he told C.D. Jackson that the United States "must consider the factor that atomic weapons strongly favor the side that attacks aggressively and by surprise."<sup>18</sup> Three months later, he told the NSC that the United States "would never enter the war except in *retaliation against a heavy Soviet atomic attack*." It was incumbent upon the president to ensure that his decision to use nuclear weapons not be clouded by consideration of how much it would hurt the United States.<sup>19</sup> It is a testament to how nuclear weapons befuddled military rationality that Eisenhower—the-Clauswitzian could argue for victory without objectives,

for retaliation against an enemy that had already destroyed the United States.<sup>20</sup> If nuclear war were futile, the only rationale for a nuclear posture was to enhance the credibility of deterrence. Unfortunately, there is no evidence from NSC meetings in 1954 that deterrence alone determined the trajectory of U.S. strategy. Eisenhower always returned to his formula that the United States had to establish “a priority in the types of war we will wage.” But he was dismissive of those who wanted the United States to “strip itself naked of all military capabilities except the nuclear.”<sup>21</sup> These were not contradictory positions in theory, but Eisenhower never interjected himself to resolve the tension between an inclusive deterrent that offered something to NATO, and the need to act decisively if it were to shake off the lethargy of containment. The hard-liners, meanwhile, inched closer to Project Control. The Defense Department’s annex to NSC 5422 reflected Control’s window of opportunity thinking:

Under such circumstances [of mutual deterrence], the Soviets might well elect to pursue their ultimate objective of world domination through a succession of local aggressions, either overt or covert, all of which could not be successfully opposed by the Allies through localized counteraction, without unacceptable commitment of resources. The Free World would then be confronted with a situation in which the only alternative to acquiescence in progressive accretions of territory, manpower, and other resources by the Soviet Bloc would be a deliberate decision to react with military force against the real source of aggression. This situation serves to emphasize *the time limitation*, as recognized in paragraph 45 of NSC 162/2, within which conditions must be created by the United States and the Free World coalition such as to permit the Soviet-Communist threat to be met with resolution, to the end that satisfactory and enduring arrangements for co-existence can be established.<sup>22</sup>

What was missing was the claim that under nuclear stalemate the Soviets might be tempted to chip away at American control of Europe using non-nuclear forces. Eisenhower thought the idea the Soviets might “nibble the free world to death piece by piece” was “completely erroneous. The more atomic weapons each side obtains,” he insisted, “the more anxious it will be to use these weapons.” The United States “should have the capability . . . of warding off destructive enemy attack and as quickly as possible ourselves to be able to destroy the war potential of the enemy. After these initial moves . . . the United States might have to contemplate a 12-year mobilization program to achieve final victory in the war.”<sup>23</sup>

This vision of the future had two implications for NATO. The only way the United States would blunt a Soviet atomic offensive was by “initiating the strategic use of nuclear weapons.”<sup>24</sup> Second, if the next war was followed by twelve years in which the residue of both sides staggered on, the shift away from NATO conventional forces has a different meaning. In 1952 and 1953, SHAPE moved toward “forces-in-being” rather than reserves, prompting angry but futile interventions by the French. The savings in conventional forces by shifting to a nuclear strategy were not found in forces needed at the outset, but because there would be no second phase of the war and thus no need for reinforcements. The argument that a nuclear strategy saved forces was thus *predicated* on immediate nuclear use. U.S. strategy after 1953 saw conventional reductions because it planned the next war as a full-blown nuclear exchange.<sup>25</sup> No one specified how it would start—NATO documents described the next war as happening either “by design or accident”—or if the Soviets saw no advantages to nuclear restraint. But Eisenhower did not believe in Soviet circumspection. When Ridgway wondered if the terrible prospects for a post-nuclear world made it desirable for the United States to withhold nuclear weapons to induce the Soviets to do the same, he was not attacked by for inviting a Soviet conventional attack: he was derided by the president for assuming the Soviets would be reticent at all. Eisenhower simply “did not believe any such thing.”<sup>26</sup>

The reasons are not hard to fathom. It was not plausible to think the Soviets would risk attacking Europe without destroying NATO’s atomic capability first. If it were NATO’s nuclear capability that the Soviets most feared (and nuclear deterrence was premised on it), it would be foolish to expect them to bank their security on NATO’s restraint, but instead contemplate a preemptive assault of their own. Most NATO scenarios for the end of the 1950s imagined that if there were a war, the Soviets would strike with nuclear weapons. U.S. officials knew that a NATO first strike was the only defense against this.

The problem is that in 1954 the NSC never approved of preemption. The policy sanctioned in August pointed vaguely in that direction, namely that new factors needed to be considered, that America’s overseas base complex might “become ineffective in the event of general war because of political reasons (including susceptibility of the local government to atomic blackmail) or military reasons (exposure to immediate destruction by enemy action).” NSC 5422/2 recommended moving toward greater freedom to use these bases by somehow overriding the fears of the allies. “The US should . . . [improve] the ability to use such bases for nuclear attack in the collective defense of the free world, [and]

increase emphasis on *developing self-sufficiency for the conduct of offensive operations exploiting the use of nuclear weapons.*”<sup>27</sup> NATO field commanders should respond in an emergency without being constrained by political fears. The United States was flirting here with first-use because the very asset it needed for war fighting might be tied-up by the nervousness of its allies.

This message, hidden in NSC 5422/2’s irresolute reflections on America’s nuclear future, was still not assertive enough for the JCS. The military was dismissive of Europe: “It is considered that the timely achievement of the broad objective of US security policy cannot be brought about if the United States is required to defer to the counsel of the most cautious among our allies, or if it is unwilling to undertake certain risks inherent in the adoption of dynamic and positive security measures.”<sup>28</sup> These accusations finally caused Dulles to snap: “our basic policy on the whole was pretty good, even . . . if it hasn’t gotten us into war,” and he was not sure that “not getting into war was a bad thing.” Yes, the United States faced some “deterioration of its position in the world—namely . . . a nuclear balance of power between the US and the USSR.” But how, he asked the military, “were we to prevent the Soviet Union from achieving such a nuclear balance of power without going to war with the USSR?” Radford, pressed to come up with some scenarios, evasively deferred to the civilians: “dynamic” actions could not be “exclusively military.” All the JCS could do, he shrugged “was to guarantee that if such courses of action did result either in a limited or a full-scale war, the outcome for the United States, *prior to Soviet achievement of atomic plenty*, would be successful.” There was plenty of evidence of the “lack of courage of our allies,” which might drive the United States into paralysis unless it could be overcome.<sup>29</sup> The military repeated this in December.

If a policy of persuasion is to be effective, the United States must either offer adequate inducements or develop a position of sufficient strength to alter radically the Soviet attitude. . . . The Joint Chiefs of Staff are of the opinion, therefore, that our national strategy should recognise that, until the Communist Regimes are convinced that *their aggressive and expansionist policies will be met by countermeasures which inherently will threaten the continued existence of their regimes*, it will not be feasible to induce a change in their basic attitude or bring about the abandonment of their present objectives, and that the desired conviction in Communist minds can be brought about only through positive dynamic and timely action by the United States.<sup>30</sup>

The JCS declined to elaborate on what it meant to threaten the existence of a regime, or how threats would produce anything other than counter-measures. If the Soviets were like the Americans, efforts to “alter radically” their attitude could produce the opposite.

The final statement of U.S. policy for 1954, NSC 5440, embraced all these contradictory themes: the necessity of using the bomb along side having “flexible and mobile” forces; the importance of applying force cautiously to retain allies next to the willingness of the United States to take measures that invariably lost allied support. It was a fuddle that provided the New Look with multiple meanings or none at all. What is critical is not the coherence of its design, but how it functioned in the field in which it was placed. If there was a tone to NSC 5440 that played on the feelings of the nation after the Korean War, it was that America and its allies had to convince the Soviets that the NATO was prepared “to oppose aggression despite the risk of general war, and . . . to prevail if general war eventuates.”<sup>31</sup> But how did NATO fit into this? The language is clear enough that allies existed mainly to augment U.S. power, but also that their concepts of security had to be harmonized with those of the United States:

Such a policy is predicated upon the support and cooperation of appropriate major allies and certain other free world countries, in furnishing bases for US military power, especially strategic air, and in providing their share of military forces. *To succeed, the basic strategy and policy of the US must be believed by our appropriate major allies generally to serve their security as well as ours. Thus, it is important for the United States to take the necessary steps to convince them that such is the case.*<sup>32</sup>

The objective was to educate European strategic thinking. The U.S. nuclear program could not function without this ideational change. The sovereignty of the allies was not on the table; their autonomy could only be expressed in acceptable strategic possibilities. It begs the question: why would the European allies need to be convinced that the free exercise of American strategic air power was in their interests? Because the new aggressiveness in U.S. nuclear thinking was simply not, American officials knew, shared by the allies in their current state of national strategic thinking.

Dulles, however, kept moving backward, closer to NSC 68 ironically. The State Department insisted that the “US and NATO should explore urgently the possibility of maintaining sufficient flexibility in NATO forces to avoid exclusive dependence on atomic weapons . . . so as to give the Europeans some sense of choice as to the actual character of warfare. Otherwise the strategy will strain the will to fight and spur

neutralism.”<sup>33</sup> The military saw this “lack of courage” as something to be circumvented. “Our alliance system,” Dulles answered in December, “has staked out the vital areas of the world which we propose to hold even at the risk of general war. These vital areas include currently all the areas of immediate strategic value to us or which possess significant war potential. The NATO area is by all odds the greatest single US asset.”<sup>34</sup> Thus, the United States and European positions on nuclear weapons were not close in 1954 and the United States knew it. Their positions could not easily be contained in one policy. The climate of opinion in the United States in 1954 suggested, as the allies also knew, that American nationalism placed constraints on the willingness of the United States to accommodate Europe.

### **Massive Retaliation and NATO:** **First Thoughts**

Part of the problem was that the allies had to decipher what they could about the New Look from public declarations and contradictory private assurances. Dulles’s speech echoed the arguments he brought to Bermuda in December, but the allies hoped consultation would not be superseded by an emphasis on “instant” in retaliation.<sup>35</sup> The French also wanted Washington to make “a new public declaration of its intentions to maintain enough ground forces in Europe to defend this continent in case of war.” As the *New York Times* reported, this “reaffirmation is desired not only because the ‘new look’ of American strategy has led to fears that United States troops may be withdrawn from Europe but to remove the doubts of some French Deputies who fear that when EDC and German rearmament are voted, American contingents may be reduced as German contingents become operative.”<sup>36</sup> The New Look was framed in France by the EDC debate and the conspicuous impatience of Americans with France’s fears.<sup>37</sup> NSC discussions on the EDC indeed digressed into verbal barrages against the French. Only once, when he grumbled how he was “sick and tired of the US pulling French chestnuts out of the fire,” was Wilson reprimanded by Eisenhower. The NSC agreed to provide verbal assurances to France, but only as a deal to get the Lanier government to bring the EDC to a vote. When word leaked, it reinforced the impression in France that the EDC was a “US project to force *premature* federation along *military* lines.”<sup>38</sup> Such suspicions played into the hand of French nuclear nationalists who resented integration.

Many Americans who dealt with day-to-day diplomacy in Europe had any more sense of what the New Look meant for NATO. As late as

February 1954, one lamented that he had to cobble together what U.S. strategy was, based on NSC 161/1 (he had not yet seen NSC 162/2) and speeches by Dulles and Radford in December and January. Reducing U.S. commitments to create a reserve and rely on allied local defenses made sense enough, he thought, but not surely in Europe.

It might . . . be self-defeating in the long run if we were to attempt through political commitments or through our information media to convey the impression that we intend to maintain substantial American ground forces in Western Europe on a long-term basis and then be faced within a few months of EDC ratification with a situation in which we had to explain the necessity of withdrawing them.

Current policy reinforced “a long-standing suspicion in Western Europe that our interest in that area is limited and transient and that there is real and imminent danger of our retreating to isolationism or, almost as bad, to a peripheral strategy.”<sup>39</sup> Ridgway, who opposed the New Look’s conventional reductions but favored “redeployment,” assured the European desk that NATO was safe for now.<sup>40</sup>

The Europeans placed inordinate hope on SACEUR’s new strategic review to restore confidence in United States leadership.<sup>41</sup> Yet Gruenther assembled his New Approach Group in response to the integration of nuclear weapons in U.S. air and ground forces, not Europe’s anxieties. Those who hoped nuclear weapons in NATO might lead to a leveling of rearmament might have been surprised to learn how well NATO had already done. Lisbon called for  $33\frac{2}{3}$  M-Day and  $77\frac{2}{3}$  M + 30 divisions by 1954. It projected that beyond 1954, it would be “militarily desirable” to have  $46\frac{2}{3}$  and  $98\frac{2}{3}$  respectively. The force goals approved by the NAC in December 1953, taking into account Greece and Turkey, called for 48 M-Day divisions from 1954 to 1956. This represented a plateau, straining the facts that the failure to move beyond Lisbon’s targets was an indication of NATO’s unwillingness to take defense seriously. NATO intelligence estimates even saw a leveling in Soviet conventional force expenditures.<sup>42</sup> NATO’s nuclearization took place at precisely the moment that the conventional balance between East and West was equalizing. But the attenuation of rearmament was encouraged by the New Look’s plan for a strategic reserve. The JCS wanted the New Approach to provide the rationale for a reduction in U.S. commitments to Europe, reminding Eisenhower that the New Look was to push for the “eventual achievement of allied collective defense to such a point that would permit reduction in magnitude of US forces stationed in Europe

in peacetime.” Eisenhower and Dulles did not “necessarily disagree.” Thus the JCS treated the 1954 Annual Review as an interim study pending SACEUR’s report because they assumed the new program would permit the United States to have its reserve without the political fallout.<sup>43</sup>

The British had similar hopes. In March 1954, the Secretary of State for War told the House that the “best way to reduce expenditure would be to bring back those elements of the Army which were a long way from home, for distance caused much additional expenditure. The enemy of economy today was the dispersion of the Army all over the world.”<sup>44</sup> It was in the name of rational efficiency, of course, not the choice to shift resources to a medium bomber rather than maintain them where SHAPE recommended, that redeployment was contemplated. The British needed to know how long NATO’s “shield” might hold without reinforcements because the Radical Review concluded there would be no “broken-backed” phase of war after all.<sup>45</sup> The hope was that SACEUR’s study might show “that large reinforcements could be furnished during the first six-months of war provided that equipment could be provided for them.” U.S. aid criteria structurally encouraged the shift from reserves to forces-in-being by refusing aid for forces not made ready in the first thirty days; this meant that when SACEUR asked NATO countries what forces they would commit during the early days of a war, this might compel the United States “to go a good deal further” in the provision of military aid.<sup>46</sup> Going along with SACEUR’s short-war plans could, in other words, shift the burden back to Washington.

By 1954, the Conservative government was ready to join the United States as a peripheral nuclear power with interests that could only be defended with the freedom of action offered by a degree of extra-European independence. These hopes were behind Anglo-American thinking from the beginning but were given the opportunity to be approved by the whole alliance if SACEUR vindicated their claim to special status. This gave the 1954 Annual Review an unreal quality since everyone expected Gruenther to produce a new platform that would alter NATO’s force composition eventually. Gruenther was not allowed, moreover, to plan around some distant “requirement,” meaning that he could only look at NATO’s *capabilities* as they were. The only resource subject to change, and thus a strategic variable, was the nuclear arsenal.<sup>47</sup> The failure to agree on “balanced” strategic plan—a failure induced by Anglo-American peripheralism—impelled NATO to make emergency plans into long-term plans. The failure to find an alternative to atomic war fighting was encouraged by economics, but it was first and foremost



driven by the competitive strategic desires of the allies and their anxieties about each other's reliability.

At the heart of the study were new tactical nuclear weapons. The U.S. Weapons Systems Evaluation Group (WSEG) prepared a study (WSEG 14) for use by U.S. officers in Europe that was mistakenly sent to American planners at SHAPE (Gruenther got permission to share it with his non-American colleagues in the New Approach Group). WSEG 14 was based on an all-out Soviet attack on Europe, including a set number of Soviet atomic weapons, probably 100, being used in Europe. Since the Soviets theoretically possessed the initiative, this offset their inferiority in number of warheads.<sup>48</sup> SACEUR's assumption offered him few choices. From the outset, this was not, therefore, an *asymmetrical* strategy. SHAPE accepted conventional inferiority because it expected the next war to be fought with nuclear weapons by both sides and had to try to prevail in a nuclear exchange.

But what of the concerns raised by Pearson over the authority for "instant retaliation"? Dulles tried to secure a domestic consensus around U.S. strategy first before going to the NAC. The day his *Foreign Affairs* article came out, he made the bold assertion that Eisenhower had the authority to order "instantaneous retaliation" against any attack on either the United States or its allies. The remark was not intended to rattle NATO as to free Eisenhower's hands from a strict construction of the Washington Treaty.<sup>49</sup> Dulles called this the "twilight zone" of presidential power. In "self-defense" Eisenhower could retaliate against Soviet aggression *anywhere* in the world. This was not an enlargement of presidential power but American geography: the area to be defended by the executive's capacity to act in self-defense. "As we acquire territory (Alaska etc.), and make treaties," Dulles argued, "*our area becomes larger*—so attacks in this enlarged area mean we have to act at once."<sup>50</sup> Alaska was evidently no different from Germany.

But of course it was. The next day the president clarified: where circumstances permit he would seek congressional support first. But it "was futile to speculate hypothetically. If the nation's interests were threatened, the President would make a common-sense judgment of the situation." He posed the question by relating the dilemmas of the nuclear age to the ever evocative historical trauma of 1941: "what should be done in the event of a gigantic Pearl Harbor?" he asked. "You did your best to save the American people and to reduce the power of the aggressor."<sup>51</sup> There was a juridical difference between U.S. soldiers defending themselves and the president launching a nuclear counteroffensive on behalf of other states. Yet Dulles, invoking a counterfactual that appealed to Taft

and Hoover, claimed if the United States had at least “had the capacity to retaliate instantly . . . there would have been no Pearl Harbor.”<sup>52</sup> Using Pearl Harbor as the prototype of the danger the United States faced, for which the executive claimed extraordinary powers, played deeply on public fears. U.S. intelligence estimates, and Eisenhower’s inclinations, indicated a considerable anxiety about an attack from the blue. This was another important way the British and Americans disagreed. Eisenhower thought nuclear weapons gave greater incentives to use them from the outset, while Churchill, and his Directors of Intelligence, thought the opposite.<sup>53</sup> Expectations about how future wars might unfold were vital because they revealed the rightness of strategic choices. In Britain’s case, predictions about the next war placed a premium on consultation. The fear of being left out of the loop in atomic warfare had always been central to its NATO strategy. In the United States, a surprise blow that might negate its nuclear edge drove decision-makers to looking for ways of reducing restraints on their authority to launch counterstrikes. The differences were geographic, but they were also expressions of attitudes about each other. Their anxieties were heightened by expectations of how the other would behave, how that behavior reflected dispositions that were, to some degree, impervious to reason precisely because they sprung from the interstices of national cultural tradition.

Dulles’s trip to Europe in April was used to broach the nuclear question again. He told the British that the United States wanted to incorporate tactical atomic weapons as a “matter of course” into NATO. He regretted that the allies continued to “draw a sharp line of distinction between the use of conventional weapons and atomic weapons.” This posed problems for Americans:

In the first place, the Soviets, according to our information, possess tactical atomic weapons. (Sir Anthony Eden and Sir Ivone Kirkpatrick nodded agreement, though Kirkpatrick said their information was that their numbers at the moment were limited.) It was obviously reckless for us to contemplate refusal to prepare ourselves to use atomic tactical weapons in the face of this situation. The Russians have clear-cut superiority over us in manpower and conventional weapons. Were we to tie our own hands behind our back in this atomic area, where we have superiority, we would all be at the mercy of blackmail.<sup>54</sup>

Dulles drove the point rhetorically: “would it be necessary for us to maintain two separate military establishments, one along conventional lines and the other based on the integration of atomic weapons with

conventional forces,” a duplication that “would come close to doubling this expenditure.”<sup>55</sup> This was nonsense, since NATO had not attempted to construct a “conventional” military, or refused to prepare for atomic weapons, or considered tying its hands. What was Dulles talking about? It is possible but unlikely that, as a critic of containment, he simply got NATO’s strategic history wrong. It is more likely that the rhetorical case linking Europe’s reluctance to push for more military spending to the condition of being vulnerable to blackmail was designed to freeze out other options.

Dulles pressed on for an explicit doctrine of nuclear first-use. He sometimes implied that nuclear weapons were needed to compensate for NATO’s conventional inferiority, but in noting that the Soviets had tactical atomic weapons, he also believed that a unilateral prohibition on the use of new weapons would be reckless. If NATO erased the distinction between conventional and atomic weapons, it could prepare for whatever form of war might happen. The fact that U.S. intelligence believed that NATO should expect a debilitating atomic “bolt from the blue” suggests that a Soviet conventional attack was not NATO’s preoccupation. Dulles implied that NATO had to overcome its nervousness about atomic weapons in case of a Soviet conventional attack, but the real need to remove allied constraints on U.S. nuclear freedom was more pressing if NATO needed to strike preemptively.<sup>56</sup>

There is no evidence that Dulles harbored preemptive fantasies. But overcoming the resistance of the allies to a more assertive policy was a priority. April was a cruel month for Dulles, as first Congress qualified, and then Britain rejected, his plans for “United Action” in Indochina.<sup>57</sup> It was not that Dulles and Eisenhower wanted to use nuclear weapons in Asia, but they needed their diplomacy unencumbered by anything that made threats less persuasive. Dulles took this reasoning to a closed session of the NAC on April 23. Rumors that he would propose a radical correction of NATO strategy surfaced in the press the day before. The *New York Times* reported that NATO had adopted a “new approach” amid bleak predictions of growing Soviet nuclear strength.<sup>58</sup> It was thought it included plans for large mobile nuclear divisions. The only hope for troop reductions came from the expectation that these divisions would need fewer reserves.<sup>59</sup> Dulles began where he left off in Bermuda, with the importance of a retaliatory capability sufficient to threaten the existence of the Soviet regime, and claiming that NATO had been unable to build conventional forces to resist “a full-scale Soviet Bloc attack.”<sup>60</sup> To compensate, the allies had “to place great reliance upon new weapons.” The United States “considers that the ability to use atomic weapons as

conventional weapons is essential for the defense of the NATO area.” This was not especially new but Dulles took retaliation one step further:

Self-imposed military inferiority is an invitation rather than a deterrent to war. If the nations of the free world were collectively to adopt a policy that atomic weapons would be used only in retaliation for their use by the enemy even though the enemy had started a war of aggression, and if such a policy became known in the Kremlin, the value of our formidable retaliatory capability as a deterrent to war would largely disappear. Such an action on our part would offer a strong temptation to the USSR to initiate wars on the expectation that they would be fought strictly on Soviet terms.<sup>61</sup>

Reading this, it is not obvious how it differs from the U.S. position taken at the December meeting of the NAC in 1949. At that meeting, Denmark said that if word leaked that NATO planned to rely on atomic bombs, it could precipitate a preemptive Soviet attack. The U.S. delegation answered then that Soviet knowledge of the NATO’s willingness to use new weapons was the best deterrent against all forms of Soviet aggression. How can we account for Dulles’s astonished rediscovery of NATO’s nuclear strategy? If seen in the context of U.S. fears about the restrictions on U.S. diplomacy imposed by the allies, and Dulles’s determination to rebuild a waning deterrent, his declaration of first-use was designed to capitalize on the resistance to more spending in Europe to force the NAC to surrender its veto on nuclear use. The United States, Dulles said, was dedicated to communicating, but consultation could not “stand in the way of our security.” There might be circumstances when “time would not permit consultation without itself endangering the very security we seek to protect. So far as feasible, we must seek understanding in advance on the measures to be taken under various circumstances.”<sup>62</sup>

Dulles’s presentation was late in the day, so there was no debate. Nor did the NAC clarify how NATO would consider “nonmilitary” factors when deciding to use nuclear weapons if the Americans wanted consultation radically streamlined. NAC delegates were nevertheless cautiously supportive of Dulles’s “frank” discussion. The Americans interpreted this to be an endorsement, which was premature. Britain was still deeply skeptical about the logistics of consultation; and both the French and Italian members of the Military Committee expressed concern that too much emphasis on the nuclear side would weaken NATO’s conventional forces. And if that happened, NATO’s strategy rested entirely in the hands

of the United States.<sup>63</sup> This was not a problem for the JCS, who immediately produced a list of the criteria for facilitating their freedom. Together, they offered the juridical conditions required to make nuclear first-use the instrument of American strategic autonomy in Europe. The United States should ensure “operating rights” for its overseas nuclear forces, with the “authority for introduction and movement of US atomic units intended to support NATO.” There would have to be a better exchange of nuclear information along the lines of Eisenhower’s recommendations in January.<sup>64</sup> NATO would have to agree on a sequence of “measures to be taken after a warning (before overt attack).” And there must be a collective decision on “the role of nuclear weapons in NATO strategy.” The way to secure all of these was to press for a comprehensive agreement by which operating rights could be “granted by the single decision by which each NATO Government commits its armed forces to action,” and NATO commanders would have permission to wage war without civilian authority.<sup>65</sup> These recommendations were handed to Wilson on June 11, about the same time Defense submitted its annex to NSC 5422, and the JCS rejected negotiations with the Soviets on arms control, which the allies were only too eager to pursue.

### **Gruenther’s New Approach:** The Road to MC 48

There are few documentary sources available to provide a certain picture of what went on in the New Approach. In public, Gruenther avoided categorical predictions for good political reason: he dared not imply that nuclear weapons precluded a German contribution to the EDC or would provide the pretext for an American withdrawal. He always referred to the inadequacy of NATO’s forces. In April, he discretely linked German forces to the New Approach, arguing that they “were a military necessity to give the Allies a shield for their bases in France.”<sup>66</sup> SHAPE’s private thoughts on force goals were muddled. Savings might come because “if anywhere near the expected nuclear firepower would be expended, then the war would not last very long. In an atomic conflict there would be scant time for holding or building-up phases. That makes the big difference in force requirements.”<sup>67</sup> The savings were due, in other words, to a strategic sleight of hand: NATO could not afford conventional forces, so it adopted a nuclear strategy predicated on savings that could *only* be had if the next war went nuclear at the outset. The persistence of NATO’s early reliance on nuclear weapons left it with no other options.

The New Approach also made no distinction between tactical and strategic nuclear weapons. The reason, Robert Wampler explains, is because “a high priority target group NATO had to attack early in the event of war was Soviet atomic installations and bases from which nuclear attacks could be launched on NATO forces.”<sup>68</sup> The JCS, studying the possible impact of “counter-air” attacks in the opening stages of a war, concluded that “blunting” the Soviet offensive depended on the percentage of weapons the Soviets used in their initial strike. This ability increased dramatically if NATO could strike before these forces even left the ground, when NATO was anticipating an attack. “*If Soviet hostile intent to attack was apparent and if the decision was made in time to launch the US counter-air offensive first, it is estimated that a reduction of 60 to 80 percent of the total Soviet capability would be effected.*”<sup>69</sup> This difference was compelling. The fear that the Soviets *could* use nuclear weapons forced NATO to think preemptively, to assume that the existence of enemy nuclear forces constituted an imminence of threat that made pre-emption ethical. This had a destabilizing side effect of course: if rationality were universal, the Soviets would come to the same conclusion. A strategy thus designed to strengthen deterrence in fact undermined its stability by giving both sides incentives for first-use.

The New Approach did not tackle this paradox. Europe had to be defended; NATO had to rely upon its “best” asset, a strong if precarious technological superiority. What was left was to redesign the battlefield. For this, the New Approach tapped into U.S. army research on building “atomic divisions,” and configuring them to reduce their vulnerability while still maintaining their defensive capacity. The U.S. army, joined by the British in 1954, was ready to launch what they hoped would be “an unparalleled revolution in tactics.”<sup>70</sup> Its new plans demanded a radical revision in training and force composition. General Charles Bolte told the U.S. Infantry School in 1954 that the nuclear battle “at once becomes dispersed, leading to a wide open, fluid battlefield. Mass, in the old sense of concentrating units and material to achieve a breakthrough or to mount an assault, becomes suicide.”<sup>71</sup> The army introduced a new defense concept—the “mobile defense”—to complement its traditional model of “position defense.” Mobile defense reversed the front structure by placing two-thirds of its force in reserve as a “mobile striking force.” The remaining one-third was placed forward in “islands of resistance.” These would “canalize” Soviet columns, which would then be attacked by the reserve with tactical nuclear weapons.<sup>72</sup> To increase mobility, emphasis would be placed on self-supporting, armored divisions; to compensate for their lightness, they multiplied their firepower.<sup>73</sup> This

emphasis dovetailed with the SHAPE's belief that the nuclear battle would be determined not by the number of divisions, but by the violence that could bring to bear.<sup>74</sup>

This plan offered potential manpower savings because a nuclear defense forced the Soviets to disperse their forces. The Red Army could not "mass" without becoming a target for NATO nuclear attack, although such an attack would have to be preemptive if Soviet massing had not been preceded by an overt act of aggression. More troops would be saved because post-D-Day reinforcements would "arrive too late, and the port and airfield concentrations they would present on arrival are too vulnerable." NATO only needed enough forces to compel the Soviets to form "lucrative" targets.<sup>75</sup> The consequence of making changes along these lines was, naturally, that NATO was left with no option *but* to rely on nuclear weapons. A dispersed defense would be extraordinarily vulnerable to a conventional attack. Having revamped its central front, NATO could only survive if it had license to strike first. There were detractors, of course, even in the very army that brought tactical atomic weapons to the front in the first place. But most of them simply objected to the claim that atomic battlefields meant fewer troops. Major-General James Gavin, a member of the WSEG, and commander of the United States Seventh Corps in Germany, argued this in the pages of the *New York Times*.<sup>76</sup> Other critics launched an attack on the New Look itself. Ridgway never fully accepted it anyway, and throughout 1954 used the media to joust with his colleagues. Twice he described U.S. reliance on nuclear weapons as "immoral and dangerous."<sup>77</sup>

Strategic rather than ethical arguments resurfaced in the army's criticisms of NSC 5422. The consequences of atomic plenty, it insisted, would be a *decreasing* ability to rely on nuclear weapons for *either* deterrence or war-fighting.<sup>78</sup> As Gavin wrote a few years later, the New Look "seemed contrary to all our experience in NATO," returning the country to the strategy that had taken it "to the brink of disaster in 1950." The army was not hostile to nuclear use: but tactical weapons meant that "local defenses would increase in importance and manpower requirements would increase accordingly." He quoted Walter Millis:

A new policy which, in the name of regaining "the initiative," can tend only to retie our hands to the old pre-1950 limits, shackle us once more to a single, "retaliatory" strategy and invite the Soviets to hit us again, if they wished to, in ways to which this strategy demonstrably offers no useful reply. . . . The return to the retaliatory and strategic atom is not consonant with the argument that . . . "we

need allies and collective security”; for probably the best way to lose allies it to make it clear that you no longer intend to provide them with the means of local defense. It is not consonant with the EDC policy and the statement that “rearmed Germans” must “serve the common cause”; for “rearmed Germans” must mean infantry (not atomic bomb crews) and if we no longer need American infantry for local defense how can we claim that we need German infantry?<sup>79</sup>

Millis overstated the extent to which the New Look relied solely on nuclear weapons, though no one in the administration was eager to clarify. But his claim that the New Look’s unilateralism contradicted its faith in allies was more on the mark.

Despite disagreement on strategic fundamentals in the U.S. military, Gruenther’s study was circulated to the heads of the three Standing Group nations in July 1954. They made minor adjustments (renaming it 241/3 in August), but the original version was drafted using the June JCS memorandum as its guide.<sup>80</sup> It claimed that although NATO was built to deter war, it needed to be able to defeat the Soviets in a war in which nuclear weapons would be used. This war would be short, violent, and decisive in its first phase. Large ground forces would make a shield in front of which Soviet forces would be forced to concentrate. NATO would be retrained to fight a fluid war, but the new plan called for fewer reserves. It also wanted an alert system that would only work if SACEUR could respond promptly in a crisis.<sup>81</sup>

These concepts all came from the JCS. Wilson told the State Department in August that the allies would have to undergo, in the words of one historian of the JCS, “considerable psychological conditioning” to accept this freeze on their sovereignty. Wilson believed the New Approach taken as a whole offered the only opportunity to secure the rights the JCS coveted. The administration’s longing for a free hand could be buried in a strategic restructuring approved by NATO because that restructuring proved “the absolute necessity for ‘normalized’ use of atomic weapons in the defense of Western Europe.”<sup>82</sup> This was seen by its proponents as its most significant but most sensitive part of the New Approach.

### **Deterrence or Preemption?**

The timetable for approval of the New Approach was thrown off track by France’s stunning rejection of the EDC. Having West German forces in Europe was so central to JCS’s thinking that the Eisenhower administration



huddled in an intense reevaluation of its entire European policy just as it was asking NATO to support the new strategy. For the JCS, the problem was prosaic: Gruenther's study was *predicated* on German forces in NATO's shield. Radford warned that France's decision meant "the availability of other NATO forces and certain freedoms of military action are clouded."<sup>83</sup> The JCS refused to consider SG 241/3 until NATO had answered the Germany question. For Germany, the collapse of the EDC removed its last inhibitions in demanding full equality.<sup>84</sup> The British quickly provided a solution by enlarging the Brussels Treaty to take in West Germany and Italy, a looser organization than the EDC but one that provided modest British participation. It retained a modicum of control over German rearmament and opened up the possibility of its inclusion in NATO itself.<sup>85</sup> The JCS concluded that if German membership were held up by France, the United States should rearm the Federal Republic anyway. Twining's response included a deleted paragraph that read that the purpose of German rearmament was to "provide West Germany with forces adequate to permit the withdrawal of substantial US military forces from Europe."<sup>86</sup> Despite appearances, Dulles was more sensitive to retaining France in NATO.<sup>87</sup> He quietly handed the reins to Eden to lead the alliance out of the EDC tangle.

The decision to bring Germany into NATO cleared an obstacle to the adoption of SACEUR's New Approach by enabling the JCS to make their final comments on SG 241/3.<sup>88</sup> The U.S. military still could not sort itself out, however, and was forced to submit a split report. Since there was no consensus on the New Look, there was no agreement on what it meant for NATO. Yet amazingly this did not prejudice SG 241/3. The New Approach, like the New Look, contained sufficient discursive latitude to avoid forcing a single interpretation. The two principles that NATO would "inevitably" use nuclear weapons in war, and that its forces would emphasize forces-in-being and not reserves, were accepted by the JCS without agreement on other details.<sup>89</sup> The question of pre-delegation was not addressed. The State Department concluded it would be impossible to get "an absolute firm package in peacetime" that handed over the power to use nuclear weapons to SACEUR. Instead, the United States could try a different tack:

*We must rather attempt to create a situation in which there can be only one decision in the event of war. . . . it should be our purpose and program to create an atmosphere that would ensure that the declaration of war by a NATO country would tacitly include the use of the new weapons by any or all NATO forces. . . . This would require*

interweaving of the newest equipment and forces with the conventional forces under the agreed plans, the establishment of requirements based thereon, and might permit foreign ministers to report to Parliament as they saw fit that this situation is now one of the facts of life.<sup>90</sup>

The State Department wanted an ambiguous doctrine that eased the allies into a *de facto* acceptance of first-use without formal agreement. Their endorsement of the strategy itself would be enough to remove the NAC's control of nuclear strategy. The “facts of life” were one strategic choice. The State Department told the JCS to think in terms of “prior arrangements” rather than “prior agreements.”<sup>91</sup>

The military was finally persuaded by Gruenther, who traveled to Washington in October. He was sympathetic to the concerns of the Europeans but he took the position of the State Department: if the NAC endorsed the New Approach in principle, it would pave the way to a *de facto* first-use. The United States would get its strategic freedom without demanding it, without coercing the allies. On November 3, the JCS, Wilson, and Dulles submitted a revision of SG 241/3—now known as MC 48—for Eisenhower's approval.<sup>92</sup> Wilson and Dulles, with Radford, Collins, and Eisenhower's White House Staff Secretary, General Andrew Goodpaster, met with the president on November 3. They made it clear the new study was not simply a statement of determination to rely on new weapons, but included a doctrine of nuclear first-use. They told Eisenhower that MC 48 believed “in the possibility of a full-scale Soviet attack without employing nuclear weapons, NATO would be unable to prevent the rapid overrunning of Europe without immediate employment by NATO of nuclear weapons, both strategically and tactically.”<sup>93</sup> This of course was true once NATO redesigned its atomic divisions. The sentence immediately before this, moreover, stated this was only a “remote possibility,” and what NATO ought to expect was an immediate nuclear exchange.<sup>94</sup>

If the prospect of a Soviet conventional attack was far from American strategic thinking, one might speculate that its inclusion was a function of SACEUR's desire to retain authority to strike preemptively at Soviet nuclear targets. Blunting had assumed a prominent role in U.S. targeting, but it is only really effective as an act of preemption. Nuclear first-use takes on a different meaning than implied by the notion that NATO was too weak conventionally to plan otherwise. While initiating a war was “contrary to the fundamental principles of the Alliance,” MC 48 argued the only “feasible way of stopping an enemy from delivering atomic

weapons against selected targets in Europe is to destroy his means of delivery at source. This will require early atomic counter-attack against the enemy's delivery system." NATO's nuclear advantage would provide the edge. MC 48 tended to think that the initial exchange might well determine the nominal victor in the war.<sup>95</sup>

This deliberately blurred the distinction between defense and pre-emption. The nuclear "blunting" mission could be non-preemptive *if* the Soviet attack were purely conventional. In other words, it would not strictly speaking be preemption to launch a nuclear strike at Soviet nuclear forces if Soviet conventional forces crossed the Elbe first. If there were semantically no difference between conventional and nuclear weapons, there would technically be no differentiated concept of *nuclear* "first-use," since NATO's escalation to nuclear weapons would be naturalized. The allies would have to concede that using nuclear weapons *first* was not a departure from normative conventional thinking because NATO made no distinction between categories of weapons: there was no difference between a blunting strategy and preemptive nuclear strike. This was not obvious in MC 48 because it placed more stress on an initial Soviet nuclear attack. But that many U.S. military minds wanted NATO to strike at the signs of Soviet *intent*, can be extrapolated from the thinking out of which the New Approach emerged.

For diplomats, the mysterious logic behind nuclear strategy was less important than the problems it created politically. Dulles had to convince NATO "to develop public opinion" to "tacitly accept the new situation." U.S. officials assured everyone that they rejected "preventative war"; they would explore "genuine" disarmament proposals; and the new nuclear strategy would bolster deterrence, not prepare for war. The strategic properties of MC 48 were sufficiently flexible to accommodate more than one possibility but these assurances unquestionably concealed what the U.S. military was asking. The "new situation" was captured by Collins in a meeting with Eisenhower: "it was inconceivable that the US, after all its expenditures and after integrating nuclear weapons even into its tactical plans, would not use these weapons if war came."<sup>96</sup> After a day's thought, Eisenhower approved MC 48 and said he would take it to Congress after the mid-term elections. He sanctioned more military aid for NATO but only if it were tied to "the development of forces prepared for integrated action generally as called for in these studies." If the allies wanted U.S. assistance, their freedom to object to the New Approach was circumscribed.<sup>97</sup> If hegemony is a mixture of consent and coercion, military and economic aid was the material means by which the United States ensured that the strategic outcome in NATO

conformed to its interests. But the heart of the matter was getting the allies to change their thinking independently of these incentives. Meanwhile, Eisenhower met privately with Congressional leaders on November 17 to petition their support. The problem there would come from placing too much overt emphasis on the favorable position of the United States. The support of conservatives might make the allies think the New Approach was an isolationist Trojan horse.

Eisenhower’s briefing paper for this meeting, written by Goodpaster with Dulles’s and Wilson’s approval, revealed the pith of the New Approach. Goodpaster ran through the themes of MC 48, that nuclear weapons were “indispensable” and so forth. The problem, he noted, would be that Congress will ask what the United States gets in return for sharing nuclear information necessary for the strategy, “specifically, whether we shouldn’t receive from the European countries authority to conduct atomic operations from bases in their territory.” This was to be avoided since pressing for categorical commitments was dangerous to unity. Instead, “the Europeans should be led into the atomic era gradually and tacitly.” If Congress were nervous about sharing atomic secrets, they should be assured that the “*quid pro quo*’ is in the acceptance by NATO of the new concept, not in seeking formal commitments for automatic use of a nature the US would not itself be prepared to give.”<sup>98</sup>

The double-standard at the heart of the New Approach, underpinning first-use and the grounds for nuclear sharing, assumed that the sublime object of policy was to create the conditions by which American strategic options would be commensurately expanded as Europe’s were reduced. Allied autonomy impinged on American autonomy in a zero-sum way. Only the United States, through its control of nuclear information, its dominance of SHAPE, and its tied aid, provided the means to answer Europe’s burning strategic questions on its behalf. Eisenhower took Goodpaster’s advice. If anything, he downplayed what he now referred to as the “so-called” New Look, which was no more than “bringing equipment and techniques up-to-date in the light of the most recent scientific advances.” But he brushed over the real strategic innovation of his administration: the acquisition of the power to execute these war plans from inside NATO. He spoke of the “value of surprise in warfare and the critical nature of the first week of any future war,” that NATO could not fight “the overwhelming number of Russian soldiers” without bankrupting the United States. And he alluded to “tentative commitments” the United States might make at the NAC. But he comforted the nation that “there had been a change for the better in regard to the former hesitancy of NATO nations about the use of atomic weapons and storage of them on the continent.”<sup>99</sup>

The British and the French governments had better sense. The real stumbling block would still be pre-delegation, although there were other lingering questions. These produced a different interpretation of MC 48. The United Kingdom entered the thermonuclear age with their sense of vulnerability pushed to the edge. If there was one consolation about the hydrogen bomb, Eden thought, it was that everyone—meaning the Americans—was now equally exposed to annihilation.<sup>100</sup> But the bomb divided British officials: those who believed it enhanced the old deterrent (Slessor and most of the Conservatives), and those who argued that the deterrent was now nothing but bluff (Blackett and Liddell Hart). The thermonuclear bomb revived older doubts about the credibility of the U.S. guarantee and encouraged some to think seriously about a truly “independent” deterrent.<sup>101</sup>

All Europeans seemed united by their anxiety about American character, accentuated by the infusion of tactical nuclear weapons in U.S. forces.<sup>102</sup> The British cautioned against nuclear strikes at Dienbienphu because of their fear that once initiated, there would be difficulty controlling it. In Asia, moreover, the stakes were not sufficiently high to take this risk. In Europe, they did not *want* the war to be limited if it weakened deterrence.<sup>103</sup> These differences did not impede Britain’s approval of the New Approach. Striking at Soviet targets fit with its interest in counterforce. The only problem was that under SACEUR, the authority to launch was in the hands of a command that was, for the foreseeable future, controlled by an American. When the British looked at SG 241/3 in September, they saw this *political* predicament: pre-delegation was militarily logical, but it would be impossible to secure a prior commitment from the NAC, *especially* if use was in response to a Soviet conventional attack.<sup>104</sup> The British rejected the idea that a nuclear doctrine was needed to meet a Soviet conventional attack trying capitalizing on NATO’s weakness. Sir John Harding (CIGS) iterated what had long been Britain’s position: the Soviets would not start a war without expecting the “full weight of the American strategic air offensive against them from the start.” They “must plan to make use of all their warlike potentialities from the beginning.” (This was affirmed by MC 48.)<sup>105</sup> Moreover, British planners thought there would be enough warning, an escalation of political tension and signs of early mobilization, to give NATO time to consult about options. There was, therefore, less urgency on pre-delegation.<sup>106</sup>

These differences were a function of how cultures filtered their experiences. In the United States, Pearl Harbor established itself as the reigning symbol of American strategic innocence and betrayal. This was especially true for neo-isolationists who argued that the nation’s postwar

predicaments were a result of earlier (liberal) faults. It was the key to a string of disasters: Yalta, the Soviet bomb, the fall of China, Korea, and so forth. Thus, bolt-from-the-blue thinking took its causative power from the need to interpret American history in a way that affirmed assumptions about America's place in the world. Culture gave the discursive framework to interpret military history, and inscribed the logic of resulting strategic commentaries in the present. For the British, its past wars were thought rooted in complex diplomatic crises. Other narratives—about the importance of the Empire—did not negate the need to prevent future crises descending into war. The U.S. position in NATO made this impossible.<sup>107</sup>

The COS never doubted the reasons to strike as early as possible. They knew there would be resistance from their civilian bosses, so they agreed that the best way to secure military authority of nuclear weapons was to push for a comprehensive strategy that gave such control implicitly.<sup>108</sup> When the second draft of MC 48 was completed in November, the COS met the opposition from the Foreign Office by agreeing to a compromise on the wording of its pre-delegation section: “It was important,” they said, “that SACEUR should be given some sanction by the NATO Council to base his future plans on the assumption that he would have authority to use atomic weapons immediately on the outbreak of war. It was fully realised that the final authority to use such weapons in war must be by political decision.”<sup>109</sup> This dissembled their intent. The NAC must know, Harding argued, that any hesitation to grant SACEUR the authority he sought ran the risk of paralyzing all NATO plans.<sup>110</sup>

Deputy SACEUR Montgomery waded awkwardly into the fray, publicly announcing that in SHAPE there was no debate about whether nuclear weapons would be used. “It is very definite. ‘They will be used, if we are attacked.’ In fact, we have reached the point of no return as regards the use of atomic weapons and thermonuclear weapons in a hot war.”<sup>111</sup> It was not yet the policy of the British and American governments to make SHAPE's operational strategy so public or to remove the semblance of political authority over war. Semblance was not enough for France. The thermonuclear age impressed the Fourth Republic with its dependence on the United States. But so had the failure of the EDC. All of which produced a resurgence in French nationalism over French Europeanism.<sup>112</sup> As frustrations with the Anglo-Americans mounted, the appeal of a French nuclear force grew too.<sup>113</sup> This was not the search for an independent nuclear force to provide security outside of NATO: the aim, announced by Plevin in March 1954, was to secure influence *within* NATO, especially after the London accords on the creation of

the WEU forbid Germany from possessing its own nuclear weapons.<sup>114</sup> At the same time, when informed that SACEUR intended to use nuclear weapons in answer to a Soviet attack, nuclear or otherwise, Paris thought this required “une délégation permanente” of authority to use these weapons. NATO needed a mechanism for rapid consultation. Five days later, a pronuclear French official, Jean-Marc Boegner, proclaimed that an army without atomic means was no army at all. Without its own force, France would rest in the hands of the Anglo-Saxons. “National independence, the autonomy of our diplomacy, from which comes, in large measure, the safekeeping of the French Union, requires that France take its proper atomic place in the military field.”<sup>115</sup>

Premier Pierre Mendès France slowly came to the same definition of “proper place,” although apparently without ever making a clear decision. When he met with CEA scientists in late 1954 to ask which parts of their research were for the economy and which for the bomb, they retired to a corner of his office and returned moments later to announce they could not make such a distinction. The two projects were inseparable. The CEA’s Administrator General, Pierre Guillaumat, confessed everyone interpreted the meeting “the way he wanted to.”<sup>116</sup> To the military, here was an opportunity to revive plans for global strategic planning with the British and Americans. At a September meeting of the *conseil de Défense nationale*, Mendès France argued that since everyone seemed to accept the new American strategy, France’s participation would help any chances for the creation of a “directoire nucléaire franco-anglo-américain.” Membership would insulate it from the U.S. tendency to place greater stock Germany.<sup>117</sup>

On October 26, Mendès France signed a secret ordinance creating a commission to investigate military applications of nuclear energy. The commission never met but was followed in November by the creation of a Nuclear Explosives Committee. These projects were supported by General Pierre-Marie Gallois, who had long been perplexed by the indifference of the French army toward nuclear weapons. Gallois believed that even a small nuclear arsenal would be better than a large conventional army.<sup>118</sup> He also hoped that a French nuclear force might “trigger” the larger U.S. arsenal to attack the Soviet Union. That way, there would be no discussion of fighting a limited nuclear war with tactical weapons, and the overall deterrent would be accordingly strengthened.<sup>119</sup>

In November, the French thus finally told the United States they endorsed the New Approach. The strategic incentives for the preservation of French *grandeur* were overwhelming. The question of pre-delegation was knottier. On a visit to Washington, Mendès France, echoing Georges Clemenceau, insisted that “the subject . . . was too serious to be left

exclusively in military hands. Political decisions at the highest level would be required in an emergency.” NATO might establish a tripartite political Standing Group similar, he said transparently, to the bond enjoyed by Roosevelt and Churchill during the war.<sup>120</sup> He too saw MC 48 as an opportunity, as the Americans and British did, each for different reasons. The Europeans were therefore not ready to waive their right to determine how NATO went to war. There was “complete agreement” about the new concept, but the “delicate and divisive” subject of political authority was open. U.S. officials worried that the president’s relations with a conservative Congress might suffer irreparable harm if MC 48 were not approved. The thing was to avoid a public wrangling over the political question, and the appearance that this was a U.S. project. American diplomats in Europe urged the administration to “lean over backwards to give [MC 48] the maximum international flavor possible.”<sup>121</sup> This soupcon of multilateralism would help along a policy that was intended, of course, to do the opposite.

In early December, Gruenther briefed the Permanent Representatives and members of the NATO Staff Secretariat. The meeting exposed the sensitivities the Americans feared. Sir Christopher Steel was “strongly critical of the document,” although he admitted that he was speaking without instructions. Maurice Couve de Murville said he was “personally unhappy about it” and doubted Mendès France had seen it. In contrast, André de Staercke of Belgium, and Alidius van Starckenborgh of the Netherlands supported it, as did the Canadians, Turks, Greeks, Norwegians, and Portuguese. The Danes were accepted with reservations.<sup>122</sup> Dulles and Eden met privately on December 4 because Dulles needed Britain’s support the most. They sorted out only two things. They agreed to find compromise wording on pre-delegation. Eden offered the following: “that the recommendations of that report are not to be construed to prejudge final decisions by governments concerned on the implementation of plans developed in support thereof.”<sup>123</sup> And, they would avoid “the establishment of any formal machinery in the Council. The important thing was to enable SACEUR to get on with its planning.”<sup>124</sup>

The chance that the NAC might assert its prerogatives led the U.S. military to remind Radford that however much the allies wanted multilateralism, the realities of U.S. nuclear plans would override them.

We should have no illusions as to the possible implications in event of war wherein one of our allies might endeavor to impose a veto on actions which the United States considers essential to its own security or to the security of its armed forces exposed to attack. We



should not let the British and French have any illusions as to US intentions. . . . [I]nsofar as NATO is concerned the United States reserves the right to retaliate instantly to use atomic weapons . . . should the circumstances, in view of the US Government, be such as preclude the delay inherent in obtaining concurrence of each of its NATO allies.<sup>125</sup>

The implications were powerful. The U.S. military claimed that the political safeguards attached to the new strategy were irrelevant to the next war, a war likely to be fought in Europe. This was not how the allies interpreted MC 48, which they hoped would reinforce deterrence, not bring war closer. But U.S. control of NATO's nuclear forces made that distinction abstract. The reality was more troubling: the United States acquired the freedom of action it had desired since the inception of NATO.

Dulles's press conference in mid-December masterfully skirted the enormity of the problem. He called the whole thing "artificial." Of course, "the fact that you have atomic weapons increases the likelihood of their use. Still there is not the difficulty, that I know of, of making a political decision today which would be binding on some unpredictable date . . . as to what should actually be done." It was all part of the normal planning that goes on in every country: "the fact that your military equipment includes atomic weapons [does not] mean that there is any automatic decision to use them." This was exactly the opposite of what he said privately to the NAC. But when asked if the president could delegate his authority over nuclear weapons to SACEUR, Dulles retreated, calling it a classified matter.<sup>126</sup> Still, he could not avoid hinting that regardless of the NAC's interpretations, under certain circumstances the United States reserved the right "to act alone." Such circumstances would, of course, be rare and only involve SAC (although not if it were operating from allied bases). Consultation was simply matter of "decency and enlightened judgment," although neither quality should be institutionalized.<sup>127</sup>

American, British, Canadian, and French officials met privately in Paris on the 16th to sort out their differences in advance of the NAC meeting the next day. Eden asked what the United States thought of the British resolution on pre-delegation. Dulles avoided it by claiming that MC 48 merely constituted war plans, and civilian authorities retained the power to declare war. "No member can delegate authority to declare war," he claimed; "yet any procedure requiring approval of all NATO members to oppose an attack would seriously hamper both the deterrent effect and the defense." The United States therefore rejected France's proposal for a "standing political group," and thought the United Kingdom

proposal should only address the NAC’s approval of SHAPE’s responsibility to plan for nuclear war without touching on the political question of declaring war itself.<sup>128</sup> Here Dulles deliberately misled his allies. The purpose of MC 48, as he knew, was to blur the distinction between plans and declarations of war by ensuring that an emergency would constitute a *casus belli*. Dulles claimed that the United States only wanted to grant SHAPE permission to plan for use, which “did not involve any delegation of responsibility of the governments for putting plans into action in the event of hostilities.” Even this fell afoul of the U.S. military. They cautioned that Dulles “must avoid implying that NATO had not settled the issue of use. Otherwise, the resolution would impair the deterrent effect.” Because of the importance of bolstering deterrence, this ambiguity was allowed to stand.<sup>129</sup> The trouble with ambiguities is they allow everyone to find the meaning they most need. British Minister of Defence Harold Macmillan thought the debate was “semantic” because “any Soviet attack would almost surely be all-out.” Eden and Pearson were not sure. Any alert procedures that defined the emergencies SHAPE had in mind constituted some erosion of political authority. Dulles retreated to his familiar position that allowing SHAPE to plan would strengthen deterrence and avoid the contingencies the allies worried about. Eden and Pearson accepted this.<sup>130</sup>

On the afternoon of December 17, the NAC met to approve MC 48. As the United States wanted, Ismay introduced it, as well as a resolution he disingenuously said had been prepared by his office. It recommended the approval of MC 48 on “a basis of planning and preparation by the NATO military authorities, noting that this approval does not involve the delegation of responsibility of governments for putting into action in the event of hostilities.”<sup>131</sup> Delegates expressed their support for both documents. Pearson said his fear that MC 48 would give SHAPE the authority to meet all crises with thermonuclear weapons had been assuaged. Others thought that alert procedures would require more careful study, but no one tried to open a debate on the strategic ambiguities of MC 48. That chance had long passed.<sup>132</sup>

There was, however, a revealing admission by Dulles. Pearson wanted reference to NATO plans modified by the word “defense.” Dulles suddenly objected. NATO should not accept that kind of qualification because “in the event of hostilities *our plans might not be purely defensive*.” He even opposed Ismay’s effort to define hostilities as “[Soviet] aggression” because, he argued, “nobody had yet been able to define aggression.”<sup>133</sup> This evasion is telling. Successive governments had had no difficulty defining aggression, even, as Colonel Sleeper once did, equating it with

evil thoughts. Since the next war demanded lightening nuclear reflexes, Dulles became philosophical. The implication is that the Americans, more than their allies, appreciated the razor-thin line separating defense from preemption. U.S. forces in NATO were prepared to act aggressively themselves before Soviet forces could damage NATO's nuclear assets. For Dulles, the language provided the moral cadence of these decisions; it gave legitimacy to actions that, under other circumstances, would be unconscionable.

The purpose of nuclear first-use was not only to provide NATO with the means to offset Soviet conventional advantages. This figured prominently in public apologies for MC 48, but less in the thinking of those who drafted it. Dulles confirmed this when he returned to Washington. A Soviet conventional attack was irrelevant to the question of authority because it would be preceded by "obvious mobilization" that would provide the NAC time to consult.<sup>134</sup> In fact, MC 48 said the reverse: "the Soviets would not jeopardize the attainment of surprise by any major pre-deployment of their forces."<sup>135</sup> The real consequence of nuclear first-use was thus more ominous: it sought to remove restrictions imposed by membership in NATO on the power of the U.S. military to blunt Soviet *nuclear* capability. Under ideal conditions, it even provided the authority for the wholesale removal of the Soviet regime.

Why the Europeans accepted this is complicated. When George Humphrey congratulated Dulles on his success, he said with dreadful condescension, that it proved "how far these people in Western Europe have progressed in their thinking and their understanding of atomic warfare."<sup>136</sup> It is consistent with the thinking that comes from hegemonic politics that U.S. officials equated their strategic program as a universal expression of "progress." But it was not what happened in Europe. "These people" had been diverted from thinking MC 48 was as preemptive, if not preventive, as some in the United States planned. They took seriously the NAC's claim that it did not entail an erosion of sovereignty. Meanwhile Britain and France found their own rationales for a new strategy, even while rejecting pre-delegation. They moved into the nuclear age, to a remarkable degree, to cope with the predominance of the United States. They reached for nuclear weapons to influence the balance of power within NATO, to manage their decline as "Great Powers," and to ensure their favor with the United States. Their support for first-use was, paradoxically, a *counter-hegemonic* strategy intended to expand their autonomy in a relationship that placed extraordinary demands on their freedom. They accepted first-use less for its preemptive opportunities than for the hope that it might at least strengthen deterrence. Preemption, while implicit in

Britain's counterforce thinking, was in the end an affliction. As Albert Wohlstetter later warned, the mere existence of nuclear weapons provided mutual incentives for preemption.<sup>137</sup> The French were less preoccupied with the risk of escalation and more with restoring their status. Since the desire of the Americans to rearm the Federal Republic was driven by their intention to “substitute German troops for American troops,” German rearmament, a threat in itself, carried the equally dangerous pretext for an American withdrawal.<sup>138</sup> For Mendès France, nuclear weapons looked attractive as compensation for a decade of decline. Once the “Anglo-Saxons” embraced nuclear weapons, France used the New Approach as means of getting what it had always sought: equality in NATO. Far from progressing a long way, as Humphrey put it, the Europeans were heading in a whole new direction.

The divergence of opinion over MC 48 suggests that if the prize of the New Look was the consent of the Europeans to the strategic plans of the United States, universalizing the cultural preferences of the Americans at a time when neo-isolationism exerted a powerful influence of U.S. thinking, this hegemonic project was far from successful. The British and French adopted strategies at odds with America's, even if SHAPE emerged from 1954 with a unified doctrine. It was because MC 48 could *simultaneously* be a strategy to preemptively fight a nuclear war and be a more robust deterrent, that first-use could take on either meaning. This no doubt accounts for its endurance. Without a crisis in which the Americans were tempted to resolve the Cold War preventively, the ambiguity of MC 48 was never exposed. Instead it came to symbolize the enduring value of nuclear deterrence as the foundation of the postwar peace in Europe. That this was not its original purpose in the mind of American planners in the mid-1950s has slipped quietly from view.

## Conclusion

### *What Does Culture Tell Us About NATO Nuclear Strategy That We Were Afraid To Ask?*

*I think that we are the best nation in the world. . . . And, if that is true, then I think we have a responsibility . . . to make sure that we keep order in the world—or that disorder is not created in the world. I think that we have been reluctant to maintain order. I think that’s why there is so much disorder in so many places in the world now and I think that it need not have been.*

—Adm. Arleigh Burke, U.S. Chief of Naval Operations<sup>1</sup>

There are probably few Americans who do not think they live in the best nation on earth. This brings with it, as Admiral Burke suggests, a sense of responsibility as well as pride that does much to account for how Americans engage the world. The “if it is true” part of Burke’s reflections on American power, forces us to think how actions flow from identity. What Burke says would not be possible without having internalized bonds of mutual affection that are a part of nationality. He expresses a theory about world order and America’s place in it because of the way he came to emotively understand the United States as an actor in world history. This is culture at work.

This book has surveyed the genealogy of NATO nuclear first-use in the 1950s. It has taken modest issue with the official line, a self-serving claim that normatively sanctions the NATO’s nuclear addiction by making it the inevitable consequence of preserving the civil values of the West. Because the “free world” did not wish to garrison its society, it preserved its freedom through technology against than the primitive manpower excesses of the Soviet Bloc. While conventional weaknesses were a part

of NATO's nuclear infatuation, they were an insufficient explanation for the adoption of first-use itself. For that, I have looked at the way cultural battles over national identity were generative of arguments about the appropriate use of certain types of military power.

Rational actor models of decision-making have dominated our understanding of NATO's strategic history. These produced the argument that the failure of the Lisbon force goals led inevitably to nuclear first-use. The argument does not, however, mesh with the evidence. For one, prior to 1952, NATO strategy never actually aimed for conventional parity with the Soviet Bloc. Atomic weapons were central to NATO strategy from 1949 on, and U.S. war planners in NATO operated under the assumption that they would be used immediately. The relationship between U.S. atomic weapons and NATO's strategy was initially tacit. The omission protected American atomic secrets and resources from the allies, and this led to extravagant demands on NATO's conventional forces. We have accordingly underappreciated how the Lisbon rearmament was a function of U.S. military efforts to treat Europe, in Acheson's words, as a "vast untapped manpower reserve," by which U.S. organizational fights over resources could be resolved by using aid to spur rearmament. The allies went along not because they were committed to its strategic logic (because it had none, or none that they could detect) but because NATO built incentives into it for the Europeans to continue sanctioning it. The need for Europe to produce defense forces so that conservatives in Congress could see the effect of their investment meant that there were no reasons to refuse requests for more production.

American strategic policy in Europe was therefore based in a mixture of atavistic peripheralism, the offsetting proliferation of its interests around the world, and the answer atomic weapons seem to provide for both. It also demanded that the defense of Europe fall on the Europeans but under conditions that induced their military and political integration into a new cultural security community. The extravagance of American demands for conventional forces was not based on a conventional strategic concept, but, paradoxically, by the determination of (most of) the U.S. military to build its postwar strategy around atomic air power. Europe's carefully guided reconstruction minimized demands on U.S. resources and concepts. But once this trade-off was undermined by the retraction of American domestic support for economic aid to Europe, the mask of rearmament was removed, leaving the ambivalent nuclear heart of NATO strategy open for public scrutiny.

Although Lisbon's goals were never met, NATO made greater progress than is recognized, so much so that Marc Trachtenberg believes

it was in a position after the Korean War to explore bringing the Cold War to a satisfactory military conclusion.<sup>2</sup> But it was a confidence that rested precariously on the *nuclear* balance between the United States and the Soviet Union. By the spring of 1954, parts of the American military were frustrated with the passivity of the New Look, a passivity inherited from the containment Eisenhower was supposed to have rejected. The new JCS was more restive about the limits on America's Asian policy imposed by the British and French. Led by Radford, they believed the United States faced a window of opportunity before the nuclear balance with the Soviets shifted away from the United States. If the Cold War were not "resolved" by then, America would be tied into a costly and futile stalemate. It was in response to shifts in the nuclear balance, buoyed by domestic support for nuclear technology that grew amongst conservative nationalists during the Korean War, the U.S. military explored the possibility that it should be in a position to fight and win a nuclear war sometime before the end of the 1950s. American strategic planners demanded that their forces had to be prepared to strike first to exploit the strategic realities of nuclear weapons. This required removing restrictions imposed by NATO on U.S. freedom of action. First-use only worked if the allies endorsed it as part of their collective responsibilities.

The Europeans would not easily accept the loss of control over the tools of war. They could, however, be moved by the claim that first-use was vital to deterrence. This meshed with the thinking of John Foster Dulles who, though worried about the impact of nuclear diplomacy on the cohesion of NATO, believed the United States had to convey its determination to use its arsenal. There is no evidence that Dulles shared the preemptive or preventive thinking of his military, but his wish for a more dynamic foreign policy to restore American spiritual expansion pointed briefly in the same direction. The allies, who accepted first-use as the price for American participation in European defense, did not assume that it was as a substitute for consultation in crises, or that it negated formal permission for the United States to use their bases for the nuclear offensive. This ambiguity remained a vital part of the adoption of nuclear first-use in 1954. We might consider ourselves fortunate that it was never resolved.

Through the rest of the 1950s, Eisenhower officials worked hard to get nuclear weapons in the hands of the NATO allies. These transfers violated the 1947 Atomic Energy Act, but Eisenhower had grown impatient with its archaic restrictions on Executive freedom to make an intelligible strategy for NATO.<sup>3</sup> This was not easy, partly because of nationalist resistance to such exchanges, but also because it never resolved the question

of how a collectivity of states could commonly authorize the use of weapons of mass destruction. This dilemma led ultimately to abortive efforts to create a European-based Multilateral Nuclear Force (MLF), which many U.S. officials preferred to the creation of independent national nuclear states. In the end, the sharing of nuclear weapons was academic as both the French and the British developed their own forces for reasons the Americans should surely have understood: they were the symbol of an independent foreign policy. A decade after Dulles's Massive Retaliation speech, NATO was still unsure of the balance between collective and national strategic doctrines.

One might interpret the desire on the part of the United States to share nuclear weapons as a plan to restore Europe's independence, a gesture of real multilateralism.<sup>4</sup> Although the MLF proved difficult to design in practice, the United States went far toward accommodating the desires of the allies for greater say in the execution of nuclear strategy. The evidence supporting this movement in U.S. policy toward multilateralism is compelling. Yet I have tried to suggest that the picture is not quite so unmixed when we take into account the cultural baggage each state carried into these debates. We see that they produced quite different conceptions of what nuclear weapons were for. Thus nuclear sharing was only partly intended to rebuild European autonomy; it was more seriously part of a process of socialization in which the Europeans had their military power restored as part of a dramatically changed strategic landscape. The new strategic conditions governing NATO war planning were built by American conceptions of their global strategic interests. Using their dominance in SHAPE and their control of military and economic aid, Eisenhower officials sought to channel European strategic reconstruction in ways that complemented American ideas. These ideas were obliquely rooted in a residual American nationalism that wanted to find ways of projecting American power by limiting the restrictions inherent in NATO membership. America's own nuclear turn—the saturation of tactical and strategic concepts with nuclear weapons of all types and sizes—was stimulated by a combination of bureaucratic competition, a desire to maintain a strategic culture of peripheralism, and the resurgence of economic and cultural nationalism that accompanied the New Look in the mid-1950s. Under these conditions, the U.S. government never doubted that new weapons were the face of modern warfare, or that the satisfaction of both American and European strategic needs involved naturalizing their presence in NATO. American peripheralism was therefore made synonymous with the security of the “free world.” The Europeans needed to be “educated,” “led tacitly,” and “made to see” that their abiding



interests rested in the nuclearization of NATO. First-use was the only rational consequence of making new weapons central to NATO's strategy since some means had to be found to overcome the reticence of America's often "timid" allies.

The Truman and Eisenhower administrations both saw the process of centralizing command of nuclear forces in NATO as the military equivalent of economic integration. It eroded European nationalism, undermining the instinct for the creation of national nuclear forces. Trachtenberg is certainly right in suggesting that U.S. officials were concerned that the precedent of national forces in NATO would raise the specter of a nuclear German military, something that could split the alliance irrevocably. But the issue of dissolving European nationalism was elemental. It stemmed from a propensity of American postwar foreign policy to want to treat Western Europe as an undifferentiated mass whose nationalist claims were not only inefficient, but were politically, if not morally and historically, suspect. If Dulles and Eisenhower came to favor sharing nuclear weapons with the allies, this hope—as Trachtenberg richly demonstrates—aimed to solve “the whole cluster of problems the U.S. government faced in Europe” over NATO strategy, such as how to streamline a doctrine of nuclear use in a fragmented coalition.<sup>5</sup> Centralized nuclear forces in the hands of NATO field commanders was not only more efficient in the missile age, but it also spoke directly to the extraordinary importance placed by U.S. foreign policy on European integration generally.<sup>6</sup>

It is hard to judge this desire harshly. The threats and inducements used to facilitate integration have brought unquestionable benefits to postwar Europe.<sup>7</sup> My argument is simply that this policy was, originally at least, profoundly “instrumental” rather than normative; it was charged with an extraordinary degree of American exceptionalism that equated American “leadership” and “responsibility” with the interests of the “free world.” American nuclear autonomy was the holy grail of its strategic planning in the early 1950s: European autonomy was tolerable as long as it involved the dissolution of national differences, and a shared endorsement of American strategic values. All other options were off the table. This was autonomy, but within the politics of hegemony. It is not surprising, then, that American officials endorsed nuclearizing NATO as a whole while quietly rejecting the development of independent national nuclear forces. French Foreign Minister Maurice Couve de Murville once recounted a lengthy conversation he had with Dulles in October 1958, in which Dulles “was very critical of the British policy [of developing an independent nuclear force], not understanding why the British insisted

to have atomic weapons, saying that it cost a lot of money, and that it wasn't very efficient, and that the United States had enough to cover the needs of everybody." When asked if he thought Dulles was also opposed to a French independent nuclear force, Couve de Murville replied: "Oh, there was no question. He would have taken the same position, of course."<sup>8</sup>

It was, of course, hypocritical that nuclear weapons were *prized* in the United States for their cost-effectiveness, efficiency, and ability to satisfy the demands of deterrence. This discrepancy can be explained by understanding that it was European, not American, nationalism that the New Look aimed to bury. There is no question that American officials saw the "problem" of Western security as if Europe were a politically and strategically *singular* community. To this, the United States would attach itself, lend its selfless assistance, and even share its military assets. But there was never any serious consideration of the idea that American nationalism would be commensurately transformed by this new community. On the contrary, American nationalism was emancipated by European integration, once the allies had been reeducated to act as a buttress against communism. This is why, seeing how the interests of a particular part of the community were made synonymous with the interests of the whole, I have come to describe the transatlantic relationship as hegemonic rather than multilateral.

And I use the word *hegemonic* and not *imperial*. What the Europeans did in the 1950s was consensual. It preserved their autonomy to a considerable degree, although on defense matters perhaps much less than NATO historians admit. But autonomy is an ambiguous term, because however much it connotes "independence," it is the psychological centerpiece of hegemony itself because it involves the *internalization* of values rather than their acceptance under conditions of coercion or adaptation. It also presupposes a degree of controlled and organized antagonism between the dominant hegemonic discourse and the social formations within it.<sup>9</sup> Although coercion was certainly part of the transatlantic relationship—Washington used economic threats and inducements through 1950 and 1951 to get both German and the NATO rearmament—the need was for Western Europe to provide space for itself to acquire freedom within a new understanding of the realities of the nuclear age.

So the allies came, in time, to embrace a nuclear strategy that was a product of the superpower rivalry from which they could not disengage. The first military strategies NATO drafted (as a condition of U.S. military assistance) were to prove that the Europeans could integrate themselves and put their nationalist tendencies behind them. The abandonment of

old cultural habits was the *sine qua non* of American support for European unity. This is why NATO war plans were constructed to curry American support for the ground defense of Western Europe. At that stage, atomic weapons were only part of the American commitment, a tool that sustained and rationalized America's peripheralism while NATO rebuilt its military forces to make it attractive to American aid. Indeed, while many of the Europeans shared Washington's faith that atomic weapons were a great deterrent, as a whole they were more eager to have a permanent commitment than the promise of atomic retribution against Moscow. Deterrence, they tended to believe, was best maintained through commitments that would also be less destructive should they fail. This position would, by the 1960s, be reversed: the European allies would eventually object to the construction of conventional forces if they thus lowered the threshold of war. But in the early 1950s, the European members of NATO were deeply skeptical of depending too much on an American-held nuclear asset.

This skepticism was what nuclear sharing was supposed to overcome. America's nuclear forces were really the only form of military commitment the Truman and Eisenhower administrations were comfortable making to Europe indefinitely. Both wanted to bring American troops home from Europe once the crisis atmosphere of the Cold War had subsided, once Europe had rebuilt its own defenses. Unquestionably, as Walter Lippmann pointed out, the bomb was seen by many Americans as a panacea, a way of both protecting Europe and not having to really make any changes in America's sense of traditional security. If the Second World War had made America "internationalist," the residue of an older desire for ultimate security meshed with the new sense that Europe was inexorably part of America's sphere of interest, and made atomic weapons the defender of *both* isolationism and internationalism. If Bretton Woods could rebuild the world economy, and atomic weapons could allow Americans to have global security without changing their strategic culture, then the new world of atomic power sustained the past more securely than Americans might ever have believed possible.

And so, what emerged in the United States in the early 1950s in response to the unnerving "responsibilities" of global leadership that threatened to entrench the New Deal state conservatives so despised was a nationalist resurgence dovetailing with the age of thermonuclear plenty to give urgency to the need for nuclear autonomy. The pressing issues for the Eisenhower administration were to regain the initiative in the Cold War, to push for the liberation of "captive peoples," to defend Nationalist China, perhaps unify Korea. To do this, many of them, Dulles in particular, reached

for the opportunities offered by nuclear deterrence to push the Cold War to some sort of resolution. We should remind ourselves that Massive Retaliation was not a defense of the global *status quo*. It was supposed to be the prelude to a resolute prosecution of the Cold War, to the rebirth of America's sense of spiritual mission. In this, the New Look certainly aimed to rebuild European defenses—as NSC 68 had before it—but it attacked the problem by making sure that a nuclear Europe made American desires for first-use synonymous with the interests of the “Free World” as a whole.

This was not neo-isolationism per se, although it was colored by it. It was instead the realization that integrating the world into a web of alliances allowed the United States to educate this world into accepting common principles of interest, from which the United States was then in a stronger position to grapple with its global enemy. In June 1952, while Eisenhower was redrafting the GOP's statement on foreign policy, he explained this to Dulles:

We must face fact; which means that any thought of “retiring within our own border” will certainly lead to disaster for the USA. . . . The minimum requirement of these programs is that we are able to trade freely in spite of anything Russia may do, with those areas from which we obtain the vital raw materials that are vital to our country. . . . This means that we must be successful in developing collective security measures for the free world—measures that will encourage each of these countries to develop its own economic and political and spiritual strength. Exclusive reliance upon a mere power of retaliation is not a complete answer to the broad Soviet threat. America's position of strength enhances her natural capabilities for leadership in this necessary task. We must state that no foreign power will be allowed to cut us off from those areas of the world that are necessary to the health, strength and development of our economy. This purpose can and must be realized within the economic capabilities of our country and of our associates. There is no acceptable alternative. Only chaos in the world and eventual distress and worse for us would result from the abandonment of the principle of collective security.<sup>10</sup>

This instrumental form of internationalism—engagement for the purposes not only of accruing resources for the economy and society of the United States, but of bringing the world's states into a moral and ideological system—is obviously quite different from multilateralism. There is no

sense of the basic equality of the desires of all states, nor of their freedom to pursue other ways of life. It is, rather, a paternalistic and teleological sense of role the United States has to play in the schooling of the world. America, as Arleigh Burke put it, was “the best nation in the world,” and its leaders had “a responsibility . . . to make sure that we keep order in the world—or that disorder is not created in the world.”<sup>11</sup>

The extent to which the New Look articulated this was unmistakable at the time. Thomas Finletter clumsily called the New Look “go-it-alone containment all over the place.” He thought Dulles’s foreign policy was not dedicated to collective security at all, but to the creation of a “web of treaties” that provided the slimmest “political basis for whatever the United States was going to do in the world.” The reason for this, he believed, had much to do with domestic pressures. The political danger of associating too closely with colonial powers such as France and Britain could be overcome through “multilateralism,” which, he remarked caustically, “makes us pure and keeps us all right. But as a matter of fact it wasn’t pure at all, because it was go-it-alone-ism.”<sup>12</sup> This is a harsh assessment of a man whose political education was acquired under Woodrow Wilson and the Paris Peace conference. But the perception, from Finletter to America’s European and Canadian allies, that the New Look aimed to tie the globe into a homogenous “free world” in which the United States, but not its friends, could act alone, betrayed whatever intentions Dulles may otherwise have had.

But if I may return to the earlier theoretical challenge raised by this book, do any of these conclusions justify a new cultural approach to diplomatic history? I have tried to show how a cultural understanding of the sources of national identity can give richer meaning to the same documentary material we all agree “explain” U.S. foreign policy. The cultural content, if you will, of the strategic doctrines of each NATO member exposes the different meanings each ascribed to the same words. Nuclear weapons meant divergent and sometimes contradictory things to the British, Americans, and French. These differences stemmed from the symbolic logic each derived from their circumstances, and from the struggles within their societies, for control over the meaning of national identity. For all of them, nuclear weapons gratified nationalist instincts more than integrationist ones. It is no accident that the most vocal proponents of nuclear programs in each country were also the most avowedly nationalist. In this sense, nuclear weapons stood in the way of integration because each state reached for the bomb to provide for its sense of strategic *difference* within NATO. All three retained global pretensions as the basis of their postwar security self-image, and all structured their strategic

policies around the most rational means of satisfying their expansive visions of world order. Nations act not only in accordance with how they perceive themselves, but also in relation to cultural perceptions of others. We better understand strategic choices by plumbing the specific meanings states attributed to the landscape they placed themselves in. They are agents, but they are *structuring* agents, whose choices are informed by the ways they interpret the material and cultural beliefs that held them.

One is, of course, always struck with the seriousness, the cold rationality, and the integrity of the men who made policy. We ought also to notice the role played by their rhetoric, and how often it worked with conceptions of identity, tradition, heritage, or history. The point of using rhetoric was to tie together the emotive characteristics of national history and metaphor with the calculating rationality of military power. The decision to go to war is the most severe claim the nation-state can make on its citizens; it demands a peculiar blend of detached, reasoning authority, and unflinching emotional commitment. In using rhetoric, officials not only drew upon existing cultural structures of knowledge, but they also reinforced them in new contexts. Nuclear weapons were new; NATO was new; the global operations of the American national security state were new. Precisely because of this novelty, policymakers had to graft this newness with older symbols and meanings. In this sense, strategic culture is not a drag on innovation, but merely the circuit through which innovation takes place.

We enrich our understanding of how “national security” policy is constructed by looking at appeals to both the conscious and unconscious forces that bind national society into a whole: the need for “national” unity in the face of uncertainty, the trust in “tradition” as the guide to the vagaries of the future, and the importance of using key cultural signifiers (manliness, progress, freedom) as the means of legitimizing the distribution of political authority, both inside the state and between states. These signifiers will play on religious, racial, class, or gendered identities, depending on the cultural fabric of the time. There is no inherent connection between a faith in God and nuclear warfare but for a great many conservative Americans in the 1950s there it was. I suspect we have underestimated the structuring power of these webs of significance because they appear ephemeral and contextual next to our materialist conceptions of rational national security. As social scientists, we do not have adequate tools for quantifying the play of subjectivity.

Critics are, in this sense, absolutely right to argue that the epistemological and ontological ground underneath culture is unsteady, especially if measured against the “hardness” of material data. I take the position

that we can make no *theoretical* separation between material and ideational elements that would be useful to understanding, and so we can benefit enormously from trying to unpack the subjective understandings that national cultures generate. To say this is not to accept the existence of national identities—in the sense of their having a predestined *Nationalgeist* rooted in antiquity—but it is to concede that states, as expressions of the social strata they represent, generate cultural identities as conscious acts of policy. We participate in that production by working as members of a national society. We can work oppositionally, or counter-hegemonically, if you will, but even in doing so, we acknowledge the hegemonic politics of the social order we are trying to shape.

In NATO, to return to the story one last time, the Europeans were not dupes who accepted American values because they lacked the power to do otherwise. They resisted it even as they embraced it, trying to define the precise place American ideas would play in the order they were working to build, by negotiating with American culture over its interests in Europe. The European states were themselves divided on this question. They still are. I have spoken of these states as if they were single entities, as shorthand for what is a much more complex structuring of state interests and identities. Some Europeans (and states) resisted American power more than others, and the fundamental question I have not answered in detail here is how each state grappled with whether its foreign policy identity would be traditional, European, capitalist, socialist, Third Way, or Atlanticist. But there is little doubt that NATO provided the institutional setting for the socialization of its members, for the cultivation of new strategic identities out of the success and limitations of a new transatlantic institution.

These were not adaptive changes either. The Europeans were not prepared to shift back to nationalist, disintegrative policies the moment the configurations of world power changed to suit their older ambitions. Western Europe *was* transformed ideationally. So, of course, was the United States, and I would be remiss if I did not draw attention to the extent to which the United States shed much of its prewar isolationism and became an Atlanticist if not globalist nation. Yet, the persistence of unilateralist tendencies is suggestive of the nature of this transformation and its intrinsic incompleteness. We would not see this, however, if we did not examine the undercurrents of nationalism and unilateralism that permeated so much of the conservative critique of liberal internationalism, and so much of its strategic affections. If we look solely at the documents of strategic doctrine, rather than the cultural assumptions that surround their production, we lose the meaning they had for their architects. In so doing, we fail

to see the authenticity of those documents, and we miss the contingent aspects of history that separate the past from the present. This has a paradoxical effect. If I have drawn attention to the culturally constructed “origins” of first-use, I have also looked at the way policymakers in the 1950s used “history” to understand their “national” interests and legitimize their strategic preferences. This picture might make us wary of using the past as a tool the way the contemporary debate over first-use has. A history such as this one succeeds, ironically, only if it undermines something of our trust in the use of history itself.



## NOTES

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### **Introduction    The Persistence of Nuclear First-Use**

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1. In fairness, this policy was never openly in service of the sort of preventive war Turgidson was pushing. Logically, moreover, the United States had a de facto policy of atomic first-use from 1945 to 1949 when it had an atomic monopoly. But having a declaratory doctrine of first-use only makes sense when the threat to use is against another nuclear power, since it is designed to signal a willingness to use such force in the face of comparable retaliation. Today, NATO uses the concept in relation to the threat of all generic weapons of mass destruction (chemical, biological, and nuclear), although semantically it is still more coherent to speak of nuclear first-use when there is a possibility of "second-use." On Kubrick, see Charles Maland, "Dr. Strangelove (1964): nightmare comedy and the ideology of liberal consensus," *American Quarterly*, 31, 5 (1979), 702.
2. See Anthony Cragg, NATO Assistant Secretary General for Defence Planning and Operations "A new Strategic Concept for a new era," *NATO Review*, 47, 4 (Winter 1999), 19–22; "The Alliance's Strategic Concept" in Appendix 9, *NATO Handbook*, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (1995), 247–48.
3. In part, this was a response to the new government's coalition with the Green Party, which had long embraced a *no-first-use* position in opposition to the ruling Christian Democrats. Fischer's stance was not fully endorsed by Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, but he was allowed to float the issue publicly. See "U.S. Rejects 'No First Use' Atomic Policy," *Washington Post*, November 24, 1998, A24. Canada echoed Germany's concerns in December 1998 when its Parliamentary Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade recommended NATO revisit first-use to make its pledges to global nonproliferation credible. See "Report Of The Standing Committee On Foreign Affairs And International Trade On Canada's Nuclear Disarmament And Non-Proliferation Policy," chap. 4, "NATO and Nuclear Weapons"; letter, General Butler to the Ministries of Defense of Fourteen Nations on the Question of NATO's "First Use" Nuclear Weapons Policy, December 10, 1998; Greg Perkovich, "Nuclear First Use For What?" Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Non-Proliferation*, Vol. 1, no. 17, December 10, 1998.
4. Siddharth Varadarajan, "NATO and no-first-use: The nuclear debate in Germany," *The Times of India*, December 10, 1998; Jaswant Singh, "Against Nuclear Apartheid," *Foreign Affairs*, 77 (1998), 41–52. Germany was admitted to the newly created Nuclear Planning Group of NATO only in 1966. See Gert Krell, Thomas Risse-Kappen, Hans-Joachim Schmidt, "The No-First-Use Question in West Germany," in Steinbruner and Sigal, eds., *Alliance security: NATO and the no-first-use question* (Washington: Brookings, 1983), 153.
5. Quotation from James Rubin, *New York Times*, November 24, 1998, A12; *The Times*, November 24, 1998, 15; *New York Times*, November 25, 1998; Wade Boese, "Germany Raises 'No-First-Use' Issue at NATO Meeting," and "NATO Reactions on No-First-Use," *Arms Control Today*,

- November/December 1998; Paul-Marie de la Gorce, "L'alliance atlantique, cadre de l'hégémonie américaine," *Le Monde Diplomatique*, April 1999; Amaya Bloch-Lainé, "Une chance pour la défense européenne," *Libération*, December 16, 1998.
6. Cragg, "A new strategic concept for a new era," 19–22.
  7. NRDC Nuclear Notebook, "Appendix B" Deployments by Country, 1951–77, *The bulletin of atomic scientists*, 55, 6 (November/December 1999), 66ff.
  8. Robert Osgood, *Limited war: the challenge to American strategy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 251; Henry Kissinger, *Nuclear weapons and foreign policy* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1957); Ian Clark, *Limited nuclear war: political theory and war conventions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 178–82.
  9. Cited in Helmut Schmidt, *Defense or retaliation: a german view* (New York: Praeger, 1962), 101; Lawrence Freedman, *The evolution of nuclear strategy* (London: Macmillan Press, 1981), 109–10; Jeffrey Record, *U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe* (Washington: Brookings, 1974). Similar "scratch-pad" war games conducted at the RAND Corporation in the early 1950s produced comparable, or even more devastating, results. See Gregg Herken, *Counsels of war* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 85–87. Robert McNamara confirmed that studies undertaken when he was Secretary of Defense in the 1960s produced the same bleak results. See McNamara, "The Military Role of Nuclear Weapons: Perceptions and Misperceptions," in William P. Bundy, ed., *The nuclear controversy* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1985), 88–89; Alain Enthoven and Wayne Smith, *How much is enough? shaping the defense program, 1961–1969* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 128.
  10. Schmidt, *Defense or retaliation*, 102.
  11. This was the argument of German critic Egon Bahr in 1982. See Krell et al., "The no-first-use question in West Germany," 151; Bernard Brodie, "Nuclear weapons: strategic or tactical?" *Foreign Affairs* (January 1954).
  12. Thomas Schelling would later argue that this uncertainty about maintaining control was what made nuclear deterrence credible. See Schelling, *The strategy of conflict* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960); Malcolm Hoag, "On stability in deterrent races," *World Politics*, 13, 4 (July 1961), 505–27.
  13. See Robert Osgood, *Limited war: the challenge to American strategy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), William W. Kaufmann, ed., *Military policy and national security* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956); and Klaus Knorr, ed., *NATO and American security* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959). See also Christopher M. Gacek, *The logic of force: the dilemma of limited war in American foreign policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), chap. 5.
  14. David Schwartz, "A historical perspective," in *Alliance security*, 12. McNamara later claimed that he had privately recommended to both presidents Kennedy and Johnson that "they never initiate, under any circumstances, the use of nuclear weapons," and that they had "accepted this recommendation." McNamara in William P. Bundy, "Introduction," in *The nuclear controversy: a foreign affairs reader* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1985), xi. Bundy is sceptical of McNamara's claim that the presidents would have seen the issue as he reported it.
  15. A number of studies in the 1970s and early 1980s concluded that NATO had exaggerated the size and preparedness of Soviet forces. Schwartz, "A historical perspective." Schwartz drew on Enthoven and Smith, *How much is enough?*
  16. *The New York Times*, October 18, 1981, 1.
  17. Earl Ravenal, letter to the editor of *Foreign Affairs*, in Bundy, *The nuclear controversy*, 70.
  18. George Kennan, Robert McNamara, Gerard Smith and McGeorge Bundy, "Nuclear Weapons and the Atlantic Alliance," *Foreign Affairs* (Spring 1982), 753–68, reprinted in Bundy, *The nuclear controversy*, 23–38.
  19. Rogers, "The Atlantic alliance: prescriptions for a difficult decade," *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1982); Kaiser et al., "Nuclear weapons and the preservation of peace," *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1982), both reprinted in Bundy, *The nuclear controversy*. Quotation from Krell et al., "The no-first-use question in Germany," 154.

20. James Livingston, *Pragmatism, feminism, and democracy: rethinking the politics of American history* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 23.
21. Eckart Conze, "States, international systems, and intercultural transfer: a commentary," in Jessica C.E. Gienow-Hecht and Frank Schumacher, eds., *Culture and international history* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003), 198.
22. See Volker Depkat, "Cultural approaches to international relations—a challenge?" *ibid.*, 175–97.
23. These concepts are explored in greater detail in chapter one.
24. Jack Snyder, *The myths of empire: domestic politics and international ambition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).
25. The state is not a universal political form, but a historical, largely European species that spread to the rest of the world. It can thus be considered a "cultural form" in itself. See Bertrand Badie, *The sociology of the state*, trans. by Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 86; Bertrand Badie, *L'état importé: essai sur l'occidentalisation de l'ordre politique* (Paris, 1992), published in English as *The imported state: the westernization of the political order*, trans. Claudia Royal (Stanford, 2000); and George Steinmetz, ed., *State/Culture: state-formation after the cultural turn* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999).
26. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000).
27. "The politico-economic capability of the United States for meeting defense requirements," October 27, 1951, TCC Files, box 275, Harriman Papers, Library of Congress.
28. Terry Deibel has argued, similarly, that all postwar multilateral American agreements were sufficiently vague in the nature of their commitments to extend American power around the world without debilitating reciprocal obligations. Deibel, *Commitment in American foreign policy: a theoretical examination of the post-Vietnam era* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1980).
29. The dichotomy was not entirely pure. French Europeanists sought integration to protect France from isolation should there emerge an Anglo-US-German triumvirate. Many Europeanists saw integration as a way of increasing France's authority on the continent and thus enlarging its sense of independence.
30. See Duncan Snidal, "Hegemonic stability theory revisited," *International Organization* 39 (Autumn 1985).
31. This idea is borrowed from Jacques Derrida, quoted in Chantal Mouffe, ed., *Deconstruction and Pragmatism* (London: Routledge, 1996), 83–84.
32. Ernst Haas, *The uniting of Europe: political, social, and economic forces* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1958); P.C. Schmitter, "Three neo-functional hypotheses about international integration," *International Organization*, 23 (1969); Bill McSweeney, *Security, identity and interests: a sociology of international relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 132–37.
33. Andrew Bacevich's account of U.S. foreign policy in the 1990s emphasizes this feature of modern American Empire: that despite its anti-imperialist disclaimers, U.S. internationalists still rely on a mixture of old imperial tools: gunboats (in the form of cruise missiles, and long-range bombers) and Gurkhas (allies and mercenaries). Bacevich, *American Empire: the realities and consequences of U.S. diplomacy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), chap. 6.
34. Marc Trachtenberg, *A constructed peace: the making of the European settlement, 1945–1963* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 158. These words are similar to Anna Marie Smith's discussion of Ernesto Laclau's concept of hegemony, where hegemony "must aim to position itself not just as one alternative among many, but as the only possible framework for the resolution of the crisis." Anna Marie Smith, *Laclau and Mouffe: the radical democratic imaginary* (London: Routledge, 1998), 167.

## Chapter One Culture, War, Empire

1. The French scholar of nationalism, Ernest Renan wrote: "Forgetting, I would almost say historical error, is a crucial factor in the creation of a nation. . . . The essence of a nation is that all

- individuals have many things in common, and also that they have forgotten many things." Ernest Renan, "What is a nation?" (1882) in Anatol Lieven, ed., *America right or wrong: an anatomy of American nationalism* (New York: Oxford, 2004), 62.
2. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000); Amy Kaplan, *The anarchy of empire in the making of U.S. culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).
  3. Stanley Hoffman, "An American social science: international relations," *Daedalus*, 106, 3 (Summer 1977): 41–60, in James Der Derian, ed., *International theory: critical investigations* (London: Macmillan, 1995), especially page 230; Alexander Wendt, "The agent-structure problem in international relations theory," *International Organization*, 41, 3 (Summer 1987): 335–70; David Dessler, "What's at stake in the agent-structure debate?" *International Organization*, 43, 3 (Summer 1989), 441–73; Harry Gould, "What is at stake in the agent-structure debate?" in Vendulka Kubálková, Nicholas Onuf, and Paul Kowert, eds., *International relations in a constructed world* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), 79–98.
  4. Charles Maier, "The making of 'Pax Americana': formative moments of United States ascendancy," in R. Ahmann, A.M. Birke, and M. Howard, eds., *The quest for stability: problems of West European security, 1918–1957* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 432.
  5. Allen Hunter, ed., *Re-thinking the Cold War* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998).
  6. Jessica Gienow-Hecht, "Shame on US? academics, cultural transfer, and the Cold War: a critical review," *Diplomatic History*, 24, 3 (Summer 2000), 477.
  7. Much of the new work in the cultural field addresses the relationship between the state and these forms of non-state interactions. See Scott Lucas, *Freedom's war: the U.S. crusade against the Soviet Union* (New York: New York University Press, 1999); and Walter Hixson, *Parting the curtain: propaganda, culture, and the Cold War* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997).
  8. Michael Howard, *The lessons of history* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 15–16.
  9. Michael Hunt, "Ideology," Melvyn Leffler, "National Security," and Akira Iriye, "Culture and International History," in Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Patterson, eds., *Explaining the history of American foreign relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 193–225; Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. foreign policy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987); Iriye, *Cultural internationalism and world order* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997). Others include Emily Rosenberg, *Spreading the American dream: American economic and cultural expansion, 1890–1945* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982) and *Financial missionaries to the world: the politics and culture of dollar diplomacy, 1900–1930* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999); Kristin Hoganson, *Fighting for American manhood: how gender politics provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); and Amy Kaplan and Donald Pease, eds., *Cultures of United States imperialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993).
  10. Buzzanco, "Where's the beef? Culture without power in the study of U.S. foreign relations," *Diplomatic History*, 24, 4 (Fall 2000), 623–32. H.W. Brands makes a similar point: "Context is not content, and, for the content of decisions, the tools of the traditionalists still work best." (*The Journal of American History*, 88, 4 [March 2002], 1595–96). Buzzanco is right: there is, as yet, no shared definition of culture. But this is no less a problem to materialists who do not, as far as I know, agree on the concepts of class or ideology; or Realists, whose theories founder on incoherent definitions of power, threat, and interest. Michael C. Desch, "Culture clash: assessing the importance of ideas in security studies," *International Security*, 23, 1 (Summer 1998), 141–70; John S. Duffield, Theo Farrell, Richard Price and Michael C. Desch, "Isms and schisms: culturalism versus realism in security studies," *International Security*, 24, 1 (Summer 1999), 156–80.
  11. Anders Stephanson, "Diplomatic history in the expanded field," *Diplomatic History*, 22, 4 (Fall 1998), 596.
  12. Melvyn Leffler, "New approaches, old interpretations and prospective reconfigurations," *Diplomatic History*, 19 (Spring 1995): 173–96; Michael Hogan, "State of the art: an introduction," *America in the world: the historiography of American foreign relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 14–15. Stephen Pelz makes this assumption, wrongly citing Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann's *The social construction of reality* as an introduction to "the postmodern

- approach." See Pelz, "Toward a new diplomatic history: two and a half cheers for international relations methods," in Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, eds., *Bridges and Boundaries: historians, political scientists, and the study of international relations* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001), 87–89.
13. George Steinmetz, "Introduction: culture and state," in George Steinmetz, ed., *State/Culture: state-formation after the cultural turn* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 1–2; Michèle Barrett, *Imagination in theory: culture, writing, words, and thing* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 13–14.
  14. Jeffrey Checkel, "The constructivist turn in international relations theory," *World Politics*, 50 (January 1998), 326.
  15. Herbert Simon, *Models of bounded rationality* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982, 1997). Simon was a rationalist, however, a bounded one.
  16. I have bracketed other cultural assumptions built into the analogy: that I *own* a house and possess private goods because of which I must fear burglars.
  17. Even here affordability is dependent on a subjective calculation of risk. An especially paranoid person might go into debt defending his or her property. Others will have competing values that demand budgetary attention and would have to be ranked next to the theoretical risk of burglary. People address their security in vastly different ways.
  18. James Clifford, *The predicament of culture: twentieth-century ethnography, literature, and art* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 10; William Sewell, Jr., "The concept(s) of culture," in Victoria Bonnell and Lynn Hunt, eds., *Beyond the cultural turn: new directions in the study of society and culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press), 38; Steinmetz, "Introduction," *State/Culture*, 7, fn. 8; Raymond Williams, *Keywords: a vocabulary of culture and society* (London: Fontana, 1976), 87.
  19. Williams, *Keywords*, 89; Isaiah Berlin, "Herder and the Enlightenment," in *The proper study of mankind: an anthology of essays* (London: Pimlico, 1998), 359–435; Eric Wolf, *Envisioning power: ideologies of dominance and crisis* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999), chap. 2.
  20. Matthew Arnold, *Culture and anarchy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), 169–76, emphasis added; Raymond Williams, *Culture and society, 1780–1950* (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1959).
  21. Bennett Berger, *An essay on culture: symbolic structure and social structure* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 15.
  22. Clifford Geertz, *Interpretation of cultures: selected essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973); David Schneider, "Notes toward a theory of culture," in Keith Basso and Henry Selby, eds., *Meaning in anthropology* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1976), 197–220. My discussion draws especially from Sewell, "The concept(s) of culture," 43–44.
  23. Sewell, "The concept(s) of culture," 47.
  24. Sewell, "The concept(s) of culture," 48. Emphasis added.
  25. Wolf, *Envisioning power*, 53–55; John Thompson, *Studies in the theory of ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press), 46–47; David Swartz, *Culture and power: the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 117–36.
  26. Sewell, "The concept(s) of culture," 49–50.
  27. Geertz, "Ideology as a cultural system," *The interpretation of cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 220.
  28. Ronald Grigor Suny, "Back and beyond: reversing the cultural turn?" *American Historical Review*, 107, 5 (December 2002), 1476–99.
  29. See Frank Costigliola, "The nuclear family: tropes of gender and pathology in the Western alliance," *Diplomatic History*, 21, 2 (Spring 1997), 163–83; "Kennedy, the European allies, and the failure to consult," *Political Science Quarterly*, 110, 1 (Spring 1995), 105–23; "Culture, emotion, and the creation of the Atlantic identity, 1948–1952," in Geir Lundestad, *No end to alliance: the United States and Western Europe: Past, Present, and Future* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998), 21–36.

30. The term was first affixed by Nicholas Onuf in *World of our making: rules and rule in social theory and international relations theory* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989). See Ted Hopf, "The promise of constructivism in international relations theory," *International Security*, 23, 1 (Summer 1998). It bears a resemblance to the English School of international relations. See Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society* (London: Macmillan, 1977); J.D.B. Miller and John Vincent, eds., *Order and violence: Hedley Bull and international relations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990); Barry Buzan "From international system to international society: structural realism and regime theory meet the English school," *International Organization*, 47 (1983), 327–52; Iver B. Neumann, "John Vincent and the English school of international relations," in *The future of international relations*, 38–65; Nicholas J. Rengger, *International relations, political theory and the problem of order* (London: Routledge, 2000), 86–92.
31. John Gerard Ruggie, "What makes the world hang together? Neo-utilitarianism and the social constructivist challenge," *International Organization*, 52, 4 (Autumn 1998), 855–85. The convergence of Neo-Liberalism and Neo-Realism is discussed in Ole Weaver, "Figures of international thought: introducing persons instead of paradigms," in Iver B. Neumann and Ole Weaver, eds., *The future of international relations: masters in the making* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 17–21.
32. This is the heart of Kenneth Waltz's *Theory of international politics* (New York: Random House, 1979), and Barry Buzan, Charles Jones, and Richard Little's *The logic of anarchy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993). For critiques, see Richard Ashley, "Untying the sovereign state: a double reading of the anarchy problematic," *Millennium*, 17 (Summer 1988), 227–62; Jens Bartelson, *A genealogy of sovereignty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Thomas Biersteker and Cynthia Weber, eds., *State sovereignty as social construct* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Helen Milner, "The assumption of anarchy in international relations theory: a critique," *Review of International Studies*, 17 (1991), 67–85; and Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics," *International Organization*, 46, 2 (Spring 1992), 391–425.
33. Chris Jenks, *Culture* (London: Routledge, 1993), 119.
34. Marriage, property rights, sovereignty, language, money, games, and so forth, are *social facts*; soil, rivers, population size, bullets, and the like, are not. Ruggie, "What makes the world hang together?" 856.
35. Max Weber, "The social psychology of world religions," in H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, eds. and trans., *From Max Weber: essays in sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), 280.
36. Ruggie, "What makes the world hang together?" 859–60; Wolfgang Schluchter, *Rationalism, religion, and domination: a Weberian perspective* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 19.
37. Anthony Giddens, *Central problems in social theory: action, structure and contradiction in social analysis* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), chap. 2; *The constitution of society: outline of the theory of structuration* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).
38. Jenks, *Culture*, chap. 6; S.N. Eisenstadt, "The order-maintaining and order-transforming dimensions of culture," in Richard Münch and Neil J. Smelser, eds., *Theory of culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).
39. Harry Gould, "What is at stake in the agent-structure debate?" in Vendulka Kubálková, Nicholas Onuf, and Paul Kowert, eds., *International relations in a constructed world* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), 79–98. Gould points out that there is not much of a debate here, since everyone rejects pure ontological structuralism and pure ontological individualism. The argument is really about how this "mutual constitution" works.
40. Anders Stephanson, "The United States," in David Reynolds, ed., *The origins of the Cold War in Europe: international perspectives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 35–41.
41. Checkel, "The constructivist turn," 325–26.
42. John Meyer argues that the idea of the nation-state as the sole legitimate political form in global politics is a product of a long period of socialization in which the European-based state was culturally disseminated throughout the world. The modern global system, he concludes, "is

- something of a cultural expression.” Meyer, “The changing cultural content of the nation-state: a world society perspective,” in Steinmetz, *State/culture*, 126.
43. Jurgen Habermas, “Historical consciousness and post-traditional identity: the Federal Republic’s orientation to the West,” *The new conservatism: cultural criticism and the Historians’ debate* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989), 253–54. “What is a people? The Frankfurt ‘Germanists’ Assembly’ of 1846 and the self-understanding of the humanities in the *Vormärz*,” in Habermas, *The postnational constellation: political essays* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), 11–14.
  44. Ruggie, “What makes the world hang together?” 879. Ruggie’s example, to which I return, is that the postwar order was shaped not by American *hegemony*, but by *American* hegemony, meaning, that the values of U.S. culture shaped the content of its postwar dominance and explains more about the nature of the Bretton Woods and NATO systems than a materialist account would. Ruggie, *Constructing the world polity: essays on international institutionalization* (London: Routledge, 1998); “Multilateralism: the anatomy of an institution,” *Multilateralism matters: the theory and praxis of an institutional form* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 8; Andrew Moravcsik, “Taking preferences seriously: a liberal theory of international politics,” *International Organization*, 51, 4 (Autumn 1997), 513–53.
  45. Sacvan Bercovitch, *The rites of assent: transformations in the symbolic construction of America* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 53; John Higham, “Hanging together: divergent unities in American history,” *Journal of American History*, 61 (1974).
  46. Costigliola, “The nuclear family”; Eric Wolf, “Culture: panacea or problem?” *Pathways of power: building an anthropology of the modern world* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 314. Realists take identity for granted. “If we reify the notion of societal identity,” McSweeney writes, “the answer is that it just happens; identity ‘emerges’, and with it, the security claim. If sub-societal groups see things differently from the majority, [materialists] offer no criteria to judge and resolve the dispute. For them, society has an identity by definition. People do not choose it; they recognize it, they belong to it.” On the contrary, state identities are constructed through social processes: “Collective identity is not out there, waiting to be discovered. What is ‘out there’ is identity discourse on the part of political leaders, intellectuals and countless others, who engage in the process of constructing, negotiating, manipulating or affirming a response to the demand—at times urgent, mostly absent—for a collective image.” Bill McSweeney, *Security, identity and interests: a sociology of international relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 77–78.
  47. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 141, 143; Mabel Berezin, “Political belonging: emotional, nation, and identity in Fascist Italy,” *State/culture*, 355–77; Waever, “Insecurity, security, and asecurty in the West European non-war community,” in Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, eds., *Security communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 77.
  48. Jacques Lacan called this the *point de capiton*, or “nodal point,” to which the ideological “quilt” of social identities is stitched. Michele Barrett, “Ideology, politics, hegemony,” in Slavoj Žižek, ed., *Mapping ideology* (London: Verso, 1995), 249–50; Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and socialist strategy: towards a radical democratic politics* (London: Verso, 2001), 112; Slavoj Žižek, *The sublime object of ideology* (London: Verso, 1989), 87–89.
  49. Laclau and Mouffe, *Hegemony and socialist strategy*; Slavoj Žižek, *The ticklish subject: the absent center of political ontology* (London: Verso, 1999), 176–79.
  50. Wolf, *Envisioning power*, 54; Žižek, *The ticklish subject*, 184–85.
  51. Stuart Hall quoted in Michael Denning, *Culture in the age of three worlds* (London: Verso, 2004), 88.
  52. Žižek, *The sublime object of ideology*, 36.
  53. Ken Booth, “Security and self: reflections of a fallen realist,” in Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams, eds., *Critical security studies: concepts and cases* (London: UCL Press, 1997), 6.
  54. Charles Taylor situates the identity of the self (individual) in an ontology of self-reflexiveness and “self-interpretation.” Identities are not static and narrowly behavioural, he argues, because

they are constantly being monitored by a sense of self-awareness that can transform identities. Human selves have “purposes” that direct action toward desired ends, however much the self is constrained by the vocabulary, values, resources, constructed by society. Moreover, identities, he insists, are fundamentally “dialogical,” meaning that they are a function of a real or imagined dialogues with other selves. Thus, “one cannot be a self on one’s own. I am a self only in relation to certain interlocutors . . . A self only exists within what I call ‘webs of interlocution.’” Charles Taylor, *Sources of the self: the making of the modern identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 36; Ruth Abbey, *Charles Taylor* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 58–100.

55. Daniel Rodgers put it well in his essay on American exceptionalism: because America thought itself the exception to some historical rule of development, “as much if its popular historical energy” has been spent “imagining every one else’s history as in writing its own.” Rodgers, “Exceptionalism,” in Anthony Molho and Gordon S. Wood, eds., *Imagined histories: American historians interpret the past* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 24.
56. Andrew Edgar and Peter Sedgwick, eds., *Key concepts in cultural theory* (London: Routledge, 1999), 102; Eric Wolf, “Incorporation and identity in the making of the modern world,” *Pathways of power*, 353–69; Wildavsky’s reply to David Laitin, in Laitin, “Political culture and political preferences,” *American Political Science Review*, 82, 2 (June 1988), 593; and Wildavsky, “Choosing preferences by constructing institutions: a cultural theory of preference formation,” *American Political Science Review*, 81, 1 (March 1987), 3–22 (emphasis added).
57. Berger, *An essay on culture*, 36.
58. Eisenstadt, “The order-maintaining and order-transforming dimensions of culture,” 69.
59. Leslie Berlowitz, Denis Donoghue, and Louis Menand, eds., *America in theory* (New York: 1988), chap. 1; Lieven, *America right or wrong*, 62–63; Bercovitch, *The rites of assent*, 54–55.
60. McSweeney, *Security, identity and interests*, 160. For example, there was a tension in Canadian foreign policy, especially in the first half of this century, between Anglo-Canadians who identified with the British Empire, Franco-Canadians who did not, and other, emerging nationalists who sought an identity that situated Canada as an independent state in the “New World” perhaps, provisionally, closer to the United States. Canadian foreign policy not only had to address elemental physical security concerns—which were actually quite few—but had to determine *what* the nation’s identity was in relation to the fate of Britain in its European wars. See Sean M. Shore, “No fences make good neighbors: the development of the Canadian-US security community, 1871–1940,” in Adler and Barnett, *Security communities*, 333–67.
61. Most of these works only make this assumption in passing, but the idea of “tradition” and “style” in warfare is scattered throughout military history. See Russell Weigley, *The American way of war: a history of United States military strategy and policy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973); Morrell Heald and Lawrence Kaplan, *Culture and diplomacy: the American experience* (Wesport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1977); James Chace and Caleb Carr, *America invulnerable: the quest for absolute security from 1812 to Star Wars* (New York: Summit Books, 1988); Allan Millett and Peter Maslowski, *For the common defense: a military history of the United States* (New York: Free Press, 1984); John M. Carroll and Colin Baxter, ed., *The American military tradition: from colonial times to the present* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1993).
62. Alastair I. Johnston, “Thinking about strategic culture,” *International Security* (Spring 1995), 46. Johnston draws his definition of culture from Geertz’s “Religion as a Cultural System,” *The interpretation of cultures*, 90.
63. Elizabeth Kier, “Culture and French military doctrine before World War II,” in Peter Katzenstein, ed., *The culture of national security: norms and identity in world politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 187.
64. Judith N. Shklar, “Subversive Genealogies,” in Clifford Geertz, ed., *Myth, symbol, and culture*, (New York: W. W. Norton, 1974), 129.
65. I use the word “threat” guardedly because the term implies that foreign policy is about identifying challenges to “legitimate” national security. These are normatively loaded words, attempts to



- move what is in the eye of the beholder into the gaze of objectivity. A state might define its "national interest" so expansively that it views quite distant disturbances as "threats" to its security.
66. Anne-Marie Burley, "Regulating the world: multilateralism, international law, and the projection of the new deal regulatory state," in *Multilateralism matters*, 125.
  67. Graham Allison, *The essence of decision: explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little Brown, 1971). See also Allison and Frederic Morris, "Armaments and Arms Control: exploring the determinants of military weapons," *Daedalus*, 104 (1975), 99–129.
  68. Kier, "Culture and French military doctrine," 186–215.
  69. Jack Snyder, *The myths of empire: domestic politics and international ambition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 13–14. Snyder believes that the main drive behind strategies of expansion is domestic political competition. In this, culture is used instrumentally and often cynically: history does *not* in itself provide a determined identity but only a general account of "national character" that lends itself to a range of arguments. Yet there is no a priori reason to believe that policymakers are always insincere. What is difficult empirically is to distinguish between sincerely held cultural understandings and merely instrumental ones.
  70. Sir Basil Liddell Hart, *The British way in warfare: adaptability and mobility* (London: Penguin, 1942), 7; for a critique see Michael Howard, "The British way in warfare: a reappraisal," *The causes of war and other essays* (London: Unwin, 1983), 189–207. Emphasis added.
  71. John Shy, "American military experience: history and learning," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 1 (1971), 205–28.
  72. John Ferling, *A wilderness of miseries: war and warriors in early America* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980).
  73. See Don Higginbotham, "The early American way of war: reconnaissance and appraisal," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 44, 2 (April 1987), 234–35. Likewise, Russell Weigley concludes that the colonial/revolutionary experience was "formative" and that is why Americans prefer "strategies of annihilation." Weigley, "American strategy from its beginnings through the First World War," in Peter Paret, ed., *Makers of modern strategy: from Machiavelli to the nuclear age* (Princeton, 1986), 408–443.
  74. Not all of the history of early American warfare has been afflicted by the search for origins: a number of historians have shown that the evidence of a Holy War spirit in the Revolution is mixed at best, that it was only through the process of *memorializing* the revolution and the subsequent War of 1812, years after the fact, that Americans began the process of reconstituting their military identity in more nationalistic terms. The ideological divisiveness and incoherence of both the "first and second" wars of independence was replaced over time by memories of heroism, national unity, and romantic fraternity. Precisely because the United States lacked any other of the "usual bonds of a people," such as common history, or unifying mythologies steeped in antiquity, war itself became the "ultimate recourse" for definers of "Americanness," and a "fundamental component of American nationality." Reginald Stuart, *The half-way pacifist: Thomas Jefferson's view of war* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978); Higginbotham, "The early American way of war"; Charles Royster, *A revolutionary people at war: the Continental Army and American character, 1775–1783* (Chapel Hill, 1979); Lawrence D. Cress, "Republican liberty and national security: American military policy as an ideological problem, 1783 to 1789," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 38 (1981), 73–96; Melvin Endy, Jr., "Just war, Holy war, and millennialism in revolutionary America," *William and Mary Quarterly* 42, 1 (1985), 3–25; Cecilia Elizabeth O'Leary, *To die for: the paradox of American patriotism* (Princeton, 1999), 12; Royster, "Founding a nation in blood: military conflict and American nationality," in Ronald Hoffman and Peter Albert, eds., *Arms and independence: the military character of the American Revolution* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1984), 25–49; Peter Parish, "An exception to most of the rules: what made American nationalism different in the mid-nineteenth century?" *Prologue* (Fall 1995).
  75. Weigley, *The American way of war*.
  76. Colin Gray, "National styles in strategy: the American example," *International Security*, 6, 2 (1981), 21–47; Gray, "Nuclear strategy: the case for a theory of victory," in Steven E. Miller, ed.,

- Strategy and nuclear deterrence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 23–56; Gray, *Nuclear strategy and national style* (Lanham, MD: Hamilton Press, 1986); Richard Pipes, “Why the Soviet Union thinks it can fight and win a nuclear war,” *Commentary*, 7 (1977), 21–34; and Carnes Lord, “American strategic culture,” *Comparative Strategy*, 5, 3 (1985), 269–93; Timothy Botti, *Ace in the hole: why the United States did not use nuclear weapons in the Cold War, 1945 to 1965* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996); and E.G. Hoffman, *Decisive force: the new American way of war* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1996). In contrast, see Edward Rhodes, “Constructing peace and war: an analysis of the power of ideas to shape American military power,” *Millennium*, 24, 1 (1995), 53–85.
77. For a debunking of common ideas about U.S. strategic culture, see Ken Booth, “American strategy: the myths revisited,” in *American thinking about peace and war* (Hassocks: Harvester Press, 1978). The problem was not simply that Gray ignored the possibility of a gap between attitudes and behavior, but that his description of postwar American strategic doctrine being firmly rooted in deterrence thinking was empirically wrong. See Aaron Friedberg, “A history of U.S. strategic ‘doctrine,’ 1945–1980,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* (December 1980), 37–71.
78. Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural realism: strategic culture and grand strategy in Chinese history* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 10.
79. Brian Ferguson, “Explaining war,” in Jonathan Haas, ed., *The anthropology of war* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 46.
80. Habermas, “The European nation-state: on the past and future of sovereignty and citizenship,” *The inclusion of the other: studies in political theory* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998, 2001), 105–27.
81. Bruce Russett, *Grasping the democratic peace* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Zeev Moaz and Bruce Russett, “Normative and structural causes of Democratic Peace, 1947–86,” *American Political Science Review* 87 (1993), 624–38; John Owen, “How liberalism produces democratic peace,” *International Security* (1994), 87–125.
82. Julia Adams, “Culture in rational-choice theories of state-formation,” *State/culture*, 98–122; Habermas, “The European nation-state,” 107–14.
83. There is a contradiction between the liberal state acting on behalf of self-governing individuals while at the same time trying to produce such individuals. Michel Foucault’s concept of *governmentality* explores this quality, which is not invested with the powers of overt coercion but seeks to inculcate self-discipline through the promotion of models of the self. It concerns itself with the “correct conduct of life,” and expresses its forms of penal and disciplinary authority only through the diffused freedom to choose the right ethical conduct for oneself. See Michel Foucault, “The birth of biopolitics,” in Paul Rabinow, ed., *Michel Foucault: Ethics, subjectivity and truth: the essential works of Michel Foucault, 1954–1984*, vol. 1 (New York: New Press, 1994), 73–79.
84. Costigliola, “Culture, emotion, and the creation of the Atlantic identity,” 24.
85. Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, xii–xiv, 9–10.
86. Machiavelli, *The Discourses*, book 2 (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970), chap. 4, 283–88; Benedetto Fontana, *Hegemony and power: on the relation between Gramsci and Machiavelli* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 140–44.
87. Samuel Beer, *To make a nation: the rediscovery of American federalism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 84–101, 119–20. Harrington did believe new provinces could break away when they had come of political age, a model of development that had particular resonance with the leaders of the American war for independence. He saw the process as continually remaking itself until political liberty engulfed the world.
88. Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, 165–76. Woodrow Wilson’s New Freedom was based on the claim that opening the United States to freer trade was one of the means of disciplining the concentrated power of America’s monopolies. The great anxiety of Progressive reformers was that the new social forces of industrial America would corrupt the original virtues of the Republic. Wilson’s internationalism was not only the expansion of the American constitutional project,

- but also a means of calling upon such expansion to resolve the internal crisis facing American liberalism.
89. Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, 182.
  90. Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, 10–12.
  91. Rogers Smith, *Civic ideals: conflicting visions of citizenship in U.S. history* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).
  92. Beer, *To make a nation*, 7.
  93. Ninkovich, *Modernity and power*; Stephanson, *Manifest destiny*.
  94. Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, 200. Frank Costigliola points out that while it is true that the United States did not “divide-and-conquer” its allies, it frequently used divisions in Europe to encourage support for American positions. Costigliola, “Kennedy, the European allies,” 110.
  95. “The Politico-Economic Capability of the United States for Meeting Defense Requirements,” draft for discussion, October 27, 1951, TCC Files, U.S. comments on TCC Report folder, box 275, Harriman Papers, Library of Congress.
  96. Lundestad, “Empire by invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945–1952,” *The Journal of Peace Research* 23 (1986), 263–77, further developed in Lundestad, *The American “Empire” and other studies of US Foreign policy in comparative perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), and repeated in “‘Empire by invitation’ in the American century,” *Diplomatic History*, 23, 2 (Spring 1999), 189–217; John Lewis Gaddis makes Lundestad’s point central to his postrevisionism in “The emerging postrevisionist synthesis on the origins of the Cold War,” *Diplomatic History*, 7 (Summer 1983), 171–90, and *We now know: rethinking Cold War history* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 26–53.
  97. See Charles Kindleberger, *The world in depression, 1929–1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974); Robert Gilpin, *War and change in world politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Robert Gilpin, *The political economy of international relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987); Robert Keohane, “The theory of hegemonic stability and changes in international economic regimes, 1967–1977,” in Ole Holsti, Randolph Siverson, and Alexander George, eds., *Change in the international system* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1980).
  98. There is, as Isabelle Grunberg has argued, something mythically heroic about the theory, something that says more about the culture from which it comes than the international system. See Isabelle Grunberg, “Exploring the ‘myth’ of hegemonic stability,” *International Organization*, 44 (Autumn 1990), 431–77; Duncan Snidal, “The limits of hegemonic stability theory,” *International Organization*, 39, 4 (Autumn 1985), 579–614.
  99. Charles Maier, “Hegemony and autonomy within the Western Alliance,” in David Painter and Melvyn Leffler, eds., *Origins of the Cold War: an international history* (London: Routledge, 1994), 155–59.
  100. P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *British imperialism: innovation and expansion, 1688–1914* (London: Longman, 1993), 8–9; Ronald Robinson, “Non-European foundations of European imperialism: a sketch for a theory of collaboration,” in Roger Owen and Bob Sutcliffe, eds., *Studies in the theory of imperialism* (London: Longman, 1972). Lundestad’s response to this is comparative: “while all empires have elements both of imposition and of invitation, the invitation side was clearly much stronger with the American than with the British or the Soviet empires.” Lundestad, “‘Empire by invitation’ in the American Century,” 194.
  101. Maier, “Alliance and autonomy: European identity and U.S. foreign policy objectives in the Truman years,” in Michael Lacey, ed., *The Truman presidency* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
  102. The view that new international economic arrangements stressing productivity, investment, and contract were apolitical and thus not imperial, comes out of the Progressive era.
  103. Marc Trachtenberg, *A constructed peace: the making of the European settlement, 1945–1963* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), chap. 5.
  104. Steve Weber, “Shaping the postwar balance of power: multilateralism in NATO,” in John Gerard Ruggie, ed., *Multilateralism matters: the theory and praxis of an institutional form* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 233–92.

105. Slavoj Žižek, "Class struggle or postmodernism? Yes, please!" in Judith Butler, Ernesto Laclau and Slavoj Žižek, eds., *Contingency, hegemony, universality* (London: Verso, 2000), 90–93.
106. Robert Keohane, "Multilateralism: An agenda for research," *International Journal*, 45 (Autumn 1990); Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Collective identity in a democratic community: The case of NATO," in Peter Katzenstein, ed., *The culture of national security: Norms and identity in world politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 365–71; Risse-Kappen, *Cooperation among democracies: The European influence on U.S. foreign policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).
107. Ruggie, "Multilateralism," 8.
108. Wolf, "Ideas and power," 378–79.
109. Weber draws on Gaddis for his portrait of Kennan, although he uses some Policy Planning Staff papers as well.
110. Weber, "Shaping the postwar balance of power," 233–92. Weber also argues that Kennedy's "flexible response" was a return to the Korean War deterrence scenario. In fairness, his claims about Eisenhower's interest in multipolarity are based on developments in the late 1950s. My analysis of the New Look, which comes to a different conclusion for 1953–55, is not a full critique of Weber's argument.
111. Alexander Wendt, "Collective identity formation and the international state," *American Political Science Review*, 88 (June 1994), 389.
112. Fontana, *Hegemony and power*, 140–41; Joseph Fermia, *Gramsci's political thought: hegemony, consciousness, and the revolutionary process* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 24, 37–39; Stephen Gill, "Epistemology, ontology and the 'Italian School,'" and Robert Cox, "Gramsci, hegemony and international relations: an essay in method," both in Gill, ed., *Gramsci, historical materialism and international relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Christine Buci-Glucksmann, "Hegemony and consent: a political strategy," in Anne Showstack Sassoon, ed., *Approaches to Gramsci* (London: Writers and Readers, 1982), 116–26; and Chantal Mouffe, "Hegemony and ideology in Gramsci," in Mouffe, ed., *Gramsci and Marxist theory* (London: Routledge, 1979): 168–204. Hegemony does not simply marginalize dissenting positions or hostile identities, but it organizes them into harmless channels where their continued existence legitimizes the authority of the ruling group by giving it the appearance of even greater consensus.
113. Laclau and Mouffe, *Hegemony and socialist strategy*, 138–42.
114. Robert Cox quoted in G. John Ikenberry and Charles Kupchan, "Socialization and hegemonic power," *International Organization*, 44 (Summer 1990), 289.
115. Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, "A framework for the study of security communities," in *Security communities*, 37.
116. Charles Maier, "The politics of productivity: foundations of American international economic policy after World War II," *International Organization*, 31 (Autumn 1977), 807–33; Michael Hogan, *The Marshall Plan: America, Britain, and the reconstruction of Western Europe, 1947–1952* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).
117. Judith Butler, "Restaging the universal: hegemony and the limits of formalism," in Butler, Laclau and Žižek, eds., *Contingency, hegemony, universality*, 31.
118. Ikenberry and Kupchan, "Socialization and hegemonic power," 288–93. They argue that this can happen because the elites of the weaker states do not wish to appear to have been forced to accept the ideas of the hegemon. So they publicly promote these values as their own, or at least as being consistent with traditions of their society. They also argue that factions will use the power offered by the hegemon to affect a "domestic realignment" that favors their party. To do this they introduce ideas and beliefs that might otherwise not be present.
119. Hogan, *The Marshall Plan*, and Robert Pollard, *Economic security and the origins of the Cold War, 1945–1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985).
120. The dynamic relationship between integration and fragmentation is explored in Waever, "Insecurity, security, and asecurty," in Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, *Security communities*, 69–118.

**Chapter Two The Persistence of the Old Regime:**  
**British, French, and American Strategic**  
**Thinking before 1949**

1. As Howard shows, the idea of making a major commitment to a continental ally was a relatively persistent feature of British strategy going back to the wars with Louis XIV. However, he also notes that the distinctiveness of British strategic doctrine over these years is better conceived as a continuous dialectic between the rhetoric of continental and maritime strategic thinking. Michael Howard, "The British way in warfare: a reappraisal," *The causes of war* (London: Unwin, 1983), 189–207.
2. Barry Posen, *The sources of military doctrine: France, Britain and Germany between the World Wars* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), 141–78; Gaines Post, Jr., *Dilemmas of appeasement: British deterrence and defense, 1934–1939* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993).
3. Malcolm Smith, *British air strategy between the wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984); R.J. Overy, *The air war, 1939–1945* (London: Europa, 1980); Roger Ruston, *A say in the end of the world: morals and British nuclear weapons policy, 1941–1987* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 94.
4. Ian Clark and Nicholas J. Wheeler, *The British origins of nuclear strategy, 1945–1955* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 23.
5. Paul Kennedy, *The realities behind diplomacy: background influences on British external policy, 1865–1980* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1981), 362–63.
6. See John Baylis, "British wartime thinking about a postwar European security group," *Review of International Studies*, 9, 4 (October 1983), 273–74.
7. DEFE 4/29, JP (50) 22 (Final), Annex, March 10, 1950, Public Record Office (PRO), Kew, London.
8. Quote in Sean Greenwood, "Return to Dunkirk: the origins of the Anglo-French Treaty of March, 1947," *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, 6, 4 (December 1983), 51; Anthony Adamthwaite, "Britain and the world, 1945–49: the view from the Foreign Office," *International Affairs*, 61 (1985); B. Zeeman, "Britain and the Cold War: an alternative approach. The Treaty of Dunkirk example," *European History Quarterly*, 16 (1986), 343–67.
9. The idea of establishing an Anglo-French condominium to contain Germany was supported by Stalin as a corollary of Soviet dominance in Eastern Europe. John W. Young, "Towards a new view of British policy and European unity 1945–1957," in R. Ahmann, A.M. Birke, and M. Howard, eds., *The quest for stability: problems of West European security, 1918–1957* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 435–37; John Baylis, "British wartime thinking about a post-war European security group," *Review of International Studies*, 9 (1983), 165–81.
10. CAB 129/23, CP (48) 8; FO 371/62723/10878, enclosure EPC (47) 6, November 7, 1947; John Kent and John Young, "British policy overseas: the 'Third Force' and the origins of NATO—in search of a new perspective," in Beatrice Heuser and Robert O'Neill, eds., *Securing peace in Europe, 1945–1962* (London: Macmillan, 1992), 48–49.
11. Alexander Wendt, "Collective identity formation and the international state," *American Political Science Review*, 88, 2 (June 1994), 384–96.
12. Kent and Young, "The 'Third Force' and NATO," 52–53; "The Western Union concept and British defence planning, 1947–48," in Richard Aldrich, ed., *British intelligence, strategy and the Cold War* (London: Routledge, 1992); The case that Bevin became an Atlanticist after 1948 but hitherto had been a Europeanist is made by Young, *Britain, France and the unity of Europe, 1945–1951* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1984) and Geoffrey Warner, "Britain and Europe in 1948: the view from the Cabinet," in Josef Becker and Franz Knipping, eds., *Power in Europe? Great Britain, France, Italy and Germany in the postwar world, 1945–1950* (New York: W. de Gruyter, 1986), 27–46.
13. Kent and Young, "The 'Third Force' and NATO," 53.
14. Escott Reid, *Time of fear and hope: the making of the North Atlantic Treaty, 1947–1949* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977), 37.

15. Scott Newton, "The 1949 sterling crisis and British policy towards European integration," *Review of International Studies*, 11, 3 (July 1985), 178; Geoffrey Warner, "British Labour government and the Atlantic alliance," in Olav Riste, ed., *Western security: the formative years: European and Atlantic Defence, 1947–1953* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 248–49.
16. DEFE 4/4, COS (47) 71st meeting, June 6, 1948; DEFE 5/6, COS (47) 227 (0), annex B, December 19, 1947; DEFE 4/10, COS (48) 3rd meeting, January 4, 1948; CAB 131/4, DO (47) 68, September 15, 1947; CAB 129/23, CP (48) 7, January 4, 1948, PRO.
17. David Reynolds, "The origins of the Cold War: the European dimension, 1944–1951," *The Historical Journal*, 28, 2 (1985), 509, fn. 32; Saki Dockrill, *Britain's policy for West German rearmament, 1950–1955* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 9.
18. Kent and Young, "The 'Third Force' and NATO," 58.
19. Richard Gardner, *Sterling-dollar diplomacy: the origins and the prospects of our international economic order* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1969), 31–35; G. John Ikenberry, "Rethinking the origins of American hegemony," *Political Science Quarterly*, 104, 3 (Autumn 1989), 382–85; Frank Costigliola, "Culture, emotion, and the creation of the Atlantic identity, 1948–1952," in Lundestad, ed., *No end to alliance: The United States and Western Europe: past, present, and future* (Nobel Symposium 105, 1998), 28–29.
20. Charles Maier, "The politics of productivity: foundations of American international economic policy after World War II," *International Organization*, 31 (Autumn 1977), 264; Alan Milward, *The reconstruction of Western Europe, 1945–1951* (London: Methuen, 1984), 63.
21. Geir Lundestad, "Empire" by integration: *The United States and European integration, 1945–1997* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 14–15; Michael Hogan, *The Marshall Plan: America, Britain, and the reconstruction of Western Europe, 1947–1952* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 445; George Kennan, *Memoirs: 1925–1950* (New York: Bantam, 1967), 337.
22. Memorandum by Hickerson, January 21, 1948, *Foreign Relations of the United States [FRUS]: 1948*, III, 11–12; John Baylis, "Britain, the Brussels Pact and the continental commitment," *International Affairs*, 60 (Autumn 1984), 622.
23. See, for example, FO 371, 73045, Z 561/273/72/G, Telegram 1032, Bevin to Inverchapel, January 26, 1948, and CAB 79, 54 COS (46) 187th meeting, PRO.
24. Bevin in CAB 129/40, CO (50) 118, May 26, 1950; PUSC 51, in CAB 221/1761, April 28, 1950, PRO.
25. Patrick Blackett, *Fear, war and the bomb: The military and political consequences of atomic energy* (New York: Whittlesey House, 1948), 71–72.
26. A. Bullock, *Ernest Bevin: foreign secretary, 1945–1951* (London: Heinemann, 1983), 353; Ruston, *A say in the end of the world*, 97.
27. Quoted in Clark and Wheeler, *The British origins of nuclear strategy*, 75.
28. *Ibid.*, 75–82.
29. *Ibid.*, 78. A Joint Planning Staff study completed in late 1946 and revised in early 1947 came to the pessimistic conclusion that a "comparatively limited number of atomic bombs might decisively affect the war-making capacity of this country, and it is possible to envisage a situation in which it might be virtually impossible to prevent this number being dropped." CAB 84/85, JP (46) 201 (Final), November 28, 1946, and AIR 8/1446, JP (46) 220 (Final), December 7, 1946, PRO.
30. AIR 8/1587, Dickson to Alexander, December 15, 1947, PRO.
31. DEFE 5/4, COS (47) 79 (0) Revise, April 21, 1947, PRO.
32. DEFE 4/10, COS (48) 26 (0), January 30, 1948; DEFE 4/10, confidential annex to COS (48) 16th meeting, February 2, 1948, PRO.
33. Montgomery, *Memoirs of Field-Marshal Viscount Montgomery* (London: Collins, 1958), 498–502.
34. DEFE 4/29, JO (50) 22 (Final), March 10, 1950; DEFE 6/12, JP (50) 22 Final; DEFE 4/30, COS (50) 46th meeting, March 21, 1950; CAB 131, 8 DO (50) 5th meeting, March 23, 1950, PRO.
35. DEFE 4/29, JP (50) 22 (Final), March 10, 1950, PRO.
36. Alan Ned Sabrosky, "The defence policy of France," in Douglas Murray and Paul Viotti, eds., *The defense policies of nations: a comparative study* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), 230.

- See also Jean-Jacques Servan Schreiber's article on the first anniversary of the NAT, "L'avenir de la coalition atlantique," *Le Monde*, April 5, 1950, 1,3; Julius Holmes to Acheson, February 17, 1950, *FRUS:1950*, III, 21.
37. Générale Pierre Billotte, *Le passé au futur* (Paris, 1979), 33–40.
  38. Georges-Henri Soutou, "La sécurité de la France dans l'après-guerre," in Maurice Vaisse, Pierre Melandri and Frédéric Bozo eds., *La France et l'OTAN* (Paris, 1996), 23–24.
  39. Jacques Frémeaux and André Martel, "French defense policy, 1947–1949," in Olav Riste, ed., *Western security*, 96–97; William Hitchcock, *France restored: Cold War diplomacy and the quest for leadership in Europe, 1944–1954* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 57–58.
  40. Soutou, "La sécurité de la France," 26–28.
  41. *Ibid.*, 32–33.
  42. Bruna Bagnato, "France and the origins of the Atlantic Pact," in Ennio Di Nolfo, ed., *The Atlantic Pact forty years later: a historical reappraisal* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1991), 82.
  43. The potential for such bargaining, though not this instance of it, is explored in Peter Evans, Harold Jacobson, and Robert Putnam, eds., *Double-edged diplomacy: international bargaining and domestic politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993). George Bidault frequently used the threat of the French communist party to warn the British and Americans not to act unilaterally to rehabilitate Germany. See Hitchcock, *France restored*, 74–75.
  44. Bidault reported to the National Committee of the Mouvement Républicain Populaire (MRP) in June 1948 that France's ability to achieve its aims in Germany, however "diametrically opposed" to those of the British and Americans, were dependent on their cooperation. "We cannot direct a policy against the entire world. We must, on the contrary, be present to be able to act and to improve upon the positive gains already achieved. It is important to realize that the opposition, pure and simple, of France will not impede America and England from achieving their objectives in their zones [of occupation]. . . . In order to impress upon our Allies the real and legitimate concerns of France, it is all the more important that our country does not separate itself politically or economically from the camp of liberty." Quoted in Hitchcock, *France restored*, 96.
  45. Michel Martin, *Warriors to managers: the French military establishment since 1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1981), 13–24.
  46. Quoted in Robert Gildea, *The past in French history* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 112.
  47. General André Beaufre, *NATO and Europe*, trans. Joseph Green (New York: Vintage, 1966), 28.
  48. Bagnato, "France and the origins of the Atlantic Pact," 82; Georges-Henri Soutou, "Georges Bidault et la construction européenne, 1944–1954," in Serge Berstein, Jean-Marie Mayeur, and Pierre Milza, eds., *Le MRP et la construction européenne* (Paris, 1993), 197–225.
  49. Robert Frank, *La hantise du déclin. La France, 1920–1960: finances, défense, et identité nationale* (Paris: Belin, 1994).
  50. Martin, *Warriors to managers*, 37–38.
  51. Gabrielle Hecht, *The radiance of France: nuclear power and national identity after World War II* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998).
  52. Maurice Vaisse, "Le choix atomique de la France, 1945–1958" in Vaisse, ed., *La France et l'atome* (Bruxelles: Bruylant, 1994), 43.
  53. "Note on the Atomic Bomb," Pierre Auger to Georges Bidault, 1946, cited in Jacques Hymans, "Reaching for the big one: Oppositional nationalism and the bomb in the French Fourth Republic," unpublished paper, 10–11.
  54. Dominique Mongin, *La bombe atomique française, 1945–1958* (Bruxelles: Bruylant, 1997); Vaisse, "Le choix atomique," 45, and fn. 15. It is interesting to compare the American response to dissent in the atomic scientific community. See Lawrence Wittner, *One world or none: a history of the world nuclear disarmament movement through 1953* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993); Joseph Manzione, " 'Amusing and amazing and practical and military': the legacy of scientific internationalism in American foreign policy, 1945–1963," *Diplomatic History*, 24, 1 (Winter 2000), 21–55.

55. Hymans, "Reaching for the big one," 14–15; Jean-Christophe Sauvage, "La perception des questions nucléaires dans les premières années de l'Institut des Hautes Études de Défense nationale, 1948–1955," in Maurice Vaisse, ed., *La France et l'atome*, 61–63.
56. Wilfrid Kohl, *French nuclear diplomacy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 30; Hymans, "Reaching for the big one," Hecht, *The radiance of France*, 38–39.
57. There are good reasons to abandon the label "isolationist" as a description of U.S. interwar policy, at least until the Neutrality Acts of the mid-1930s. William Appleman Williams argued that while American policy during the 1920s was unilateralist, it had never before been as actively involved in promoting its interests around the world. It was also no more "nationalistic" than any of the other Great Powers who seldom labor under the label of isolationism. Nonetheless, the tendency toward unilateralism was, as I argue throughout this book, a powerful and pervasive one and while it was strongest among those conservatives who, on occasion, even used the word "isolationist" to describe themselves, it surfaced throughout much American internationalism. See William A. Williams, "The legend of isolationism in the 1920s," in Henry Berger, ed., *A William Appleman Williams reader* (Chicago: Ivan Dee, 1992), 75–88.
58. DeConde, "On twentieth-century isolationism," in Alexander DeConde, ed., *Isolation and security* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1957), 24. For a sense of American postwar isolationism, see John Morton Blum, *V was for victory: politics and American culture during World War II* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), 315–16.
59. Lundestad uses this comparison with the "divide-and-rule" habits of past empires to invoke his parenthetical use of the word "empire" when discussing American power in Europe. See "Empire" by integration, 1–2.
60. "During the crucial formative period in the early 1950s," Trachtenberg writes, "everyone wanted a permanent American presence in Europe—everyone, that is, except the Americans themselves. It is hard to understand why the intensity and persistence of America's desire to pull out as soon as she reasonably could has never been recognized, either in the public discussion or in the scholarly literature, because it comes through with unmistakable clarity in the [US] . . . documents." See Marc Trachtenberg, *History and strategy* (Princeton: Princeton University of Press, 1991), 167.
61. George Marshall reflected the fears of many military thinkers when he remarked after the Truman Doctrine speech that, with a growing gap between U.S. commitments and capabilities, Washington was "playing with fire while we have nothing with which to put it out." Kenneth Condit, *The history of the Joint Chiefs of Staff: the Joint Chiefs of Staff and national policy, 1947–1949*, vol. II (Washington: GPO, 1979), 18.
62. On how postwar American military planning emerged during the Second World War, see Melvyn Leffler, "The American conception of national security and the beginnings of the Cold War, 1945–1948," *American Historical Review*, 89 (April 1984).
63. Friedberg, "A history of US strategic 'doctrine,'" 37–71; David Alan Rosenberg, "American atomic strategy and the hydrogen bomb decision," *Journal of American History*, 66, 1 (June 1979), 62–87; Rosenberg, "The origins of overkill: nuclear weapons and American strategy, 1945–1960," *International Security*, 7, 4 (Spring 1983), 3–71; Gregg Herken, *The winning weapon: the atomic bomb in the Cold War, 1945–1950* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980); Philip Bobbitt, Lawrence Freedman, and Gregory Treverton, eds., *U.S. nuclear strategy* (London: Macmillan, 1989); Marc Trachtenberg, "Strategic thought in America, 1952–1966," in Trachtenberg, ed., *History and strategy*, 3–46; Samuel R. Williamson, Jr. and Steven L. Rearden, *The origins of U.S. nuclear strategy, 1945–1953* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993).
64. Critics of Truman's disengagement from atomic weapons issues frequently cite this provision in NSC 30 as evidence of his naiveté. They contrast it with the more strategically sophisticated approach taken by the Eisenhower administration in its 1953 New Look. We see in later chapters, however, that the New Look's NSC 162/2 had exactly the same provision for the use of nuclear weapons.
65. NSC 30, United States policy on atomic warfare, September 10, 1948, *FRUS: 1948*, I, 624–28; memorandum by the Director of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs (Butterworth), September 15,



- 1948, *FRUS:1948*, I, 630–31; George Kennan in the minutes of the 148th meeting of the Policy Planning Staff, October 11, 1949, *FRUS:1949*, I, 402.
66. *Survival in the air age: a report by the President's Air Policy Commission* (Washington: GPO, 1948).
67. Quoted in Michael Sherry, *The rise of American air power: the creation of Armageddon* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 177.
68. Paul Boyer, *By the bomb's early light: American thought and culture at the dawn of the atomic age* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985). Boyer shows the extent to which the cultural reception of atomic energy played on the imaginations of the government. The process was decidedly top-down: in response to the government's adoption of an atomic strategy, Truman officials engaged in a concerted effort in "atomic education," designed to equate atomic energy with "health, happiness and prosperity," not merely at home but overseas as well. One Pentagon official fretted that the public had not fully adjusted to the potential of modern science and that the United States needed to "absorb elementary nuclear science into our folklore as soon as possible." See 291–302.
69. Truman in *Public papers of the Presidents of the United States: Harry S. Truman, 1945* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1961), 381–88, 437; Groves in Gregg Herken, "'A most deadly illusion': the atomic secret and American nuclear weapons policy, 1945–1950," *Pacific Historical Review*, 49 (February 1980), 51–76; Anderson in Shane Maddox, "Defending the American way and containing the atom: ideology and U.S. nuclear proliferation policy since 1945," unpublished mss.
70. This hardening was part of the ill-fated Baruch Plan. Robert Messer, "Acheson, the bomb, and the Cold War," in Douglas Brinkley, ed., *Dean Acheson and the making of U.S. foreign policy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 62.
71. Quoted in Lawrence Freedman, *The evolution of nuclear strategy* (London: Macmillan, 1981, 1983), 48; Walter Lippmann, *U.S. war aims* (Boston: Little Brown, 1944), 147, and Blum, *V was for victory*, 316.
72. Sherry, *The rise of American air power*, 219–300. Sherry offers a rich sociological analysis of the relationship between air power, organizational culture, and wider social values, arguing that the uniquely technological and "professional" dimensions of the air war during the Second World War equipped proponents of air power with a disposition that suited the return to civilian life better than other services. In this respect, not only did air power enthusiasts see themselves as culturally distinct from the other services—in a kind of class sense—their view of military violence as a technological problem rather than a destructive task, was commensurate with the desire to restore American "values" in the aftermath of the war (see Sherry's chap. 8).
73. Paul Hammond, "NSC-68: prologue to rearmament," in Warner Schilling et al., *Strategy, politics and defense budgets* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), 281–82; Hammond, *Super carriers and B-36 bombers: appropriations, strategy and politics* (Inter-University case program # 97, 1963); Richard Hewlett and Francis Duncan, *Nuclear navy, 1946–1962*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974); Paolo Coletta, *The United States navy and defense unification, 1947–1953* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1981); see also Robert Donovan, *Tumultuous years: the presidency of Harry S. Truman, 1949–1953* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1982), chap. 10; House Committee on Armed Services, *The national defense program—unification and strategy*. Hearings, 81st Congress, 1st session, 1949 (Washington: GPO, 1950), 45, 51, 408.
74. It should be noted that the Army advanced an alternative program after 1949. Here too the plan was to push the Air Force into a more discriminate strategic nuclear targeting, and to encourage the idea of using atomic weapons to "retard" the Soviet advance into Western Europe, rather than simply annihilate urban-industrial centers. Trachtenberg, *History and strategy*, 156–58.
75. JSPG 496/1, Joint Outline War Plan BROILER, November 8, 1947, Record Group 218, [henceforth Records of the JCS], CCS 381, USSR (3-2-46), sec. 8, U.S. National Archives [henceforth USNA], Washington, DC; Condit, *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, II, 283–86.
76. Escott Reid, *Time of fear and hope*, 37; John Baylis, "Britain, the Brussels Pact and the continental commitment," 620.

77. Lawrence Kaplan, "An unequal triad: the United States, Western Union, and NATO," in Riste, *Western security*, 109; Forrestal to the National Security Council, April 17, 1948, *FRUS:1948*, I, 563.
78. JCS 447/10, March 29, 1946, RG 165, ABC 471.6, Atom (8-17-45), USNA; see also Leffler, "The American conception of national security," 350-51.
79. See the famous remark by French Premier Henri Queuille that if the U.S. waited until after a Soviet invasion to use atomic weapons, it would be "liberating a corpse." Quoted in Robert Osgood, *NATO: the entangling alliance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), 37. Not all Europeans shared this view. The British COS came to the rather pessimistic conclusion that Britain would have to be prepared to fight a nuclear war, irrespective of the damage it might cause. Clark and Wheeler, *The British origins of nuclear strategy*, 91-111.
80. Jack Snyder, *The myths of empire: domestic politics and international ambition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 286, fn. 150; John Gimbel, *The origins of the Marshall Plan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976).
81. Kennan quoted from October 1947, Hickerson from January 1948 both in John Lewis Gaddis, *The long peace: inquiries into the history of the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 58.
82. Postrevisionists are stuck here between their insistence that the United States was driven by rational security concerns in its Cold War policies, and by a persistent reticence in becoming too involved in Western Europe. The reticence suggests aberrant behavior for a great power, in turn implying that the United States was different in some substantive way.
83. H.W. Brands, *What America owes the world: the struggle for the soul of foreign policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Anders Stephanson, *Manifest destiny: American expansion and the empire of right* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1996).

### **Chapter Three "Disembodied Military Planning": The Political-Economy of Strategy, 1949-50**

1. John Duffield, *Power rules: the evolution of NATO's conventional force posture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 1-150. Duffield's use of alliance theory to understand NATO is laudable. The only problem methodologically is that he uses a "reconstruction" of NATO history to generate theory-testing data without appreciating that the reconstruction is a theory-dependent process. Interpretive variations in the history will simply be replicated in the testing results.
2. Glenn Snyder, "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics," *World Politics*, 36, 4 (July 1984), 461-95; Michael Mandelbaum, *The nuclear revolution: international politics before and after Hiroshima* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 151. The United States reply to WU is in Marshall to Inverchapel, January 20, 1948, *FRUS:1948*, III, 8-9; memorandum by Hickerson, January 21, 1948, *ibid.*, 11-12; memorandum by Lovett, January 27, 1948, *FRUS:1948*, III, 13; Inverchapel to under-secretary of state, Lovett, January 27, 1948, *ibid.*; Lovett to Inverchapel, February 2, 1948, *ibid.*, 17-18; memorandum by Hickerson, February 7, 1948, *ibid.*, 21-22. See also FO 371, 73045, Z 561/273/72/G, Inverchapel-Hickerson meeting, telegram no. 324, January 21, 1948, PRO; Aide-Mémoire, the British embassy to the Department of State, March 11, 1948, and Marshall to Inverchapel, March 12, 1948, *FRUS:1948*, III, 46-48; Truman in Department of State *Bulletin*, March 28, 1948, 418; PPS 27, March 23, 1948, *FRUS:1948*, III, 61-64, NSC 9, April 13, 1948, *ibid.*, 85-88.
3. Minutes of the US-UK-Canada security conversations, March 29, 1948, *FRUS:1948*, III, 69-70.
4. Kennan to Lovett, April 29, 1948, *ibid.*, 108-09; Coordination of U.S.-Western European Military Resources to Counter Soviet Communism, March 19, 1948, JCS Records, CCS 092 Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 1, USNA; "Halfmoon," May 6, 1948, JCS 1844/4, May 19, 1948, CCS 381, USSR (3-2-46), sec. 12; Kenneth Condit, *The history of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, Vol. II, 1947-49 (Washington: GPO, 1979), 288-93; Gregg Herken, *The winning weapon: the atomic*

- bomb in the Cold War, 1945–1950* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 266; Samuel Williamson, Jr. and Steven Rearden, *The origins of U.S. nuclear strategy, 1945–1953* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 85–86.
5. JSPC 877/4, May 15, 1948, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 1, USNA; DEFE 4/13, COS (48) 64th meeting, May 10, 1948, PRO; Clark and Wheeler, *The British origins of nuclear strategy*; John Baylis, *Ambiguity and deterrence: British nuclear strategy, 1945–1964* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).
  6. Memorandum of Conversation, June 26, 1948, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 3, USNA; Caffrey to Marshall, June 29, 1948, *FRUS:1948*, III, 142–43.
  7. PPS 27, March 23, 1948, *FRUS:1948*, III, 61–64; NSC 9, *ibid.*, 85–88; Walter Millis, ed., *The Forrestal Diaries* (New York: Viking Press, 1951), 425; State envisioned no more than \$3 billion would be earmarked for military aid. Steven Rearden, *History of the office of the Secretary of Defense: the formative years, 1947–1950*, I (Washington: GPO, 1984), 462.
  8. Forrestal to the NSC, April 28, 1948, in Rearden, *History of the office of the Secretary of Defense*, 462–63; NSC 14, June 14, 1948, and NSC 14/1, July 1, 1948, *FRUS:1948*, I, 585–88; JSPC 876/4, June 30, 1948, and JCS 1868/11, July 3, 1948, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 3, USNA; NSC 9/4, July 20, 1948, *FRUS:1948*, III, and Gruenther to Hickerson, July 16, 1948, *ibid.*, 188–193.
  9. JSPC 876/4, June 30, 1948 and JCS 1868/11, July 3, 1948, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 3, USNA.
  10. *Ibid.*
  11. Marshall to embassy in the United Kingdom, July 16, 1948, *FRUS:1948*, III, 188; Paul Nitze, Princeton Seminars, October 10–11, 1953, folder 1, Acheson Papers, HSTL; also Dean Acheson, *Present at the creation, my years in the State Department* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1987), 307–08, and Roger Hilsman, “NATO: the developing strategic context,” in Klaus Knorr, *NATO and American security* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), 14. On Congress and the budget, see Edward A. Kolodziej, *The uncommon defense and congress, 1945–1963* (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State Press, 1966), 33–80; and NSC 14/1, July 1, 1948, *FRUS:1948*, I, pt. 2, 585–88.
  12. Third Meeting of the Working Group participating in the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, July 15, 1948, *FRUS:1948*, III; Fourth meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, July 8, 1948, *ibid.*; joint statement of the WU Ministers of Defense, *ibid.*, 125; NSC 9/6, JCS to Forrestal, November 24, 1948, *ibid.*, 289–92; letter, Forrestal to Lovett, December 31, 1948, *ibid.*, 347; JSPC 876/4, June 30, 1948, and JCS 1868/11, July 3, 1948, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 9, USNA; Douglas to Lovett, October 16, 1948; Lovett to Forrestal, October 22, 1948; Forrestal to the JCS, October 28, 1948; JSPC to Gruenther, November 1, 1948, *ibid.*; Lovett to Forrestal, December 23, 1948, appendix to “United States participation in the permanent Western Union Chiefs of Staff Committee,” January 3, 1949, *ibid.*; CAB 131/7, DO (49) 2, January 7, 1949; CAB 131/8, DO (49) 16th meeting, June 21, 1949; DEFE 4/22, COS (49) 86th meeting, June 10, 1949, PRO; JSPC 876/4, June 30, 1948, and JCS 1868/11, July 3, 1948, both in JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 3, USNA. For an example of the importance of securing base rights in exchange for aid, see Forrestal to Lovett, December 31, 1948, *FRUS:1948*, III, 347.
  13. See Glenn Snyder, “The Security Dilemma,” 461–95.
  14. Selig Adler, *The isolationist impulse: the twentieth century reaction* (New York: Free Press, 1957), 349; Joan Bryniarski, “Against the tide: Senate opposition to the internationalist policies of Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman,” (Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland, 1972), 246; Vursell in *Congressional record*, 80th Congress, 2nd session, January 1948, 119. I thank Erin Black for these sources.
  15. Révers believed that a force of some 30 to 35 divisions would “guarantee immediate security,” “permit the development of US strategic air action,” and “provide the time needed for the arrival of reinforcements.” This force should be in place by 1952. A much larger force, in the range of 100 divisions, would eventually be required to launch a ground-based counteroffensive

- into the Soviet Union. This “complete solution of the conflict between the two blocks” was not something that needed to be discussed initially, but France could promise 23 divisions by April 1, 1952, and a total of 30 by the same time in 1954. General Révers to Bradley, March 25, 1949, “Conceptions stratégiques d’ensemble,” Aide Mémoire no. 2, March 28, 1949, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 18, USNA. The *IHEDN* quoted in Bagnato, “France and the origins of the Atlantic Pact,” 107. See also Pierre Guillen, “France and the Defence of Western Europe: From the Brussels Pact (March 1948) to the Plevin Plan (October 1950),” in Norbert Wiggershaus and Roland G. Foerster, eds., *The Western security community, 1948–1950: common problems and conflicting national interests during the foundation phase of the North Atlantic Alliance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 130–31.
16. Bagnato “France and the origins of the Atlantic Pact.”
  17. Lawrence S. Kaplan, *NATO and the United States: the enduring alliance* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1988), 26; MAP D-G/7, July 1, 1949, *FRUS: 1949*, I, 347–48; see also MAP D-D/2, *ibid.*, 358 and MAP D-F/1, *ibid.*, 360.
  18. Princeton Seminars, October 10–11, 1953 File, folder 2, July 22–December 1953, box 75, Acheson Papers, HSTL.
  19. “Realistic” in this discourse meant pessimism about the Soviet military threat, not optimism about the ability of NATO to match that threat. Princeton Seminars, October 10–11, 1953, Folder 1, Princeton Seminars, July 22–December 19, 1953.
  20. Princeton Seminars, October 10–11, 1953, Folder 1, July 22–December 19, 1953, HSTL.
  21. “Disembodied military planning” from Harold Sprout in *ibid.*, folder 2. Acheson in *ibid.*, folder 1.
  22. Acheson in *ibid.*, folder 1.
  23. *Wall Street Journal*, July 25, 1949.
  24. Robert LaFollette, Jr., “America must raise a standard,” *The Progressive*, June 11, 1945, 1–2; *Chicago Tribune*, February 15, 1949; Robert Taft told the Toledo United Nations Association that he opposed military aid to Europe, but favored “a declaration by the United States, in the nature of the Monroe Doctrine, that if Russia attacks Western Europe, she will find herself at war with us.” Quoted in Erin Black, “‘Isolationist’ subtexts: reappraising America’s foreign policy, 1945–1949,” (M.A. diss., University of Western Ontario, 2001), 71.
  25. JLPC 414/12, December 7, 1948, and related files JCS 1868/13/16 and 29, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 12, USNA.
  26. FACC D-3, February 7, 1949, *FRUS: 1949*, I, 250–57; SANA 6333, Rusk to Acheson, March 16, 1949, *ibid.*, 257–67, and annex 2, SANACC 360/11, Report by the SANACC Subcommittee for Rearmament, August 18, 1948. Emphasis added.
  27. Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that he favored using “everyone who is willing to help us—Spain, the Germans and to a limited degree the Japanese.” France was a problem until it had “cleaned house,” meaning, expunged its air force of Communists. That France was a democracy made it less militarily reliable for U.S. bases than fascist Spain. See Memorandum of conversation, August 17, 1950, U.S. Congress, 1951–52 folder, TCC, box 275, Harriman Papers, LC.
  28. Overriding state objections, the FACC claimed that the United States should seek to satisfy its base requirements bilaterally “prior to the extension of military assistance.” The FACC also pointed out that military facilities that, for political reasons in the host country, might not be provided bilaterally could be available to U.S. forces through the host’s contribution to the NAT. “In this manner, the security interests of the United States will be protected and improved.” Johnson to Acheson, May 19, 1949, *FRUS: 1949*, I, 300–02; and memorandum Butler, May 31, 1949, *ibid.*, 325; Lovett to Forrestal, January 17, 1949, *FRUS: 1949*, IV, 37–39; MAP D-G/14, May 20, 1949, *FRUS: 1949*, I, 311–12; Rearden, *History of the office of the Secretary of Defence*, 499.
  29. MAP D-D/2, July 19, 1949, *FRUS: 1949*, I, 358–59; meeting of the European Correlation Committee, March 25, 1949, *FRUS: 1949*, IV, 244–48; Reply of the U.S. Government, dated April 5, 1949, April 6, 1949, *ibid.*, 287–88; “Relationship of the Military Assistance Program to US strategic interests,” July 1, 1949, *FRUS: 1949*, I, 347–48.

30. JSPC 877/59, Brief of Joint Outline Emergency War Plan (OFFTACKLE), May 26, 1949 in Etzold and Gaddis, *Containment*, 324–34. A revised version can be found on August 2, 1949, JCS Records, USSR (3–2–46), sec.36, USNA. See also, Condit, *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, II, 294–302; Bradley and Clay Blair, *A general's life* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 499–501.
31. JSPC 876/38, September 7, 1949, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 27, and JSPC 876/42, September 19, 1949, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 27, USNA. The basic points of JSPC 876/42 were approved in JCS 1868/112, September 20, 1949.
32. JCS 1868/130, October 11, 1949, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 31, USNA. The August version is mentioned in minutes of meeting between the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Lord Tedder representing the British Chiefs of Staff, October 5, 1949, JCS Records, CCS 337 (7–22–48), sec. 1, USNA.
33. The original draft, as enclosed in Memorandum for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, “Tentative draft-strategic concept for the defense of the North Atlantic area,” October 7, 1949, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 31, USNA, read: “Insure, as a matter of first priority to the common defense, our ability to deliver the atomic bomb promptly.” The army insisted on deleting the word “first,” while the navy tried to remove the offending clause altogether. See “Navy position on JCS 1868/130,” n.d., and memorandum by the Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, n.d., JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 31.
34. The JCS argued that because of its highly political nature and need for widespread consideration “the concept must be general enough not to compromise classified war plans.” JCS 1868/30, enclosure “B,” JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 31, USNA.
35. Minutes of meeting between United States Joint Chiefs of Staff and Lord Tedder representing the British Chiefs of Staff, October 5, 1949, CCS 337 (7–22–48), sec. 1, *ibid.*, The British version is identical. See DEFE 5/17, COS (49) 344, October 13, 1949, PRO.
36. Rearden, *History of the office of the Secretary of Defense*, 487; JSPC 876/60, November 18, 1949, RG 218, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 35, USNA. See appendices to enclosure “B” for submissions from NAT members. The Standing Group approved the strategic concept on October 18, 1949. JCS 2073, October 18, 1949, *ibid.*, sec. 32. It would not be until May 1950 that the concept of balanced collective forces was accepted with promises from Acheson that no one would be left unprotected by NATO. See Acheson, *Present at the creation*, 398–99.
37. RDC 5/123, November 3, 1949, and JSPC 876/59, November 15, 1949, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 34; Department of State Comments on JIC 479/10 [JIC 479/2] in JIC 479/11, n.d., JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec.40, USNA.
38. For Congress, the administration was anxious not to produce the impression that military assistance would involve a long investment. See Robert Osgood, *NATO: the entangling alliance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), 42–43; Acheson, *Present at the creation*, 353. Acheson later recalled that the strategic concept was a simple document “that just said, ‘Defend Europe, don’t defend Africa, (defend) Europe.’” He also believed that the strategic concept “really meant nothing.” Princeton Seminars, October 10–11, 1953, folder 1, Acheson Papers, HSTL.
39. Faure in Pierre Melandri, “France and the Atlantic Alliance, 1950–1953: between Great Power policy and European integration,” in Riste, ed., *Western security*, 271.
40. Bradley to Gruenther, May 5, 1950, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 46, USNA. JSPC, PM-987, memorandum for Gen. Schuyler, Adm. Ingersoll and Gen. Smith, November 22, 1949, *ibid.*, sec. 35, emphasis in original; also in PM-997, December 7, 1949, *ibid.*, sec. 37, and JIC 479/10, January 12, 1950, *ibid.*, sec. 39. See also JCS to the US representative on the Standing Group, North Atlantic Treaty Military Committee, December 30, 1949, *ibid.*, sec. 39. These views of the MTDP’s guidelines are supported by British records. See JP (49) 151 (Final), annex, DEFE 6/11, PRO. The British Joint Services Mission in Washington contended that the United States chose July 1954 “in order to postpone awkward discussion regarding their commitments in Europe in the immediate future.” The British felt that having a target date for

- the outbreak of war was “alarmist,” but they conceded it held advantages in terms of generating “some sense of urgency to planning.” JP (49) 149 (Final), November 21, 1949, DEFE 6/11, PRO.
41. Memorandum for the Director, Joint Staff, January 24, 1950, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 40; Memorandum for General Norstad, Admiral Struble and General Gruenther, February 6, 1950, sec.41, USNA.
  42. Nitze and Acheson in the Princeton Seminars, October 10–11, 1953, folder 1, Acheson Papers, HSTL.
  43. Crittenger to Adm. Davis, March 3, 1950, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 42; JCS 2073/8, North Atlantic Treaty Organization Medium Term Defense Plan, July 1, 1954, Parts I and III (SG 20/2), March 15, 1950, sec. 43; JSPC 876/102, March 10, 1950, sec. 43, USNA. Roger Hilsman claims that the division totals for Western Europe were determined by each regional group simply applying rules of thumb from “World War II” models: “so many troops for each mile of front to be covered in the main approaches; so many more to screen the intervening areas; and so many more to provide a reserve of roughly one third of the total.” Hilsman, “On NATO strategy,” in Arnold Wolfers, ed., *Alliance policy in the Cold War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1959), 149.
  44. Communiqué of the Military Committee of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, March 28, 1950, *FRUS:1950*, III, 35.
  45. This view was not shared by the alliance’s Finance Ministers who, in the meetings of the Defense Financial and Economic Committee presented what Harriman thought to be “socialistically inclined” arguments for more social and less military security. Memorandum, Joint Strategic Planning Group to Admiral Davis, April 4, 1950, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 44, USNA. This interpretation of the meeting at The Hague was later disputed by Harriman, who claimed to have been “shouting my head off to everybody” about the lack of civilian control over military planning in NATO during this time. See the Princeton Seminars, October 10–11, 1953, Acheson Papers, HSTL.
  46. JCS 2073/16, April 26, 1950, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 45; message, JCS to CINCEUR, CINCELM, CINCAFE, CINCLANT, U.S. Representative on the Standing Group, and Director of the Joint Military Advisory Group, Europe, April 28, 1950, CCS 337 (7-22-48), sec. 2, USNA.
  47. Bradley to Gruenther, May 5, 1950, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 46; JSPC 876/134, June 5, 1950, sec. 48; JAMAG 576P (CM-IN-3123, May 50), May 18, 1950 and JAMAG 610P (CM-IN-4225, May 50), May 26, 1950.
  48. Memorandum for the Director, Joint Staff, January 24, 1950, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 40; memorandum for General Norstad, Admiral Struble and General Gruenther, February 6, 1950, sec.41; JCS 2073/157, May 22, 1951, sec. 81; JCS 2073/201, September 7, 1951, sec. 93, USNA. See also Duffield, *Power rules*, 48, 52, 60, 61.
  49. There was a brief period in which the Soviet threat was dramatically reassessed in Europe, but by mid-1951, many allies settled in the belief that the war in Korea was not a prelude to a general Soviet invasion of Western Europe. See Duffield, *Power rules*, 58.
  50. Meeting between the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the French Chiefs of Staff, July 6, 1950, JCS Records, CCS 337 (6-15-50), USNA, emphasis added.
  51. On the rhetorical character of NSC 68, postrevisionist John Gaddis and post-structuralist David Campbell agree. See Gaddis, *Strategies of containment*, 107; Campbell, *Writing security*, 25–26.
  52. NSC 68, April 14, 1950, *FRUS: 1950*, I, 403.
  53. Acheson in Princeton Seminars, October 10–11, 1953, Acheson Papers, HSTL.
  54. NSC 68, 264–65, 282, 277.
  55. NSC 68, 256–58, 286.
  56. Harmon Report in Herken, *The Winning weapon*, 293–96; David Rosenberg, “American Atomic Strategy and the Hydrogen Bomb Decision,” *Journal of American History* (May 1979), 71–75. For the original, see JCS 1953/1, Harmon Report, May 12, 1949, JCS Records, CCS 373 (10-23-48), USNA.

57. Memorandum by the Bureau of the Budget, May 8, 1950, *FRUS: 1950*, I, 298–306.
58. House Committee on Appropriations, *The supplemental appropriations bill for 1951*, hearings, 81st Congress, 2nd session (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1950), 20. Bradley's position is generally taken in the literature to be consistent with NSC 68's comprehensive containment, and inconsistent with its New Look successor, Massive Retaliation. The degree of continuity between strategic programs is explored in later chapters, but one is struck here by Bradley's use of the concepts of "flexibility of military power" and "highly mobile standing force which we can bring to bear at any threatened point." Both were central to the New Look.
59. Vandenberg in Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees, *The military situation on the Far East*, hearings, 82nd Congress, 1st session (Washington: GPO, 1951), 1379. Air force in Walter Poole, *The history of the Joint Chiefs of Staff: the Joint Chiefs of Staff and national policy, volume IV, 1950–1952* (Washington: GPO, 1980), 172–72, emphasis in the original. See also Hammond, "NSC-68," 358–59.
60. NSC 73, July 1, 1950, *FRUS: 1950*, I, 333, 336–37; NSC 73/4, August 25, 1950, *ibid.*, 375–90; CIA Intelligence Memorandum no. 322, August 21, 1950, in NSC/CIA (5–11) Intelligence Memoranda, 1950–1951, Central Intelligence Agency File, Records of the National Security Council (Special Evaluations—ORE), box 2, HSTL.
61. Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, to the JCS, Guidance to NATO Representatives on Medium-Term Plan, September 5, 1950, JCS 2073/63, September 11, 1950, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 55, USNA; REAPER, November 29, 1950, in Poole, *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, IV, 170–71.
62. McCloy to Acheson, August 4, 1950, *FRUS: 1950*, IV, 704; Bruce to Acheson, September 1, 1950, *FRUS: 1950*, III, 1384; Bohlen to Acheson, July 13, 1950, *FRUS: 1950*, I, 342–44. Truman in Lawrence Kaplan, *A community of interests: NATO and the military assistance program, 1948–1951* (Washington: GPO, 1980), 101.
63. Anonymous [Dean Acheson], "The balance of military power," *Atlantic Monthly*, June 1951, 22. It was a view iterated subsequently in private discussions among former Truman officials. See Edward Barrett's account from 1953: "with regard to NSC 68—thank God Korea came along." Princeton Seminars, October 10–11, 1953, Acheson Papers, HSTL.
64. JCS 2073/41, July 12, 1950, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 50, USNA.
65. JCS to the Secretary of Defense, n.d. [July 12, 1950], JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 50, USNA.
66. See Lincoln Gordon, "Economic Aspects of Coalition Diplomacy—the NATO Experience," *International Organization*, 10 (November 1956), 530; Lt-Commander Ralph Williams, Jr., "National Security and Military Policy," *United States Naval Institute Proceedings*, 77, 3 (March 1951), 235–36.
67. Huntington, *The common defense: strategic programs in national politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 342–43; Paul Hammond, *Organizing for defense: the american military establishment in the twentieth century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), 250; Maxwell Taylor, *The uncertain trumpet* (New York: Harper, 1959), 45; M.J. Armitage and R.A. Mason, *Air power in the nuclear age* (London: Macmillan, 1983), 44; Christopher M. Gacek, *The logic of force: the dilemma of limited war in American foreign policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 124–57.
68. André Beaufre, *NATO and Europe*, trans. Joseph Green (New York: Vintage, 1966), 28.
69. Douglas to Acheson, April 11, 1950; Douglas to Acheson, May 18, 1950, Memoranda of conversation, 1950, box 65, Acheson Papers, HSTL.
70. Princeton Seminars, October 10–11, 1953, folder 2, Acheson Papers, HSTL.
71. Meeting Between the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the French Chiefs of Staff on Board the *Sequoia*, 6 July 1950, JCS Records, CCS 337 (6–15–50), USNA; memorandum by Acheson, July 14, 1950, *FRUS: 1950*, I, 345; Acheson to Certain Diplomatic Offices, July 22, 1950, *FRUS: 1950*, III, 138–41; Spofford to Acheson, July 29, 1950, *ibid.*, 162; Acheson from Discussions with Congressional Leaders, August 10, 1950, *ibid.*, 164.

72. Peter Boyle, "Britain, America and the transition from economic to military assistance, 1948–1951," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 22, 3 (July 1987), 533, 528; Geoffrey Warner, "The British Labour Government and the Atlantic Alliance, 1949–1951," in Riste, ed., *Western security*, 259–60.
73. Acheson to Spofford, July 21, 1950, *FRUS: 1950*, III, 228–30; Spofford to Acheson, August 22, 1950, *ibid.*, 232; Spofford to Acheson, August 24, 1950, *ibid.*, 241–44.
74. Chief of Staff, U.S. Army to the JCS, May 1, 1950, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 45.
75. Johnson in JCS 2073/55, August 14, 1950, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 53; JCS reply in JCS 1073/58, August 16, 1950, sec. 54, USNA.
76. JCS 2973/577, August 16, 1950, encl. draft memorandum approved by the JCS on August 17, 1950, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 54 (emphasis in original).
77. JCS 2124, May 2, 1950, and JCS 1868/190, June 21, 1950, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 49.
78. The Service Secretaries to the Secretary of Defense, August 17, 1950, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 55.
79. Future Chairman of the JCS, Admiral Arthur Radford later commented that under Eisenhower American military planners made an explicit link between German rearmament and the reduction of U.S. forces on the ground in Europe. When Truman made the commitment to send four divisions to Europe in the autumn of 1950, Radford's understanding was that it was always a "temporary arrangement" that would change as German troops came into being. Arthur Radford Oral History, John Foster Dulles Papers, Seeley Mudd Library, Princeton, New Jersey.
80. The air force believed that the prompt U.S. response in Korea would serve as a sufficient indication of "the US intention to meet its obligations to NATO." JCS 2073/41, July 12, 1950, sec. 50.
81. McCloy to Acheson, August 3, 1950, *FRUS: 1950*, III, 180–82, responses from Douglas, August 8, 1950, *ibid.*, 190–92, and Bruce, August 9, 1950, *ibid.*, 194–95.
82. Acheson, *Present at the creation*, 437–38, 440.
83. Poole, *History of the JCS*, IV, 212; memorandum of conversation with Marshall, October 27, 1950, Acheson Papers, Memoranda of Conversation, 1950, October 1950 File, HSTL; minutes of US–UK political–military conversations, October 26, 1950, *FRUS: 1950*, III, 1689–90; Bohlen to Acheson, October 15, 1950, *ibid.*, 380.
84. Princeton Seminars, December 11–13, 1953, folder 1, Acheson Papers, HSTL.
85. Nitze, Princeton Seminars, Acheson Papers, July 22–December 19, 1953, box 75. Acheson here claimed that the State Department's support for the EDC was designed to break open the military aid process that risked being blocked at home because of Europe's foot-dragging on rearmament. Sometime in the summer of 1951, he came to see that if the United States went "over-board for the EDC," it would "have unlocked a lot of doors in Paris, Bonn, and Washington."
86. JSPC 876/200, October 7, 1950, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 59, and JCS 2073/81 (report on Medium Term Defense Plan), October 17, 1950, sec. 60, USNA.
87. Poole, *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, IV, 171.
88. Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense, December 4, 1950, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 63, USNA.
89. Clark and Wheeler, *The British origins of nuclear strategy*, 139.
90. Memorandum of conversation, December 7, 1950, Acheson Papers, Memoranda of Conversation, 1950, December 1950 folder, HSTL, also found in *FRUS: 1950*, III, 1758–61. The Truman–Attlee conversations in *ibid.*, 1706–88.
91. CAB 128/18, CM (50) 87th conclusions, December 18, 1950, and CAB 129/44, CP (51) 16, Memorandum by the COS, January 12, 1951, PRO; Memorandum of conversation with Oliver Franks, January 3, 1951, Acheson Papers, memoranda of conversation, 1951, January 1951 folder,



- HSTL; Alec Cairncross, *Years of recovery: British economic policy, 1945–1951* (London: Methuen, 1985), 218–22; Boyle, “The transition from economic to military assistance,” 534.
92. US Delegation Min-1, December 18, 1950, *FRUS: 1950*, III, 585–95; U.S. Delegation Min-2, December 19, 1950, *ibid.*, 595–604; MC 30, November 18, 1950, Marshall to Assistant Secretary of Defense, Burns, December 5, 1950, *ibid.*, 517–18, and revised as D/MC-D/2, December 12, 1950, *ibid.*, 538–47; and C5-D/11 Final, September 26, 1950, *ibid.*, 350–52. See the Brussels communiqué, *NATO final communiqués*, 61–62.
93. Claxton “heard Americans urge representatives of European countries to agree to put in figures that were quite unrealistic in order to show Congress what a big contribution the European countries were making.” Claxton’s quoted in James Eayrs, *In defence of Canada: growing up allied* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 275–76. See also a memorandum for Truman for his talks with Pleven in January, 1951, in which he was urged to say: “As for US financial support, if you speed up the French production program and can show a greater need for dollars, we are prepared to consider a greater amount of assistance, over and above the amount which we have already discussed.” Memorandum, PSF, Subject File, Conferences, January 1951–February 1952, Truman–Pleven talks, January 29–30, 1951, HSTL.

## **Chapter Four Mind the Gap: The Paper Divisions and Cardboard Wings of the Lisbon Force Goals**

1. He later wrote to then secretary of defense, Robert Lovett, that “the task of making Europe both secure and economically sound must, *in the long run, devolve upon the Europeans*; the United States cannot build a Roman wall around all parts of the world in which American interests might be both deep and lasting.” Eisenhower to Marshall, December 12, 1950, Eisenhower Pre-Presidential Papers, box 80, Marshall File, folder 3; Eisenhower to Truman, December 16, 1950, *ibid.*, box 116, Truman file, folder 2; and Eisenhower to Lovett, September 25, 1951, *ibid.*, box 72, Lovett file, folder 2, DDEL.
2. Phil Williams, *The Senate and U.S. troops in Europe* (New York: St. Martin’s, 1985), 43.
3. David R. Kepley, “The Senate and the Great Debate of 1951,” *Prologue*, 14 (Winter 1982), 215; Robert Donovan, *Tumultuous years: the presidency of Harry S. Truman, 1949–1953* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1982), 296–98.
4. Acheson in testimony before the U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and Committee on the Armed Services, *Assignment of Ground Forces of the United States to Duty in the European Area* (henceforth *Assignment of Ground Forces*), hearings, 82nd Congress, 1st session (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1951), 114.
5. *Congressional Record*, *ibid.*, 60; Williams, *The Senate and U.S. troops* (Washington, DC: Government Publications Office, 1957), 49.
6. *Congressional Record*, *ibid.*, 58.
7. Statement by Robert A. Taft (ca. May–June, 1951), Hebert Hoover Papers, Post-Presidential files, Taft file, box 233, HHPL, West Branch, Iowa.
8. Ted Galen Carpenter, “United States’ NATO policy at the crossroads: the ‘Great Debate’ of 1950–1951,” *The International History Review*, 8, 3 (August 1986), 400–01.
9. Paper by Lindsay Rogers for the Council on Foreign Relations Study Group on Aid to Europe, n.d., Eisenhower Pre-Presidential Papers, Box 28, Council on Foreign Relations file, folder 1, DDEL. This view is also supported by Samuel Huntington, *The soldier and the state: the theory and politics of civil-military relations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957), 384–86.
10. Acheson’s testimony in *Assignment of Ground Forces*, 10, 19; “Unity of purpose urged for security of North Atlantic area,” Report of General Eisenhower, SACEUR, to members of Congress, U.S. Department of State, *Bulletin*, vol. 24, no. 606 (February 12, 1951), 246; “Notes on a meeting at the White House,” January 31, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, III, 457.
11. In an April meeting with Belgian Prime Minister Joseph Pholien, Acheson left open the possibility of the United States sending more troops to Europe should the Europeans meet their

- obligations, something that would have undermined the rationale for sending more troops. Memorandum of conversation with Pholien, April 9, 1951, memoranda of conversation, 1951 file, April 1951 folder, Acheson Papers, HSTL.
12. Acheson's testimony in *Assignment of Ground Forces*, 10, 13, 18. The figure of 60 divisions was offered by Taft in his testimony on page 643. Eisenhower in "Notes on a meeting at the White House," January 31, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, III, pt. 1, 455. Churchill, in late 1950, called for a 60–70 division European army. See C.C. Walton, "Background for the European Defense Community," *Political Science Quarterly*, 68, 1 (March 1953), 52.
  13. The pamphlet also blamed British socialists for preventing the admission of Spain to NATO, which would have brought 21 divisions to Eisenhower's army. *Headlines and what's behind them*, vol. 3, no. 5, April 1, 1951, Hoover Papers, Post-Presidential files, Foreign Policy files, box 161, HHPL.
  14. General Bonner Fellers, "The present American setting," April 15, 1951, Hoover Papers, Post-Presidential files, Douglas MacArthur files, box 129, HHPL. Senator James Kem of Missouri argued that "our allies cannot expect continuing assistance from the American people when they show no willingness to defend themselves." Quoted in *The New York World Telegram and Sun*, December 30, 1950.
  15. *The Chicago Tribune*, February 12, 1951; "Internationalist" from Senator William Jenner in *The Chicago Tribune*, December 20, 1950, 18; William Randolph Hearst, "A tragic unity," *Los Angeles Examiner*, January 2, 1951.
  16. Joseph McCarthy to Herbert Hoover, March 12, 1951, Hoover Papers, Post-Presidential files, Joseph McCarthy files, box 131, HHPL.
  17. Anonymous letter to Senator "Higgenlufer," February 20, 1951, Hickenlooper Papers, Foreign Relations Committee folder, box 1, Acheson file, HHPL.
  18. Hoover to Knowland, October 25, 1952, Hoover Papers, Post-Presidential files, William Knowland files, box 115, HHPL.
  19. Blanche Dyer Ballagh to Herbert Hoover, April 19, 1951, Hoover Papers, Post-Presidential files, Firing of MacArthur files, box 214, HHPL.
  20. Bluford Balter to George C. Marshall, May 7, 1951, *ibid.* Emphasis in original.
  21. Bonner Fellers, "The present American setting," April 15, 1951, Hoover Papers, Post-Presidential files, Douglas MacArthur files, box 129 (emphasis added); Palmer to Hoover, February 10, 1951, Hoover Papers, Post-Presidential files, William Knowland files, box 114, HHPL. Paul Palmer suggested that USAF General George Kenney, Strategic Air Command (SAC) Commander Curtis LeMay and civilian air exponent Alexander De Seversky would be excellent witnesses for the Taft–Hoover strategy. Dulles rejected Hoover's call for an "American Gibraltar," warning that isolationism was akin to "crawling back into our own hole in a vain hope of defending ourselves against the rest of the world." Yet, Dulles also warned against fighting a "series of Koreas throughout the world," and called containment a "futile" "static defense." *The New York World Telegram and Sun*, December 30, 1950.
  22. Hoover press release, July 9, 1952, Hoover Papers, Post-Presidential files, Robert A. Taft files, box 233, HHPL.
  23. Acheson, "The Joint Defense of Western Europe," U.S. Department of State, *Bulletin*, 24, 608 (February 26, 1951), 324; *Assignment of Ground Forces*, 79.
  24. Robert Osgood, *The entangling alliance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), 79.
  25. Robert Jervis, "The impact of the Korean War on the Cold War," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 24 (December 1980), 570.
  26. George Graham, Joseph Johnson and Averell Harriman in the Princeton Seminars, July 22–December 1953, Box 75, October 10–11, 1953 file, folder 2, Acheson Papers, HSTL.
  27. JCS to the Secretary of Defense, in JCS 2073/115, Report by the JSSC to the JCS, January 25, 1951, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 67, USNA. This view was included into the position papers prepared for Truman in his meetings with Plevon on January 29 and 30. These papers argued that Truman should tell Plevon that since the American bomb had not deterred aggression in Korea, it might not in Europe either. See Memorandum for the

- President, PSF subject file, conferences—January 1951–February 1952, Truman–Pleven talks, January 29–30, 1951, background material, HSTL.
28. Memorandum of State–Joint Chiefs of Staff meeting, January 24, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, I, 33–7.
  29. Samuel Wells, “The origins of massive retaliation,” *Political Science Quarterly*, 96, 1 (Spring 1981), 49–50.
  30. Eisenhower wrote to Harriman concerned that the administration had given Congress the impression that the U.S. commitment would “never exceed six” divisions. “Now, I do not mean to say that, as of this moment, such an assertion can be proved wrong. But I do most earnestly believe that *no one can prove it to be correct*, and certainly the psychological effect of stating this in unequivocal language might prove harmful.” Eisenhower to Harriman, March 8, 1951, Eisenhower Pre–Presidential Papers, Box 55, Harriman file, folder 4, DDEL. Eisenhower told the cabinet that he hoped the U.S. might commit 10–12 divisions to NATO. “Notes on a meeting at the White House,” January 31, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, III, pt. 1, 455.
  31. Acheson, *Present at the creation*, 488. As Walter Lippmann wrote, “Mister Truman’s troubles with Congress are self-induced. The whole question of his rights and powers would never have been raised had he exercised his rights and powers with tact, with discretion, and with a broader understanding of what is involved,” in Williams, *The Senate and U.S. troops*, 49; Ronald Steel, *Walter Lippmann and the American century* (New York: Vintage, 1981), 475; Justus D. Doenecke, *Not to the swift: the old isolationists in the Cold War era* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 1979), 204.
  32. *FRUS: 1950*, I, 484, and Memorandum of understanding between the Departments of State and Defense and the Economic Cooperation Administration, February 15, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, III, pt. 1, 47; FM D A–2/1, May 3, 1950, *FRUS: 1950*, III, pt. 1, 86; Hogan, *The Marshall Plan*, 388; Richard Stebbins, *The United States in World Affairs, 1951* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1952), 233–36.
  33. Ernest Bloch, “European rearmament and United States foreign aid,” *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 32, 1 (November 1950), 342.
  34. Robert Joyce to Nitze, February 2, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, I, 42–44; ORE 91–49, April 6, 1950, Central Intelligence Reports—ORE 1949, no. 90–100 folder, PSF, Intelligence file, Central Intelligence Reports, 1949, 1950, HSTL. This CIA report was attacked by the military as “dangerous as an intelligence basis for national policy.” See the appendices for their positions.
  35. JIC 479/2, November 18, 1949, appendix A, brief for the use of the U.S. member of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Intelligence, Standing Group, NATO, in CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 35, and JIC 558/80, December 28, 1951, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 112, USNA.
  36. Drew Middleton, *The defense of Western Europe* (New York: Appleton–Century–Crofts, 1952), 96. These numbers are not entirely comparable, since much of the extra manpower of an American division often came from elaborate support staff rather than combat forces.
  37. JP (51) 33 (Final), May 17, 1951, DEFE 6/16, PRO.NSCB study in NSC 100, January 11, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, I, 15; William P. Mako, *U.S. ground forces and the defense of Central Europe* (Washington: Brookings, 1983), 113; Hilsman, “NATO’s developing strategic context,” in Klaus Knorr, ed., *NATO and American security* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), 16, and “On NATO strategy,” in Arnold Wolfers, ed., *Alliance policy in the Cold War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1959), 149.
  38. Policy Planning Staff memorandum, September 22, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, I, 172–75.
  39. Director of Intelligence, USAF, Appendix D to ORE 91–49, April 6, 1950, PSF, Intelligence File, Central Intelligence Reports, 1949, 1950, Central Intelligence Reports—ORE 1949, no. 90–100 folder, HSTL.
  40. Steven Kull has shown American defense intellectuals deliberately favor Manichean views of the U.S.–Soviet relationship to cope with the mutuality of the threat, a mutuality that would have denied the “moral correctness of the American response to the Soviet threat and thus would remove the moral justification for American strategic war plans.” See Steven Kull, *Minds at war: nuclear reality and the inner conflicts of defense policymakers* (New York: Basic Books, 1988).

41. Richard Ned Lebow, "Deterrence: A Political and Psychological Critique," in Paul Stern, Robert Axelrod, Robert Jervis, and Roy Radner, eds., *Perspectives on deterrence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 25–51; Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Stein, "Beyond Deterrence," *Journal of Social Issues*, 43, 4 (1987), 5–71.
42. JSPC 876/200, October 7, 1950, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 59, USNA, and JCS 2073/81, *ibid.*, sec. 60.
43. JP (51) 33 (Final), May 17, 1951, DEFE 6/16, PRO.
44. Hastings Lionel, *Lord Ismay, NATO: the first five years* (Paris, s.n., 1954), 110. The United States had 1.46 million military personnel on active duty in 1950. The total increased to 3.25 million, with 1.5 million in the army, by 1951. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Historical statistics of the United States* (Washington: GPO, 1975).
45. JCS 2073/140, March 27, 1951, JCS Records, CCS 092 Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 75, USNA.
46. DUSM-83-51, Wright to JCS, February 12, 1951, *ibid.*, sec. 70.
47. JCS 2073/117, JCS to Wright, March 5, 1951, *ibid.*, sec. 68.
48. JCS 2073/140, March 27, 1951, *ibid.*, sec. 75.
49. Watson, *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, V, 93.
50. Poole, *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, IV, 171. The "neutralization" of Britain had, however, been anticipated by the U.S. Joint Intelligence Group as early as 1948. See Trachtenberg, *History and strategy*, 121, fn. 72.
51. NSC 100, January 11, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, I, 7–18; Herken, *The winning weapon*, 334–36.
52. Trachtenberg, *History and strategy*, 157–58; Rosenberg, "Origins of overkill," 128–31; Poole, *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, IV, 163–66.
53. Memorandum by Tracy Voorhees, June 19, 1950, and an interview with Vandenberg on May 9, 1950, to which Voorhees was responding, in the Gruenther Papers, NATO Series, Top Secret Correspondence File, folder 1, DDEL. See also a discussion of the study in DDE Pre-Presidential Papers, Name Series, Collins File, folder 3, *ibid.*, April 19, 1950.
54. Poole, *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, IV, 98–99, fn. 36. Poole's figures differ slightly from those in Vandenberg's papers. See Vandenberg Papers, Subject File, Memos Re 138 Wings, box 83, Library of Congress (henceforth LC). On the decline of tactical air power in U.S. air force thinking after the Second World War, see David MacIsaac, "Voices from the central blue: the air power theorists," in *Makers of modern strategy from Machiavelli to the nuclear age* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 643.
55. Poole, *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, 168–70. LeMay reportedly distrusted "foreigners" and wanted to have SAC's ring of overseas bases replaced by a fleet of intercontinental bombers as soon as possible. See Fred Kaplan, *The wizards of Armageddon* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 93.
56. "Relationship of the Strategic Air Command to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization," April 20, 1951, JCS Records, Chairman's File (Bradley), CJCS 092.2, North Atlantic Treaty, January–May 10, 1951, USNA.
57. The USAF established informal links between SAC and Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers, Europe (SHAPE) urging that retardation targets wanted by Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR) be included in SAC's annexes. In practice these targets were previously approved by the JCS. Neither SACEUR nor U.S. European Command (EUCOM) had independent authority over targeting. Wright to Vandenberg, April 16, 1951, Redline Messages; Vandenberg to Norstad and LeMay, August 23, 1951, Vandenberg Papers; Security File, Redline Msgs, June–October 1951, and Norstad to Vandenberg and LeMay, September 27, 1951, same file, June 1951 to October 1951, box 86, LC.
58. Memorandum for the Director of the Joint Staff, September 25, 1951, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 95, USNA.
59. Minutes of a meeting of the president with Eisenhower, November 5, 1951, PSF, General File, Eisenhower, folder 1, HSTL; Wright to the JCS, October 2, 1951, JCS 2073/219, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 97, USNA.

60. Norstad to Vandenberg, December 7, 1951 and Norstad to Vandenberg, December 8, 1951, Norstad Papers, Box 37, Pre-SACEUR message and correspondence series, 1950–56, folder 2, DDEL; Elliot, “Project Vista and Nuclear Weapons,” 174–75. According to Norstad, the strongest opposition to strategic bombing came from Oppenheimer. The others, Lee DuBridge and Charles Lauritsen, he judged to be more flexible. Air force chief scientist David Griggs claimed that it was VISTA that convinced him Oppenheimer was “disloyal” and a security risk. Kaplan, *Wizards of Armageddon*, 84.
61. Norstad to Vandenberg, August 25, 1951, Vandenberg to Norstad, August 28, 1951, and Vandenberg to Norstad, August 30, 1951, Vandenberg Papers, Security File, Redline Msgs, May–December 1951, box 86, LC.
62. Norstad to Vandenberg, August 30, 1951, Vandenberg Papers, Security File, Redline Msgs, May–December 1951, box 86, LC.
63. Chief of Staff, USAF to the JCS, December 11, 1951, JCS Records, CCS 471.6 (11-3-51), sec. 1, USNA.
64. Poole, *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, IV, 89–91; memorandum by the Policy Planning Staff to Acheson, October 16, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, I, 224.
65. NSC 114/1, August 8, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, I, 127–57. It was in response to NSC 114/1’s assessment of Soviet intentions that Bohlen rejoined the battle he had unsuccessfully fought over NSC 68. He was supported by senior NSC analysts, including Frank Nash, Everett Gleason, and James Lay. According to Richard Neustadt of the NSC, “Paul Nitze is the only top level guy I know who feels that regardless of the defects of the estimate, its conclusions are probably close to the mark.” Neustadt’s criticism of NSC 114, and Leon Keyserling’s appendix to NSC 114, is in Neustadt to Murphy, November 17, 1951, Truman Papers, Files of Charles Murphy, correspondence and general file, National Security Council folder, HSTL.
66. Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees, *The military situation in the Far East*. Hearings, 82nd Congress, 2nd session (Washington: GPO, 1951), 1379; Poole, *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, IV, 95–96; “Memorandum for the presentation support of 138-wing program,” n.d., Vandenberg Papers, Subject File, Memos Re 138 Wings, box 83, LC.
67. Poole, *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, IV, 97–101.
68. See the reaction to Hoover’s “American Gibraltar” speech in December 1950; *Staunton Virginia News Leader*, December 24, 1950; *New York Herald Tribune*, December 24, 1950; *Manchester Evening News*, December 21, 1950; *San Francisco Examiner*, December 21, 1950. In its editorial, *Edinburgh Evening News*, December 21, 1950 that warned that Hoover’s “moral is obvious— unless this stubborn deficiency [in Europe’s integration] is repaired while there is still time, Mr. Hoover’s exasperation may take root widely elsewhere, and with disastrous consequences for the free world as a whole.”
69. DUSM-96-51, Wright to JCS, February 19, 1951, in JCS 2073/126, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 71, USNA.
70. Department of State-Joint Chiefs of Staff meeting, February 20, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, III, pt. 1, 58–64.
71. Memorandum by the Director of ISAC, Cabot, April 5, 1951, *ibid.*, 123–25.
72. JCS 2073/157, May 25, 1951, approved for the Secretary of Defense and the U.S. representative on the Standing Group, May 28, 1951, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 82.
73. *Liverpool Post*, December 21, 1950.
74. Cairncross, *Years of recovery*, 224; Geoffrey Warner, “The British Labour Government and the Atlantic Alliance, 1949–1951,” in Riste, ed., *Western security*, 258–60; Hogan, *The Marshall Plan*, 395–96; Kenneth Morgan, *Labour in power, 1945–1951* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 447–54.
75. Ismay, *NATO: the first five years*, 40–41.
76. Acheson to Spofford, July 14, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, III, 151–52; Acheson to Spofford, February 15, 1951, *ibid.*, 43–47; memorandum of understanding between the Departments of State, Defense and the Economic Cooperation Administration, February 15, 1951, *ibid.*, 51–52; Spofford to Acheson, February 19, 1951, *ibid.*, 53–56.

77. Draft record of a Department of State-Joint Chiefs of Staff meeting, March 7, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, III, pt. 1, 82–83; ISAC D-4/7a, June 20, 1951, PSF, Subject File-Foreign Affairs, Russia-State Department plan for psychological offensive, HSTL. Portions of this are in *FRUS: 1951*, III, pt. 1, 193–97.
78. ISAC D-4/7a, *FRUS: 1951*, III, pt. 1, 193–97, emphasis added. ISAC even suggested that the “devices” the United States could use to extract greater effort from Europe could be made more effective in “a changed international situation” in which the resulting “political cohesion” would induce “greater sacrifice and the kinds of economic controls necessary for an effort several billion dollars greater; but plans should not rely on such a possibility.” ISAC D-4/7a in HSTL, *ibid.*, 16–17.
79. DO (51) 80, COS (51) 384, June 22, 1951, CAB 131/11, PRO. Claxton in Eayrs, *In defence of Canada*, 223; and Slessor to Eisenhower, May 15, 1951, DDE Pre-Presidential Papers, Box 108, Slessor File, DDEL.
80. Vandenberg to Norstad, May 5, 1951, Vandenberg Papers, Security File, Redline Msgs, January–May 1951, box 86, LC.
81. Cabot to Marshall, June 25, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, III, pt. 1, 206; Webb to Spofford, August 19, 1951, *ibid.*, 248–53; Spofford to Acheson, August 30, 1951, *ibid.*, 258; Parsons to Perkins and Cabot, August 31, 1951, *ibid.*, 259–60. This memorandum suggests that avoiding military discussion in Ottawa was a condition imposed by Defense on its approval of the decision to hold an NAC meeting in September. Spofford to Acheson, September 4, 1951, *ibid.*, 643.
82. Spofford to Acheson, July 4, 1951, *ibid.*, 213–16; Webb to Spofford, August 17, 1951, *ibid.*, 251.
83. C7-D/3, *ibid.*; Porter to Bissell, September 6, 1951, *ibid.*, 265–67.
84. Schuman to Acheson, August 26, 1951, *ibid.*, 1191; U.S. delegation minutes of second meeting of the foreign ministers of the United States and the United Kingdom, September 11, 1951, *ibid.*, 1248; U.S. delegation minutes of first meeting of the foreign ministers of the United States and France, September 11, 1951, *ibid.*, 1249; Bruce to Acheson, August 25, 1951, *ibid.*, 1186–87.
85. Webb to Spofford, August 17, 1951, *ibid.*, 253–55; Tripartite Min-6, September 14, 1951, *ibid.*, 1287–90; US-Fr Min-1, September 11, 1951, *ibid.*, 1255. On the relationship between the Washington Conference and the French proposal for a committee of “wise men,” see Hitchcock, *France restored*, 157–58.
86. TCC-DR/7, Temporary Council Committee, December 8, 1951, TCC Files, Report: Drafts folder, box 277, Harriman Papers, LC.
87. CP (51) 239, August 30, 1951, CAB 129/47, PRO; Porter to Bissell, September 12, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, III, pt. 1, 269–70.
88. Acheson, *Present at the creation*, 569.
89. Spofford to Webb, November 13, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, III, pt. 1, 707–8. Taft had said during the Great Debate that the trouble with NSC 68’s “year of maximum danger” was that it gave the Soviets incentives to go to war before rearmament was complete. *Congressional Record*, vol. 97, pt. 1, 82nd Congress, 1st session, January 3–February 21, 1951, 60.
90. Achilles to Acheson, August 4, 1951, *ibid.*, 633–34; Acheson to Truman, September 19, 1951, *ibid.*, 678–79.
91. France called the Group’s position “indefensible,” while the Netherlands bitterly suggested that NATO should decide “whether the Standing Group does exactly as it pleases, forcing its opinions to prevail, subject to nobody’s advice or comment.” Spofford to Acheson, September 4, 1951, *ibid.*, 643–44; Bradley to Eisenhower, September 7, 1951, Eisenhower Pre-Presidential Papers, Bradley File, Box 13, DDEL; C7-D/3, September 14, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, III, pt. 1, 274; U.S. Delegation at the Seventh Session of the North Atlantic Council to Webb, September 17, 1951, *ibid.*, 666, and September 18, 1951, *ibid.*, 673–74.
92. U.S. Delegation at the Seventh Session of the NAC to Webb, September 19, 1951, *ibid.*, 677. and Resolution C7-D/19 Final, *ibid.*; also as C7-D/19 (Final), TCC Files, Chronological Reading folder, box 275, Harriman Papers, LC. See the NAC’s final communiqué from Ottawa, *NATO Final Communiqués, 1949–1974* (Brussels, 1975), 63–65.

93. Ismay, *NATO: The First Five Years*, 44, 45; McNarney to Lovett, October 21, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, III, pt. 1, 327–32. The TCC was composed of a general committee of twelve with the Executive Bureau (EB) serving as its administrative agent (the members of the EB were also their country representatives on the committee of twelve). Moreover, although every country in NATO had representation in the TCC's Screening and Costing Staff, most of General McNarney's staff was American. Princeton Seminars, December 11–13, 1953, folder 2, Acheson Papers, HSTL; on Belgium's procedural complaints, see Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, December 28, 1951, TCC Files, Belgium folder, box 275, Harriman Papers.
94. TCC-D/12, October 24, 1951, and TCC-D/18, November 28, 1951, TCC Files, Executive Bureau Progress Reports, box 276, Harriman Papers.
95. Memo from Acheson, September 27, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, III, pt. 1, 289–90; ISAC D-25/1, October 8, 1951, *ibid.*, 304–06; Harriman's objections to circumventing the TCC in Harriman to Acheson, October 22, 1951, *ibid.*, 332–33; Webb to certain diplomatic offices, November 13, 1951, *ibid.*, 349–50; Harriman complained that there was "too much strict bilateralism in our relations with the European countries. Our objective should be to get the Europeans through NATO to develop a program which we can support, somewhat as was done in the Marshall Plan. Then we could use bilateral pressures to carry out this European program rather than an American program." Harriman to Truman, June 29, 1951, PSE, General File, Harriman folder, HSTL.
96. The CEA and the Treasury objected to the intrusiveness of the TCC's questionnaires. Memorandum of Conversation with Secretary Snyder, October 19, 1951, Memoranda of Conversation, 1951, October 1951 folder, Acheson Papers, HSTL.
97. "The Politico-Economic Capability of the United States for Meeting Defense Requirements," October 27, 1951, TCC Files, U.S. comments on TCC Report folder, box 275, Harriman Papers, LC.
98. *Ibid.*
99. Keyserling to Harriman, November 1, 1951; Harriman to Keyserling, November 8, 1951, TCC Files, CEA folder, Harriman Papers.
100. Harriman knew "that all the Europeans whom he had seen were petrified of inflation." Ridgway Knight to Perkins, October 29, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, III, pt. 1, 337–40. The reply stated: "It is the considered judgment of the U.S. Executive Branch that the present military program is the maximum reasonable in the light of the present emergency, the associated economic impact, and the proximity to a presidential election year." "The Politico-Economic Capability of the United States for Meeting Defense Requirements," October 27, 1951, TCC Files, U.S. comments on TCC Report folder, box 275, Harriman Papers.
101. "The Politico-Economic Capability of the United States for Meeting Defense Requirements," *Ibid.*, emphasis added.
102. State Department officials told Harriman to be sensitive to Congressional opinion in the TCC exercise. See Richard Bissell to Phillip Jessup, October 19, 1951; "Outline of remarks to be made by Mr. Harriman and General McNarney before the House Foreign Affairs Committee Meeting in Executive Session," no date, in TCC Files, U.S. Congress 1951–52 folder, box 275; Harriman to Pace, December 8, 1951, U.S. Defense Department folder, Harriman Papers.
103. Memorandum by Knight, October 26, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, III, pt. 1, 333–34; Gordon to Harriman, October 26, 1951, TCC files, U.S. Comments on TCC Report folder, box 275, Harriman Papers.
104. JCS 2073/245, November 12, 1951, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 105, USNA.
105. "The Politico-Economic Capability of the United States for Meeting Defense Requirements," October 27, 1951, TCC Files, U.S. comments on TCC Report folder, box 275, Harriman Papers.
106. Robert Jordan, *The NATO International Staff/Secretariat, 1952–1957* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), 206–07; Bruce to Webb, December 5, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, III, pt. 1, 368–69.

107. Telegram for the President and Acting Secretary of State, November 17, 1951 and Memorandum for the President, November 20, 1951, President's Secretary's Files, Subject File—Conferences, Secretary of State, Rome, Italy, NATO, November 1951 Folder, HSTL; René Mayer to Harriman, October 22, 1951, and Harriman to Mayer, October 25, 1951; Bissell to Harriman and Acheson, November 17, 1951; Acheson to Truman, November 17, 1951; Memorandum of conversation between René Plevin, Mme. Plevin, Jean Monnet and Helen Kirkpatrick, November 18, 1951, TCC Files, France folder, box 275, Harriman Papers.
108. Webb to Spofford, August 17, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, III, pt. 1, 248–53; Memorandum for record, November 21, 1951, TCC Files, Standing Group and Military Committee folder, box 278, Harriman Papers.
109. As interim targets, NATO should have 24 divisions-in-being by December 31, 1951, with another 20 to be mobilized within thirty days. For December 1952, the figures were 30 divisions at M day, and 55 at M + 30. See Harriman's in Princeton Seminars, December 11–13, 1953, folder 2, Acheson Papers, HSTL; Vass to Knight, November 26, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, III, pt. 1, 721; U.S. Delegation at the eight session of the NAC to Webb, November 27, 1951, *ibid.*, 730–31. At the Defence Ministers' meeting, it was the "U.S. resolution."
110. Progress Report by the Chairman of the Temporary Council Committee to the North Atlantic Council Committee to the North Atlantic Council (Rome, November 26, 1951), TCC Files, Chronological Reading folder, box 275; Temporary Committee of the Council Press Conference, October 12, 1951, TCC Files, TCC Press Conference 1951 folder, box 277; Notes for the personal statement by Mr. Harriman at the North Atlantic Council Meeting, November 26, 1951, TCC Files, Executive Bureau Progress Reports folder, box 276; "Sir E. Plowden's speech to North Atlantic Council in Rome," no date, TCC Files, Executive Bureau Progress Reports, box 276, Harriman Papers.
111. "Notes for WAH press conference," n.d.; Waldemar Nielsen to Charles Bonesteel, December 14, 1951, TCC Files, TCC Press conference folder, box 277, Harriman Papers.
112. Robert J. Wood, "The first year of SHAPE," *International Organization*, 6 (May 1952), 188.
113. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade [Government of Belgium], December 28, 1951, TCC Files, Belgium folder, box 275; TCC-DR/7, Temporary Council Committee, December 8, 1951, TCC Files, Reports: Drafts folder, box 277; John Lindeman to Averell Harriman, TCC Files, Countries, General folder, box 275; Harriman's notes for TCC presentation to Congressional Committees, January 15, 1952, TCC Files, U.S. Congress folder, box 275, Harriman Papers. The story did not break in the press until January 7. The U.S. media referred to the TCC as the "Harriman Committee." See *New York Herald Tribune*, January 8, 1952.
114. Privately the United States described Belgium's challenge an "ill-tempered blast." John Lindeman to Averell Harriman, TCC Files, Countries, General folder, box 275, Harriman Papers.
115. Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, "A framework for the study of security communities," *Security communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 37.
116. Gordon, "Economic aspects of coalition diplomacy," 539–40; U.S. Delegation on the TCC to Acheson, December 17, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, III, pt. 1, 381–84.
117. TCC-DR/13 through 17, Temporary Council Committee, "Draft by Executive Bureau of Part III, Economic Conditions for the Fulfillment of the T.C.C. Plan of Action," December 10, 1951, TCC Files, Reports: Drafts folder, box 277; TCC-DR/23 (Revised), Temporary Council Committee, "Revised Draft by Executive Bureau of Summary of Findings," Paragraph 6, December 16, 1951, TCC Files, Executive Bureau Working Group folder, box 276, Harriman Papers.
118. TCC-DR/13 through 17, *ibid.*; TCC-DR/19 through 22, Temporary Council Committee, "Draft by Executive Bureau of Part V, Sections 19 through 22 of TCC Report: Organizational Problems for NATO," December 9, 1951, TCC Files, Reports: Drafts folder, box 277, Harriman Papers.
119. TCC-DR/13 through 17, Temporary Council Committee, December 10, 1951, TCC Files, Reports: Drafts folder, box 277, Harriman Papers.



120. TCC-DR/26, December 9, 1951, TCC Files, Reports: Drafts folder, box 277, Harriman Papers.
121. Poole, *History of the Joint Chiefs*, IV, 276–78; Jordan, *NATO International Staff/Secretariat*, 207–08; memorandum prepared for the Secretary of State, December 17, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, III, pt. 1, 389–92; TCC-DR/23 (Revised), Temporary Council Committee, Paragraph 6, December 16, 1951, TCC Files, Executive Bureau Working Group folder, box 276, Harriman Papers.
122. Notes for TCC Presentation to Congressional Committee, January 15, 1952, TCC Files, U.S. Congress folder, box 275, Harriman Papers. Emphasis added.
123. Jordan, *NATO International Staff/Secretariat*, 209–20; Charles Spofford, “NATO’s Growing Pains,” *Foreign Affairs*, 30 (October 1952), 98.
124. Acheson to Bruce, December 20, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, III, pt. 1, 967.
125. The idea of using the EDC to centralize planning in NATO is consistent with Acheson’s July paper, “German Rearmament and Problems of the Defense of Europe,” July 6, 1951, *ibid.*, 815–16; here it was expressed in Bruce to Acheson, July 3, 1951, *ibid.*, 807–10; De Staercke in Bruce to Acheson, December 15, 1951, *ibid.*, 966–67.
126. Konrad Adenauer, *Memoirs, 1945–1953* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966), 270, 274–75; Gordon Craig, “Germany and NATO: The Rearmament Debate, 1950–1958,” Knorr, ed., *NATO and American Security*, 237–39; *FRUS: 1951*, III, pt. 2, 1446–1617.
127. Pierre Guillen, “Les chefs militaire français, le réarmement de l’Allemagne et la CED, 1950–1954,” *Revue d’histoire de la deuxième guerre mondiale et des conflits contemporains*, 129, 33 (January 1983), 16, 18.
128. Memorandum of conversation by Acheson [containing memorandum of Acheson–Eden–Schuman Dinner Meeting, February 14, 1952], February 15, 1952, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, 40–41.
129. Auriol, Bidault and Bonnet in Hitchcock, *France restored*, 162–63.
130. NAT Council Preparation, Lisbon, February, 1952, Position Paper, February 11, 1952; NAT Council Preparation, Lisbon, February, 1952, February 7, 1952; NAT Council Preparation, Lisbon, February, 1952, Negotiating Paper, February 8, 1952, TCC Files, Meetings and Trips NAC—Lisbon folder, box 276, Harriman Papers.
131. The use of gendered and psychological language by U.S. decision-makers to legitimize the hierarchy of NATO has been explored by Costigliola in “The nuclear family: tropes of gender and pathology in the Western alliance,” 163–83; “Kennedy, the European allies, and the failure to consult,” 105–23; and “Culture, emotion, and the creation of the Atlantic identity, 1948–1952,” in Lundestad, *No end to alliance*, 21–36.
132. NAT Council Preparation, Lisbon, February, 1952, February 7, 1952, TCC Files, box 276, Harriman Papers.
133. Communiqué by the Foreign Ministers of the United States, the United Kingdom, and France, February 19, 1952, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, 105; communiqué by the Foreign Ministers of the United States, the United Kingdom, France and the Chancellor of the German Federal Republic, February 19, 1952, *ibid.*, 106–07.
134. NAT Council Preparations, Lisbon, February 1952, February 6, 1952, TCC Files, Harriman Papers.
135. *Ibid.*
136. “U.S. Psychological Objectives and Tasks for NAC, Lisbon.”
137. Nash to Foster, February 21, 1952, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, 119–20; Nash to Foster, February 22, 1952, *ibid.*, 135–36.
138. Bruce to Acheson, December 5, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, III, pt. 1, 144.
139. United States–French Memorandum of Understanding, February 25, 1952, *ibid.*, 273–77; Acheson to Webb, February 24, 1952, *ibid.*, 272. See too Irwin Wall, *The United States and the making of postwar France, 1945–1954* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 226.

140. Nash to Foster, February 23, 1952, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt.1, 146–47; Acheson, *Present at the creation*, 609; Clarence Walton, “Background for the European defense community,” *Political Science Quarterly*, 68, 1 (March 1953), 65.
141. U.S. Delegation to the Department of State, February 23, 1952, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 150–54; Acheson to Truman, February 26, 1952, *ibid.*, 175–76.
142. U.S. Department of State, *Bulletin*, 26, 663, March 10, 1952, 367–70.
143. *The Times*, February 26, 1952, 5. Even one supportive analyst referred to the communiqué as “a mistake never to be repeated.” Max Freedman, “The Lisbon Conference,” *International Journal*, 7 (Spring 1952), 86. Harriman was informed of *The Times*’ “hefty swing” at the communiqué on March 4 but did not seem bothered. S.D. Berger to Averell Harriman, March 4, 1952, TCC Files, Meetings and Trips NAC—Lisbon folder, box 276, Harriman Papers.
144. Verbatim notes from the Public Advisory Board meeting, February 27, 1952, Report on the NATO Lisbon meeting, TCC Files, Meetings and Trips NAC—Lisbon, box 276, Harriman Papers.
145. The British Minister of Supply had received representations from British employers and trade unionists as early as 1948, complaining about the competitive advantage of German engineering companies while Britain was expending resources in occupation and rearmament. See CAB 130/44, Gen 263, December 3, 1948, PRO; Denis Healy, “Britain and NATO,” in Knorr, *NATO and American security*, 214–15.
146. Osgood, *The Entangling Alliance*, 88–89.
147. *Ibid.*, 89–90; Alfred Grosser, *The Western alliance: European-American relations since 1945*, trans. by Michael Shaw (New York: Continuum, 1980), 164; Foster, to Acheson, July 21, 1952, Memoranda of Conversation, January–July 1952 file, July folder, Acheson Papers, HSTL.

## **Chapter Five Strategies of Peripheralism: France, Britain, and the American New Look**

1. Michel Martin, *Warriors to managers: the French military establishment since 1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1981), 13–14.
2. Pierre Melandri, “France and the Atlantic alliance, 1950–1953: between Great Power policy and European integration,” in Riste, ed., *Western security*, 273; Ely, “Notre politique militaire,” *Revue de Défense nationale*, 13 (1957), 1043.
3. Melandri, “France and the Atlantic alliance,” 268.
4. Annie Lacroix-Riz, *Les protectorats d’Afrique du Nord entre la France et Washington* (Paris, 1988); Acheson, *Present at the creation*, 638–39, 648–49.
5. Pierre Guillen, “Les chefs militaires français, le réarmement de l’Allemagne et la CED (1950–1954),” *Revue d’histoire de la deuxième guerre mondiale et des conflits contemporains*, 33, 129 (January 1983), 7–8. On the military’s views toward the EDC, see also, Jean Planchais, *Une histoire politique de l’armée: de De Gaulle à De Gaulle, 1940–1967* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1967), 243–44.
6. U.S. delegation to the Department of State, February 21, 1952, *FRUS, 1952–1954*, V, pt.1, 121–22; U.S. delegation to the Department of State, February 25, 1952, 142–45; Nash to Lovett, February 26, 1952, 169; and the U.S.–French memorandum of understanding, February 25, 1952, *ibid.*, 273–77.
7. Quoted in Guillen, “Les chefs militaire,” 22–23.
8. Bertrand Goldschmidt, “La genèse et l’héritage,” in *L’aventure de la bombe: De Gaulle et la dissuasion nucléaire (1958–1969)*, (Paris, 1985), 28; Goldschmidt’s *L’aventure atomique* (Paris, 1962), Lawrence Scheinman, *Atomic energy policy in France under the Fourth Republic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965); and Georges-Henri Soutou, *The French military program for nuclear energy, 1945–1981*, Nuclear History Program Occasional Paper no. 3, April 1989 (Centre for International Security Studies at Maryland).

9. Bertrand Goldschmidt, *Pionniers de l'Atome* (Paris: Stock, 1987), 352–53; Jacques Hymans, “Reaching for the Big One,” 12. Hymans quotes de Gaulle from his *Discourse et messages: dans l'attente février 1946–avril 1958* (Paris: Plon, 1970), 282–96.
10. Jean-Christophe Sauvage, “La perception des questions nucléaires dans les premières années de l'Institut des Hautes Études de Défense Nationale, 1948–1955,” in Maurice Vaisse, ed., *La France et l'Atome: études d'histoire nucléaire* (Bruxelles: Bruyant, 1994), 59–82.
11. Martin, *Warriors to managers*, 37–38.
12. Hymans, “Reaching for the Big One,” 11, fn. 18. Rocard's account is from his *Mémoires sans concessions* (Paris: Grasset, 1988) but, according to Hyman's personal correspondence, is denied by Bertrand Goldschmidt, the man Rocard claims issued the warning about possible American reaction.
13. Patrick Facon, “L'armée de l'air face au problème nucléaire (1945–1954): un nouvel âge d'or du douhétisme,” *Revue historique des armées*, 178 (March 1990), 84–93; Coutaud, “L'avenir de l'aviation de bombardement,” *Revue de Défense nationale* (November 1949), 468–69. Coutaud had earlier judged that “the atomic bomb should be employed against a variety of targets, but in particular large cities. See “Perspectives sur l'emploi militaire de l'énergie atomique,” *Forces aériennes françaises* (January 1948), 591; Lieutenant-Colonel Debrabant, “Nécessité et possibilité d'une force de bombardement française,” *Forces aériennes françaises* (September 1950), 743–44; Squadron Leader Leclercq, “Bombe atomique de poche et force aériennes,” *Forces aériennes françaises* (June 1951), 176; Marcellin Hodier, “Doctrine d'emploi et mission de l'armée de l'Air (1946–1948),” *Revue historique des armées*, 148 (1982), 61–69.
14. Clarence C. Walton, “Background for the European Defense Community,” *Political Science Quarterly*, 68, 1 (March 1953), 64–65.
15. Goldschmidt, “La gènesè et l'héritage,” 29–31; Wolf Mendl, *Deterrence and persuasion: French nuclear armament in the context of national policy, 1945–1969* (New York: Praeger, 1970), 27–28.
16. Scheinman, *Atomic energy policy*, 215.
17. Colonel Charles Ailleret, “L'arme atomique, arme à bon marché,” *Revue de défense nationale* (October 1954), 314–25; “Applications ‘pacifique’ et ‘militaires’ de l'énergie atomique,” *ibid.*, (November 1954), 421–32; “L'arme atomique: ultima ratio des peuples,” *ibid.*, (December 1954); “L'arme atomique, facteur de paix?” *ibid.* (January 1955), 34–41; and his later book, *L'aventure atomique française* (Paris: Grasset, 1968).
18. As Valin insisted, “the promise of securing in this field the aid of our allies is not sufficient to guarantee our security, for we would not be able to gain even the minimum political and military autonomy.” Valin wrote that a nation without the atomic bomb was a secondary military power whose influence in world affairs is greatly weakened. Quoted in Facon, “L'armée de l'air,” 92–93.
19. Alphonse Juin to Edgar Pisani, April 14, 1956, quoted and translated in Hymans, “Reaching for the Big One,” 20.
20. Juin quoted in Bernard Pujo, *Juin: Maréchal de France* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1988), 328.
21. U.S. delegation to the Department of State, February 23, 1952, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 151; U.S. delegation minutes, January 7, 1952, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, VI, pt. 1, 754–55.
22. Gifford to the Department of State, December 28, 1951, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, VI, pt. 1, 720; “Approach and Objectives for the Churchill talks,” December 21, 1951, *ibid.*, 709–10; AIR 8/1689, September 8, 1952, PRO.
23. As one paper noted before Churchill's arrival, “It should be borne in mind that Mr. Churchill thinks in terms of grand strategy.” *FRUS: 1952–1954*, VI, pt. 1, 709–10.
24. U.S. minutes for the second meeting of President Truman and Prime Minister Churchill, January 7, 1952, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, VI, pt. 1, 763; Wrong in Eayrs, *In defence of Canada*, 251.
25. For a summary, see a staff study by representatives of the Special Committee of the National Security Council on Atomic Energy, June 11, 1952, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, II, pt. 2, 973–79.
26. Joint communiqué issued by President Truman and Prime Minister Churchill, January 9, 1952, Department of State *Bulletin*, January 21, 1952, 83. Publicly, the United States denied that the discussions between Truman and Churchill contained any binding decisions. On the divergent interpretations of the communiqué see Duke, *U.S. defence bases in the United Kingdom*, 80–85.

27. Charles Murphy, "A new strategy for NATO," *Fortune* (January 1953), 80; Ian Clark and Nicholas J. Wheeler, *The British origins of nuclear strategy, 1945–1955* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 151. Murphy's objectivity here is doubtful. He was a reserve officer in the air force, a firm believer in the virtues of the atomic air offensive, and enjoyed a close relationship with top air force personnel. His correspondence with Lauris Norstad reveals a man not only apprised of air force doctrine, but who saw his role as a public advocate for a "new strategy" for NATO. See his letters in the Norstad Papers, Pre-SACEUR message and correspondence series, 1950–56, Box 41, folder 8, DDEL.
28. Murphy, "A new strategy for NATO," 80.
29. Denis Healy, "Britain and NATO," in Klaus Knorr, ed., *NATO and American security* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), 214.
30. U.S. minutes of the first meeting of President Truman and Prime Minister Churchill, January 7, 1952, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, VI, pt. 1, 747–51; memorandum of luncheon meeting at the Department of the Treasury, January 8, 1952, *ibid.*, 786–90.
31. "Increased military end-item assistance to the United Kingdom," January 2, 1952, PSF, General File, Churchill-Truman meetings—papers prepared for US–UK relations, HSTL.
32. See Churchill to Truman, March 10, 1952, Eden to Acheson, March 10, 1952, and attached paper prepared by Eden (n.d.), *FRUS: 1952–1954*, VI, pt. 1, 867–70; Gifford to Acheson, October 16, 1952, *ibid.*, 870–75; memorandum for the President, March 13, 1952, Papers of Dean Acheson, Memoranda of conversation, 1952, (March), HSTL; Gifford to Acheson, December 28, 1951, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, VI, pt. 1, 722; CAB 131/12, 24 September 1952, and D (52) 41, 29 September 1952, PRO.
33. Murphy, "A new strategy for NATO," 80; E. Grove, *From vanguard to trident: British naval policy since World War II* (London: Bodley Head, 1987), 82; A.J. Pierre, *Nuclear politics: the British experience with an independent strategic force, 1939–1970* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), 87. Lauris Norstad reported to Washington his suspicion that there was "some political representation" at the meeting. This argument contributed to the impression that the reappraisal of British strategy was a rationalization for political and economic interests. See Norstad to Twining, n.d. [ca. August 1, 1952], in box 87, Vandenberg Papers.
34. Alastair Buchan, "Their bomb and ours: some concluding remarks on the paradox of force," *Encounter*, 12 (1959), 16; Slessor, *Strategy for the West* (New York: Morrow, 1954); *The great deterrent* (London: Cassell, 1957), 304; *What price co-existence? a policy for the Western alliance* (London: Cassell, 1962), 87. I am grateful to Alan Macmillan for providing me with this last source. See also A.J.R. Groom, *British thinking about nuclear weapons* (London: F. Pinter, 1974), 58; Pierre, *Nuclear politics*, 87–88; Richard Rosecrance, *Defence of the realm: British strategy in the nuclear epoch* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), 171; John Baylis, *Anglo-American defence relations* (New York: St. Martin's, 1981, 1984), 69; Lawrence Freedman, *The evolution of nuclear strategy* (London: Macmillan, 1981), 80–81; Clark and Wheeler, *British origins of nuclear strategy, 178–82*; John Baylis, *Ambiguity and deterrence: British nuclear strategy, 1945–1964* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 157–60.
35. DEFE 4/55, COS (52), July 5, 1952, in N.J. Wheeler, "British nuclear weapons and Anglo-American relations, 1945–54," *International Affairs* (Winter 1985/86), 76.
36. As Congress cut into aid funds, the 1952 GSP concluded that, under such circumstances, "over-expenditure on rearmament, leading to the ruin of the economy of Western Europe, would be to play the Communist game and to present Russia with a bloodless victory gained at the sole cost of playing upon the nerves of the Free World." CAB 131/4, D (52) 26, para. 13, Defence Policy and Global Strategy (GSP), June 17, 1952, PRO. Slessor suggested that bankrupting the West might actually be the Kremlin's plan for Cold War victory in a memorandum to Alexander from the North Atlantic Council's Rome meeting in November 1951. See AIR 75/94, JS 11, November 24, 1951, Slessor Papers, PRO.
37. Clark and Wheeler, *British origins of nuclear strategy*, 161–62.
38. AIR 75/119, Draft minute to the Minister of Defense, n.d. [February 1952], Slessor Papers, PRO.

39. Gifford to Acheson, December 28, 1951, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, VI, pt. 1, 721.
40. CAB 131/13, D (53) 3, January 28, 1953, PRO.
41. Slessor, *Strategy for the West*, 52–54.
42. CAB 131/12, D (52) 41, September 29, 1952, and AIR 19/737, CAS 1118, May 28, 1952; DEFE 6/22, JP (52) 108 (Final), Plan FAIRFAX, November 27, 1952, PRO.
43. CAB 131/12, September 24, 1952; ADM 205/89, enclosure to DNI 8529, July 6, 1953, PRO.
44. Slessor was especially critical of the navy's plans for aircraft carriers, which would drain more resources away from the metals industries, and hence aircraft. The 1952 GSP called for 5 carriers while the navy wanted about 20, Slessor complained in July 1952. AIR 8/1689, CAS 1531, Slessor to Lt. Gen. Sir Ian Jacob, July 26, 1952, PRO; Grove, *Vanguard to Trident*, 85; Clark and Wheeler, *The British origins of nuclear strategy*, 172–73.
45. CAB 131/12, September 24, 1952, PRO.
46. *Ibid.*
47. Royal Air Force *War Manual*, Part I, Operations (Air Ministry, January 1950), Eisenhower Pre-Presidential Papers, Slessor File, Box 108, DDEL. Emphasis in original. Slessor represented Britain at the Military Committee in Lisbon and reported that the military's comments on the TCC report were "satisfactory." He did, however, urge Harriman and Bradley to include a statement in the TCC resolution that "Allied strategic air power is not only a powerful deterrent to aggression; but in the event of attack would be a valuable supplement to conventional forces in the defence of Western Europe." This, Slessor thought, "sufficiently understates the case." DEFE 4/52, COS (52) 32nd meeting, February 28, 1952, PRO; Slessor to Harriman, February 18, 1952, TCC Files, UK folder, box 275, Harriman Papers.
48. Slessor, "The place of the bomber in British policy," *International Affairs*, 29 (July 1953), 305–06; Slessor, *Strategy for the West*, 48, 78.
49. Slessor rejected the idea of creating a strategic air force under a unified command, such as SACEUR, because it was unnecessary and undesirable: the RAF and SAC had already proven in war their competence at fulfilling a coordinated plan "in perfect rhythm and pattern" without the need for an overall commander; undesirable because he feared that SAC's size would lead to that commander being American, and he doubted whether NATO would be better off having yet another American-led command. *Ibid.*, 117, 164.
50. Lawrence Freedman, "British nuclear targeting," in Desmond Ball and Jeffrey Richelson, eds., *Strategic nuclear targeting* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 111–12.
51. Slessor did not believe that the Anglo-U.S. air strategy could deter local conflicts. He believed that NATO could expect "more 'Koreas'" in an era of atomic plenty. "The fact is that air power . . . is in its fullest sense an unlimited instrument, and must be supplemented by forces of the type that can deal with what are, or should be, limited commitments by limited means." This was, though, a *confirmation* of existing NATO strategy, not a rebuttal. It is true that the prospect of future conventional conflicts made the need for a conventional strategic reserve all the more important. Yet there is a contradiction in wanting to maintain forces for such a reserve—so as to be able to fight limited conflicts of the Korea-type—as a rationale for withdrawing forces from these peripheral areas in the first place. Presumably, such conflicts would again draw the allies into draining peripheral wars that would tie down NATO reserves. Clark and Wheeler, *The British origins*, 163; Slessor, *Strategy for the West*, 79–81, 87–88.
52. AIR 8/1689, September 8, 1952; CAB 131/12, D (52) 45, Defense Programme, October 31, 1952, PRO.
53. Murphy, "A new strategy for NATO," 83.
54. CAB 131/12, D (52) 41, The Defense Programme, September 29, 1952.
55. Significantly, this version downplayed the anxieties the British felt in relying solely on U.S. nuclear forces, or at least concealed the extent to which it dominated British thinking. COS (52) 362, Alan Macmillan and John Baylis, *A reassessment of the British global strategy paper of 1952* (University of Maryland: Nuclear History Program Occasional Paper no. 8, 1994), 70–108.

56. Robert Wampler, *NATO strategic planning and nuclear weapons, 1950–1957*, Nuclear History Program Occasional Paper 6, College Park, MD, 1990, 4–7; AIR 75/120, Slessor Papers, PRO.
57. Slessor made the claim during his meetings with the JCS that Ridgway and General Alfred Gruenther (who succeeded Ridgway as SACEUR and took his atomic studies to their conclusion in 1954) had been shown copies of the GSP by Montgomery and that “preliminary steps in making a re-assessment of force requirements had thus been taken within a limited circle in SHAPE.” But on August 8, Ridgway wrote to Bradley and said that he “had never seen the British paper nor did I know of its existence until it was delivered by [General Maxwell] Taylor on August 6. If Monty has a copy of it I am still unaware of it. He submitted a memorandum dated July 18 to me on this subject which, it is apparent now, was wholly based on [the] British paper. However, we had no inkling of [the] existence of [the] study until August 1.” Slessor in AIR 75/120, Record of meetings between the U.S. JCS and the CAS, 29 and July 30, 1952, Slessor Papers; Ridgway in Ridgway to Bradley, August 8, 1952, JCS Records, Chairman’s file (Bradley), box 6, CJCS 092.2 NAT, August 1–October 31, 1952 folder, NA; JCS message to Ridgway carried by Taylor in JCS to Ridgway, August 1, 1952, JCS Records, Geographic file, 1951–53, CCS 092, Great Britain (4–19–50), sec. 2, USNA.
58. AIR 75/120, Record of meetings between the U.S. JCS and the CAS, July 29 and 30, 1952, Slessor Papers. This was the oddest of Slessor’s assertions. What the logical connection might be between developing a conventional defense and abandoning the strategic air campaign one can only guess, especially since the GSP explicitly tried to link the two.
59. AIR 75/120, Record of the Meetings between the U.S. JCS and the CAS, July 29 and 30, 1952, Slessor Papers, PRO. The JCS did, on August 1, forward Slessor’s request to Ridgway but repeated that the question of force reductions was more applicable in 1956 than 1954. JCS to Ridgway, August 1, 1952, JCS Records, Geographic file, 1951–53, CCS 092, Great Britain (4–19–50), sec. 2, USNA. AIR 75/120, Record of meetings between the U.S. JCS and the CAS, 29 and July 30, 1952, Slessor Papers, PRO.
60. The U.S. rationale for the greater likelihood of war in 1954 was filled with contradictions. They offered a few scenarios, including the possibility that by 1954 the Soviets would have enough bombs to launch “a ‘Pearl Harbor’ ” In general, though, the United States seemed to believe that the Soviets might be tempted to “pull the trigger” before NATO had produced a “complete deterrent.” This implies that the nuclear integration process actually *increased* the likelihood of war by giving the Soviets incentives to strike first. More seriously, there was no precision in defining the completeness of the deterrent since deterrence rested upon the assumption of something being deterred and thus on somewhat arbitrary assessments of the Soviet Union’s willingness to run certain risks. Britain could logically claim that a lesser force would offer a complete deterrent if its views of the Soviet Union were different. See State-Joint Chiefs of Staff meeting, July 30, 1952, State Department Records, Records of the Policy Planning Staff, 1947–53, box 77, State-Joint Chiefs of Staff meetings, July 1951–December 1952 folder, USNA; AIR 75/120, July 31, 1952, Slessor Papers, PRO; AIR 75/120, Slessor Papers. To Slessor’s amazement, many members of the JCS had not been briefed on SAC’s war plans. Slessor concluded philosophically that however “odd by our standards, this is not astonishing to one who is familiar with inter-service relationships in the U.S.”
61. AIR 75/120, record of meetings between the U.S. JCS and the CAS; “Discussion in Washington on Global Strategy with the U.S. JCS and State Department,” Slessor Papers; JCS 2056/24, February 21, 1952, JCS Records, Central Decimal File, 1951–53, box 131, CCS 373.11 (12–14–48), sec. 6, Target Systems for JOEWP folder, August 2, 1952, Nathan Twining Papers, box 121, Top Secret file, LC; State-Joint Chiefs of Staff meeting, July 30, 1952, State Department Records, Records of the Policy Planning Staff, 1947–1953, box 77, State-Joint Chiefs of Staff meetings, July 1951–December 1952 folder, USNA.

62. Macmillan and Baylis, *A reassessment*, 8–9.
63. Slessor's argument that NATO's 1954 plan gave no thought to the costs of the effort should there be no war in 1954 was a misreading of the MTDP. Its target date of mid-1954 was chosen by the United States as the point by which its military aid would have enabled the Europeans to build enough forces to wean themselves off the United States. Bradley memorandum to Gruenther, May 5, 1950, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 46; JSPC, PM-987, memorandum for General Schuyler, Admiral Ingersoll and Gen. Smith, "Strategic Guidance for North Atlantic Regional Planning," November 22, 1950, sec. 53; JIC 479/10, January 10, 1950, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 39; JCS memorandum to the U.S. representative on the Standing Group, North Atlantic Treaty Military Committee, December 30, 1950, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 39, USNA. See also DEFE 6/11, JP (49) 151 (Final), Brief for the U.K. representative on the Standing Group—Strategic Guidance for the North Atlantic Regional Planning Groups, November 25, 1949; and JP (49) 149 (Final), Brief for the U.K. representative on the Standing Group—Strategic Guidance for the North Atlantic Regional Planning Groups, November 21, 1949, PRO.
64. In joint State-JCS meetings the next morning, the JCS commented that they also wanted amendments to the McMahon Act but that it was the British who made this so politically difficult. "If they hadn't opened their mouths," Bradley complained, "I think we might have gotten it." State Department officials at the meeting judged that an amendment would be more likely "when the new Administration comes in," perhaps already conceding the 1952 election to the Republicans. See substance of discussions of State-Joint Chiefs of Staff meeting, July 30, 1952, State Department Records, Records of the Policy Planning Staff, 1947–53, box 77, State-Joint Chiefs of Staff meetings, July 1951–December 1952 folder, USNA.
65. Collins to the JCS, n.d. [late July 1952], JCS Records, Geographic file, 1951–53, CCS 092 Great Britain (4-19-50), sec. 1, USNA.
66. It is notable that at the same meeting the JCS again rejected British calls for formal coordination of global strategy. They accepted the desirability of informal links, but wanted these clearly restricted to the NATO area. DEFE 7/677, Sir O. Franks, no. 822 to Foreign Office, August 3, 1952.
67. Substance of discussions of State-Joint Chiefs of Staff meeting, July 30, 1952, State Department Records, Records of the Policy Planning Staff, 1947–53, box 77, State-Joint Chiefs of Staff meetings, July 1951–December 1952 folder, USNA. When Bradley raised this concern with the British, Slessor switched his argument away from economics and over to "the soundness of their strategic theories judged solely on strategic criteria." AIR 75/120, Record of meetings between the US JCS and the CAS, July 29, 1952 and July 30, 1952, Slessor Papers, PRO.
68. Why the USAF privately offered Slessor its support but in the JCS dismissed the 1952 GSP as an exercise in cultural self-esteem is not known. It may have thought it stood to gain if Slessor pressed for a NATO-wide strategic reevaluation, but wanted to weaken any peculiarly British claims on SAC authority.
69. AIR 75/120, Record of Meetings between the U.S. JCS and the CAS, Slessor Papers, PRO. As Vandenberg mused, the "British never lay all their cards on the table at first." Vandenberg was, in fact, the most suspicious of all the JCS, believing, in the racist parlance of the day, that "there is a colored gentleman in the woodpile." Substance of discussions of State-Joint Chiefs of Staff meeting, July 17, 1951, State Department Records, Records of the Policy Planning Staff, 1947–53, box 77, State-JCS meetings, July 1951–December 1952 folder, USNA. See also "Discussion with British Regarding Use of Atomic Weapons," August 1, 1951 and "Discussion with British Regarding Use of Atomic Weapons," August 6, 1951, State Department Records, Records of the Policy Planning Staff, 1947–53, box 77, State-JCS meetings, July 1951–December 1952 folder, USNA.
70. 1952 GSP, paras. 59–63. Slessor on China's ability to sustain suffering in AIR 75/120, Record of meetings between the U.S. JCS and the CAS, Slessor Papers. In both the GSP and the edited version supplied to the Allies, a paragraph concerning the development of some sort of "strategic reserve" in Asia has been deleted from the declassified versions available to us today.

It is discussed in both the United States and British papers from the July meetings, but its exact content is not presently known. "Discussion with British Regarding Use of Atomic Weapons," August 6, 1951, State Department Records, Records of the Policy Planning Staff, 1947-53, box 77, State-JCS meetings, July 1951-December 1952 folder, NA; DEFE 7/677, Sir Oliver Franks to the Foreign Office, August 3, 1952, PRO.

71. This was the conclusion of the earlier JCS paper with which Slessor and the COS took so much exception. Wampler, *NATO strategic planning and nuclear weapons*, 9-11; see also his "Conventional goals and nuclear promises: the Truman Administration and the roots of the NATO New Look," in Francis Heller and John Gillingham, eds., *NATO: the founding of the Atlantic alliance and the integration of Europe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 366; draft statement by the U.S. representative to the Military Committee, December 5, 1953, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 254; JCS 2073/630, August 24, 1953, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 234, NA; PREM 11/369, [December 1952]; AIR 74/120, December 23, 1952, PRO.
72. DEFE 6/22, JP (52) 140 (Revised Final), December 3, 1952; see also DEFE 7/677, MISC/M (52) 98, October 3, 1952; and December 6, 1952, PRO.
73. AIR 75/120, Slessor to SAAM, March 14, 1952, Slessor Papers; PREM 11/323, Jebb to Foreign Office, November 15, 1952. British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden met with Dewey just after the election but found him "determined to continue as governor." Eden's infamous hostility toward Dulles found early expression in his cryptic conclusion to this meeting: "Man we don't like is still making all the running he can. I am doing all that I discreetly can." PREM 11/323, Eden to Churchill, enclosed in Jebb to Foreign Office, November 12, 1952. When Eisenhower finally made his decision, he called Eden for a personal meeting and told him that Dulles would be his secretary of state "at least for a year." To his surprise, Eden found Eisenhower "almost apologetic about it," trying to assure the British that if ever they wanted they could communicate directly with the president. PREM 11/323, AU 1018/68G, conversation between Eden and Eisenhower, November 20, 1952; Colville's "Diary of an American Journey," January 1953, CLVL 1/7, Colville Papers, Churchill Archives, Churchill College, Cambridge, England; FO 371/109099, AU 1011/1, Makins to Foreign Office, February 23, 1954, PRO.
74. CAB 131/12, D (52) 45, October 31, 1952, PRO.
75. Brien McMahon, "Atomic weapons and defense," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 7, 10 (October 1951), 297. Lovett in "A news chronology—weeks of history and mystery," *ibid.*, 303.
76. Poole, *History of the JCS*, IV, 146-49; Memorandum for the President, January 17, 1952, PSF, NSC Atomic File, "Expansion of the atomic energy program" folder, HSTL; Robert Gilpin, *American scientists and nuclear weapons policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), 124.
77. Statement of the views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on Department of Defense interest in the use of atomic weapons, February 6, 1952, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, II, pt. 2, 863-68; Gordon Dean to Lay, May 27, 1952, *ibid.*, 947-68.
78. Lovett to the Executive Secretary of the NSC, Lay, May 16, 1952, PSF NSC Atomic File, "expansion of the atomic energy program" folder, HSTL.
79. Acheson to Lay, May 14, 1952, *ibid.* See also Wells, "The origins of massive retaliation," 50-51. In fact, the State Department and the AEC had reservations about granting the military unlimited control over the development and possession of atomic weapons. The State Department objected on the grounds that the JCS could not unilaterally limit the advice the president may seek in determining the "how, when and where" of an atomic attack. These decisions involved political repercussions that the State Department considered beyond the exclusive jurisdiction of the military. They wanted to make sure the military understood the difference between "readiness to use" and "authority to use." Department of State comments on JCS paper, June 11, 1952, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, II, pt. 2, 969-73.
80. NSC 135/3, n.d., report to the NSC by the Executive Secretary, Lay, September 25, 1952, *ibid.*, 144-56; minutes of a meeting of the President with Eisenhower, November 5, 1951, PSF, General File-Eisenhower file, folder 1, HSTL.



81. "Reappraisal of United States objectives and strategy for national security," August 12, 1952, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, II, pt. 1, 73-80.
82. NSC 135/3, *ibid.*; NSC 135/1 Annex, August 22, 1952, *ibid.*, 104-09, 111-12. The National Security Resources Board argued for emphasis on defenses that might thwart the Soviet atomic assault, and criticized NSC 135/3's refusal to address the issue. Lovett sympathized but said that the "defensive weapon of today was almost always an offensive weapon also." Truman agreed claiming that "there wasn't much of a defense in prospect except a vigorous offense." See Chairman, NSRB, Gorrie, n.d., *ibid.*, 114-17, and memorandum of discussion at the 122nd meeting of the NSC, September 3, 1952, *ibid.*, 117-23.
83. *Ibid.*, 112-13.
84. Trachtenberg argues that rearmament so positively shifted the balance of power that the United States was increasingly willing to pursue a more aggressive foreign policy. Trachtenberg, "A 'wasting asset': American strategy and the shifting nuclear balance, 1949-1954," in Marc Trachtenberg, ed., *History and strategy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 28-32.
85. Kenney to Harriman, September 22, 1952, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, VI, pt. 1, 501. Emphasis added; Bissell to Ohly, October 29, 1952, *ibid.*, 516-26.
86. NSC 141, January 19, 1953, *ibid.*, 209-22.
87. "We must achieve both security and solvency," Eisenhower said during the election. "In fact, the foundation of military strength is economic strength. A bankrupt America is more the Soviet goal than an America conquered on the field of battle." *The New York Times*, September 26, 1952, 1; Douglas Kinnard, "President Eisenhower and the defense budget," *Journal of Politics*, 39 (August 1977), 597-98.
88. Eisenhower was urged to run by columnist Drew Pearson who argued that "the foreign policies of the United States must not be reversed at this time." Quoted in Donald Mrozek, "A new look at 'balanced forces': defense continuities from Truman to Eisenhower," *Military Affairs*, 38 (December 1974), 146.
89. Eisenhower was reluctant to criticize the administration's handling of Korea. In June he claimed to have no "clean-cut solution to bringing the Korean War to a successful conclusion," and he insisted the war "can't be settled by extending it." But by October, he was more than willing to exploit the Democrats' vulnerability. Ronald Caridi, *The Korean War and American politics: the Republican Party as a case study* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968), 214-24; Stephen Ambrose, *Eisenhower: soldier, general of the army, president-elect, 1890-1952* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 550-72; John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of containment: a critical appraisal of postwar American national security policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 127-29.
90. Harriman's remarks in Princeton Seminars, December 11-13, 1953, folder 2, Acheson Papers, HSTL. Eisenhower's approach was to emphasize the preparedness of these enlarged forces, thereby increasing their cost. He made a presentation at the Rome meeting of the NAC that nettled his civilian colleagues, when he overstepped his authority by advising the allies on the political and economic steps they should undertake to fulfill his force goals. He wrote to Lovett that "Europe would have no problem if every single man here would demand for himself the right to work 50 hours a week instead of 40, and *insist upon maximum instead of minimum taxes*. If this same spirit were general throughout the free world, the great problem of making us all safe against Communism would be solved within a year!" He could not, of course, have imagined winning an election on such a platform at home. Eisenhower to Lovett, September 21, 1952, Eisenhower Pre-Presidential Papers, Lovett file, folder 2, DDEL, emphasis added.
91. Minutes of a meeting of the President with Eisenhower, November 5, 1951, PSF, General File—Eisenhower, folder 1, HSTL. Statements favoring air power while SACEUR referred to tactical air as a complement to the ground forces committed to SHAPE. See telegram to Secretary Finletter, June 27, 1951, Norstad Papers, Incoming and Outgoing—December 1950—December 1951 File, folder 6; and letter, Eisenhower to Harriman, June 7, 1951, Eisenhower Pre-Presidential Papers, Harriman File, folder 3, DDEL.

92. See his handwritten comments on a memorandum by Symington, August 22, 1949, and his reply to Symington, August 27, 1949, Eisenhower Pre-Presidential Papers, Symington File, folder 2, DDEL.
93. Quoted in Gaddis, *Strategies of containment*, 128; Mrozek, "A new look at 'balanced forces,'" 147. Eisenhower used the same expression in an August 1954 NSC meeting in qualifying Dulles's claim that U.S. nuclear power was "the principle factor restraining local aggression by the Communists." See 209th meeting of the NSC, August 5, 1954, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, 2, pt. 1, 708.
94. The Democrats campaigned in part on the idea that the war effort had at least succeeded in bringing prosperity to the American people. On the Republican platform see *The New York Times*, July 11, 1952, 8.
95. Bernard Brodie, *Strategy in the missile age* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959, 1965), 258-59. The assertion that Truman had not considered or attempted to use America's nuclear assets in the Korean War is disputed by Roger Dingman, "Atomic diplomacy during the Korean War," *International Security*, 13 (Winter 1988/89), 50-91.
96. *The New York Times*, July 11, 1952, 8.
97. Eisenhower's pessimistic conclusion to this prospect was to contemplate, only briefly, the prospect of waging preventive war. If faced with persistently high expenditures, "we would be forced to consider whether or not our duty to future generations did not require us to *initiate* war at the most propitious moment that we could designate." Eisenhower to Dulles, September 8, 1953, Dulles Papers, White House Memoranda series, White House correspondence—1953 file, folder 2, DDEL.
98. Snyder, "The 'New Look' of 1953," 389-91. Snyder's work remains one of the best studies of the New Look.
99. Watson, *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, V: The Joint Chiefs of Staff and national policy, 1953-1954* (Wilmington, Del: Michael Glazier, 1986), 2-3.
100. Snyder, "The 'New Look' of 1953," 403-04.
101. Eisenhower later assented to the use of a maximum danger target date in spurring production of U.S. continental defense forces in the summer of 1954. See the 209th meeting of the NSC, August 5, 1954, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, II, pt. 1, 704.
102. Watson, *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, V*, 11-14, and "Notes taken at the First Plenary session of Project Solarium," June 26, 1953, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, II, pt. 1, 378-93, and other documents at 323-26 and 394-442; for the original records of the project see Project Solarium, WHO, Office of the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, records, 1952-61, NSC series, DDEL.
103. Vandenberg lost some credibility even with air power enthusiasts such as Charles Murphy. Murphy felt that Vandenberg's "grandstand" on the 143-wing force suggested "an inflexibility of mind." If advanced too rigidly, the air force case was "full of holes," Murphy told Norstad. See Murphy to Norstad, June 16, 1953, Norstad Papers, Pre-SACEUR message and correspondence series, 1950-56, "eyes only file," folder 8, DDEL; Douglas Kinnard, *Eisenhower and strategy management: a study in defense politics* (Washington: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1977, 1989), 22-23.
104. Ridgway dissented from Radford in arguing that while the United States should consider redeployment as one way of tackling its overextension, he did not favor it personally. The 160th meeting of the NSC, August 27, 1953, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, II, pt. 1, 443-55.
105. Robert Cutler, to Dulles, September 3, 1953, *ibid.*, 456.
106. The 160th meeting of the NSC, August 27, 1953, *ibid.*, 443-55.
107. Quoted in Watson, *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, V*, 22.
108. NSC 162, September 30, 1953, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, II, pt. 1, 508-09. Radford's position was supported by Treasury and the Bureau of the Budget. The other Chiefs had originally opposed this view but came to accept it without the timetable. See memorandum of discussion at the 165th meeting of the National Security Council, October 7, 1953, *ibid.*, 526-27.
109. The 165th meeting of the NSC, October 7, 1953, *ibid.*
110. NSC 162, *ibid.*, 509.
111. The 165th meeting of the NSC, October 7, 1952, *ibid.*, 532-33, emphasis added.

112. JCS memorandum, October 6, 1953, WHO, Office of the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, NSC Series, policy papers subseries, NSC 162/2—Basic National Security Policy file, folder 3, DDEL.
113. Joint Chiefs of State to Wilson, October 27, 1953, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, II, pt. 1, 563–64; see also JCS, “Recommended changes to NSC 162,” October 6, 1953, *ibid.*
114. Quoted in Charles Murphy, “The Eisenhower shift, III,” *Fortune*, March 1956, 112.
115. Undated memorandum [October–November 1953], Dulles Papers, White House memoranda series, general foreign policy matters file, folder 3, DDEL. It is not clear who wrote this memo. It is consistent with both Radford’s hope for a single-war concept and Dulles’s efforts to shed public inhibitions about the use of atomic weapons. A later point in the memo urging a public announcement of this policy as a means of preventing future Korea would suggest that it was written by Dulles, probably adopting some of Radford’s ideas for a more comprehensive statement.
116. NSC 162/2, October 30, 1953, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, II, pt. 1, 578–97.
117. “Military strategy to support the national security policy set forth in NSC 162/2,” attached to memorandum for the Director of the Joint Staff, and others, December 10, 1953, JCS Records, CJCS (Radford File), 381 (Military strategy and posture), USNA.
118. NSC 162/2, October 30, 1953, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, II, pt. 1, 578–97; JCS to Wilson, October 27, 1953, *ibid.*, 563. NSC 162/2 also noted that allies were important for the same reasons as the Marshall Plan. The progressive loss of the economic and military power offered by these allies would shift the balance of power in favor of the Soviet Union and endanger the capacity of the United States to defend its interests without altering its way of life.
119. *Ibid.*, 593.
120. Walter Bedell Smith to Eisenhower, December 3, 1953, WHO, Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, NSC Series, atomic weapons, correspondence and background for presidential approval and instructions for use file, folder 1, DDEL.
121. Department of Defense to Eisenhower, December 1, 1953, *ibid.*
122. Memorandum for the record by Robert Cutler, December 2, 1953, *ibid.*
123. Memorandum, undated, quoted in Mrozek, “A new look at ‘balanced forces,’ ” 149. Emphasis added.
124. After NSC 162/2, the JCS were given manpower ceilings so that they would recommend specific reductions. The Everest Committee, created to design a level to fit with NSC 162/2, split. It accepted a level of 2.75 million people, a reduction from the 3.6 million at the peak of the Korean War, but an arbitrary compromise between the maximum and minimum levels set by Wilson. The JCS negotiated a 2.815 million force for 1957, but with so many conditions as to make the promise meaningless. Snyder, “The ‘New Look’ of 1953,” 440–43; Watson, *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, V, 27–29.
125. Watson, *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, V, 30–32. There was a contradiction in a strategic reserve designed to increase the mobility of U.S. forces. Without mobility, the United States would have been best served by retaining forces overseas. However, the air force cuts that Eisenhower urged in reducing the USAF from 143 to 137 wings came mostly in troop transport. The affect on strategy was that redeployment theoretically gave the United States greater mobility, while weakening the capability to provide that mobility. See Snyder, “The ‘New Look’ of 1953,” 457–59, 483–84.
126. GSP, paras. 19, 20, 21; AIR 75/107, Slessor to Eliot, October 18, 1951, Slessor Papers; Peter Lowe, “The Korean War in Anglo–U.S. Relations, 1950–53,” in Dockrill and Young, eds., *British Foreign Policy*, 126–48.
127. AIR 75/107, Slessor to Makins, May 15, 1951, Slessor Papers, PRO.
128. FO 371/109099, AU 1011/1, Makins to the Foreign Office, February 23, 1954; FO 371/109100, AU 1013/5, Makins to the Foreign Office, January 23, 1954; FO 371/109100, AU 1013/5, Makins to the Foreign Office, January 23, 1954; FO 371, 109100, AU 1013/39, 427 (S), September 4, 1954, PRO.

## Chapter Six Two Cultures of Massive Retaliation: Neo-isolationism and the Idealism of John Foster Dulles

1. Richard H. Kohn and Joseph P. Harahan, eds., "U.S. strategic air power, 1948–1962: excerpts from an interview with generals Curtis E. LeMay, Leon W. Johnson, David A. Burchinal, and Jack J. Catton," *International Security*, 12, 4 (Spring 1988), 89.
2. John Foster Dulles, "The Evolution of Foreign Policy," U.S. Department of State *Bulletin*, January 25, 1954, 107–10; "Policy for Security and Peace," *Foreign Affairs*, 32, 3 (April 1954), 353–64; Paul Peeters, *Massive retaliation: the policy and its critics* (Chicago: Regnery, 1959); E. Raymond Platig, "The 'New Look' Raises Old Problems," *The Review of Politics*, 17, 1 (January 1955), 111–35; William F. Knowland, "The 'Instant Retaliation' Policy Defended," *New York Times Magazine*, March 21, 1954, E2; Chester Bowles, "A Plea for Another Great Debate," *New York Times Magazine*, February 28, 1954, 11.
3. Frederick W. Marks III, *Power and peace: the diplomacy of John Foster Dulles* (Westport: Praeger, 1993).
4. Glenn H. Snyder, "The 'New Look' of 1953," in Warner R. Schilling, Paul Y. Hammond, and Glenn H. Snyder, *strategy, politics and defense budgets* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), 495–502.
5. Gaddis, *Strategies of containment: A critical appraisal of postwar American national security policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 127.
6. Barton Bernstein, "Election of 1952," in Arthur Schlesinger et al., eds., *History of American presidential elections, 1789–1968*, vol. IV (New York: Chelsea House, 1971), 3215–337.
7. William Kaufmann, ed., *Military policy and national security* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956); General Maxwell D. Taylor, *The uncertain trumpet* (New York: Harper, 1959).
8. A number of conservatives were incensed by Eisenhower's victory, seeing him as the head of an internationalist minority that would rule by forging an alliance with New Dealers (what one annoyed Republican called the "Military-Internationalist-New Deal Movement"), ending the two-party system in the United States. See "Validity of the Eisenhower movement within the Republican Party," attached to Homer Ferguson to Herbert Hoover, May 8, 1952, box 53, Hoover Papers.
9. In 1955 Talcott Parsons wrote that McCarthyism could be explained as an "acute symptom of the strains which accompany a major change in the situation and structure of American society." Parsons, "Social strains in America," in Daniel Bell, ed., *The radical right* (New York, 1964), 209; Richard Hofstadter, *Anti-intellectualism in American life* (New York: Vintage, 1963), 221–29; Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab, *The politics of unreason: right-Wing extremism in America, 1790–1970* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), 209–47; Michael Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995, 1998), 190–93.
10. Judith N. Shklar, "Subversive Genealogies," in Clifford Geertz, ed., *Myth, symbol, and culture*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 1971), 129; For nationalism as an argument about "origins," see Anthony D. Smith, *The antiquity of nations* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004), introduction.
11. Anne-Marie Burley, "Regulating the world: multilateralism, international law, and the projection of the new deal regulatory state," in John Gerard Ruggie, ed., *Multilateralism matters: the theory and praxis of an institutional form* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 125; Ruggie, "Embedded liberalism and the postwar economic regimes," in Ruggie ed., *Constructing the world polity: essays on international institutionalization* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 62–84.
12. DeConde, "On twentieth-century isolationism," in Alexander DeConde, ed., *Isolation and security* (Durham, NC, 1957), 24. As DeConde puts it: Conservative isolationists "did not want to isolate America from Europe's troubles for the welfare of humanity or to spur economic reform; they wanted to do business as usual in a free enterprise system fed by a nationalism which would not subordinate America's freedom of action to the will of other nations. They based their isolationist arguments on military power and national self-interest."

13. I use "conservative" here in its post-New Deal sense, as the ideology of laissez-faire, Social Darwinian liberalism. James Young, *Reconsidering American liberalism: the troubled odyssey of the liberal idea* (Boulder: Westview, 1996), 128–29; Mike Hawkins, *Social Darwinism in European and American thought, 1860–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 104–22.
14. Ray Allen Billington, "The origins of middle Western isolationism," *Political Science Quarterly*, 55 (March 1945), 44–64; William Carleton, "Isolationism and the Middle West," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 33 (December 1946), 377–90; Wayne Cole, *Roosevelt and the isolationists, 1932–1945* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983); Selig Adler, *The isolationist impulse: its twentieth century reaction* (New York: Crowell-Collier, 1957).
15. Paul R. Bish, "Socialism on the installment plan," *National Republic: a monthly magazine of fundamental Americanism*, vol. 36 (March 1949), 7–8; Hickenlooper Papers, box 82, HHPL; Taft to Hoover, November 21, 1950, Hoover Papers, box 233, HHPL.
16. Kazin, *The Populist persuasion: an American history* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 165–67.
17. Frank Ninkovich, *Modernity and power: a history of the domino theory in the twentieth century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 1–36.
18. Walter Lippmann, *U.S. foreign policy: shield of the republic* (Boston: Little Brown, 1943); Ronald Steel, *Walter Lippmann and the American century* (New York: Vintage, 1980), 405–09; Hoover to Clark, October 6, 1943, Hoover Papers, box 125, HHPL.
19. Quoted from William T. Hutchison, "The American Historian in Wartime," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 29 (September 1949), 163–86; Alexander DeConde, "On twentieth-century Isolationism" DeConde, ed., *Isolation and security* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1957), 13–15. See, in contrast, Henry Cabot Lodge Jr.'s argument in 1932 that the utopian internationalization of American culture will dissipate the "self-understanding and self-mastery" of American idealism. Lodge, *The cult of weakness* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1932), 162.
20. Manfred Jonas, *Isolationism in America, 1935–1941* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), 100–01.
21. Anders Stephanson, *Manifest destiny: American expansion and the empire of right* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995), 8–10.
22. Lodge, *The cult of weakness*, 161–62.
23. Ronald Radosh, *Prophets on the right: profiles of conservative critics of American globalism* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974), 119–45.
24. Quoted in Peter H. Irons, "American business and the origins of McCarthyism: The Cold War crusade of the United States Chamber of Commerce," Robert Griffith and Athan Theoharis, *The specter: original essays on the Cold War and the origins of McCarthyism* (New York: New Viewpoints, 1974), 77–79.
25. Russell D. Buhite and Wm. Christopher Hamel, "War for Peace: The Question of an American Preventive War against the Soviet Union, 1945–1955," *Diplomatic History*, 14, 3 (Summer 1990), 367–84.
26. Henry W. Berger, "A conservative critique of containment: Senator Taft on the early Cold War program," in David Horowitz, ed., *Containment and revolution* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), 132–39; Henry W. Berger, "Senator Robert A. Taft dissents from military escalation," in Thomas G. Paterson, ed., *Cold War critics* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971), 167–204. Journalist Nicholas von Hoffman claimed that the Vietnam War had proven that "Taft was right, right on every question all the way from inflation to the terrible demoralization of troops." Radosh, *Prophets on the right*, 147.
27. Armstrong, "The enigma of Senator Taft and American foreign policy," *The Review of Politics*, 17, 2 (April 1955), 206–31; Thompson in DeConde, ed., *Isolation and security* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1957), 169.
28. Quoted in James T. Patterson, "Alternatives to globalism: Robert A. Taft and American foreign policy, 1939–1945," *The Historian*, 36, 4 (August 1974), 681–82; See also Russell Kirk and James McClellan, *The political principles of Robert A. Taft* (New York: Fleet Press, 1967).
29. Armstrong, "The enigma of Senator Taft," 224–25.

30. Thomas Bailey wrote in 1948 that Franklin Roosevelt had shown that "because the masses are short-sighted and generally cannot see danger until it is at their throats, our statesmen are forced to deceive them." They would have to continue deceiving them "unless we are willing to give our leaders in Washington a freer hand." Quoted in Paul Buhle and Edward Rice-Maximin, *William Appleman Williams: the tragedy of empire* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 73.
31. Geoffrey Matthews, "Robert A. Taft, the constitution and American foreign policy, 1939–53," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 17 (1982), 507–22; Richard Grimmett, "Who were the senate isolationists?" *Pacific Review of History*, 42, 4 (November 1973), 479–98.
32. Quoted in D. Clayton James, *The years of MacArthur*, vol. III: *Triumph and disaster, 1945–1964* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985), 646, 665. Herbert Hoover wrote in 1952: "Might I suggest that we need some old and tested codes of ethics applied anew to public life. There are the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, and the rules of the game which we learned at our Mother's knee." Hoover to Knowland, October 25, 1952, Hoover Papers.
33. *One man's opinion* ("Mr. Republican II: a short biography of Senator Knowland"), 1, 2 (April 1956), 11, Hoover Papers, HHPL.
34. Quoted Duane A. Tananbaum, "The Bricker Amendment Controversy: Its Origins and Eisenhower's Role," *Diplomatic History*, 9, 1 (Winter 1985), 75–77, 80–81, and *The Bricker amendment controversy: a test of Eisenhower's political leadership* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988); Gary W. Reichard, "Eisenhower and the Bricker Amendment," *Prologue*, 6, 2 (Summer 1974), 90.
35. Frank E. Holman, "Why YOU should support the Bricker Amendment," Hoover Papers, HHPL.
36. *Congressional quarterly almanac*, 83rd Congress, 2nd Session, 1954, vol. 10 (Washington: GPO, 1955), 262; statement of John DeWitt Kyle II, National Defense League of America, *Hearings before a subcommittee of the committee on the judiciary*, United States Senate, 83rd Congress, 1st Session, on S.J. Res. 1 and S.J. Res. 43 (Washington: GPO, 1953); "The Erroneous Arguments of the Opponents of a Constitutional Amendment on Treaties and Executive Agreements: An Analysis and Answer," Paper by Frank E. Holman, Past President of the American Bar Association, box 498, Taft Papers.
37. R. Moulton Pettey to Robert Taft, July 10, 1953, box 1221, Taft Papers.
38. George Sokolsky, Address before the Sons of the American Revolution, Federal Hall Memorial, New York, September 17, 1953, box 86, Hoover Papers, HHPL.
39. Cecilia Elizabeth O'Leary, *To die for: the paradox of American patriotism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Jonathan M. Hansen, *The lost promise of patriotism: debating American identity, 1890–1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).
40. Herbert Hoover, "The Protection of Freedom," Address at West Branch, Iowa, August 10, 1954, in *Addresses upon the American road, 1950–1955* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1955), 78–79.
41. Nora M. Williams to Taft, July 10, 1953, box 1221, Taft Papers. Emphasis added.
42. Cumings, *The origins of the Korean war*, vol. 2, 18–19.
43. William S. White, *The Taft story* (New York: Harper, 1954), 167–68.
44. Justus Doenecke, *Not to the swift: the old isolationists in the Cold War era* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 1979), 181–82; Norman Graebner, *The new isolationism: a study in politics and foreign policy since 1950* (New York: Ronald Press, 1956), 27–28; Richard Freeland, *The Truman doctrine and the origins of McCarthyism: foreign Policy, domestic Politics, and internal security, 1946–1948* (New York: Knopf, 1971), 336–37.
45. Poll results show varying degrees of support for neo-isolationist positions during the Korean War. The war was unpopular but a majority continued to support it. As the results of the war were known, however, a majority of Americans stated that it had been a "mistake" to get involved, while support for foreign aid to NATO diminished. See H. Schuyler Foster, *Activism Replaces Isolationism: U.S. Public Attitudes, 1940–1975* (Washington, 1983), 103–29.
46. Samuel Brooks to Bourke Hickenlooper, April 19, 1949, box 82, Hickenlooper Papers, HHPL.
47. Paul Flory to Robert Taft, June 6, 1953; Curt Berger to Taft, May 5, 1953; John T. Parkerson to Taft, July 3, 1953, box 1221, Foreign Policy file, 1953, Taft Papers.

48. Freva Cook to Taft, July 2, 1953; Wm. A. Bernreider to Taft, March 14, 1953, box 1221, Taft Papers.
49. A. J. Mitchell to Bourke Hickenlooper, April 23, 1949, Box 82, Hickenlooper Papers, HHPL.
50. Capt. George Moura, American Oil Company, to Taft, June 24, 1953; Taft to Ray Henle, June 6, 1953; George Brown to Taft, June 12, 1953; Charles Baxter to Taft, February 14, 1953; Curt Berger to Taft, May 5, 1953; Paul Flory to Taft, June 6, 1953; C. Y. Semple to Taft, July 7, 1953, box 1221, Foreign Policy file, 1953, Taft Papers.
51. Taft quoted in White, *The Taft Story*, 162–63.
52. Taft to Hoover, June 5, 1953, Hoover Papers, Box 233, HHPL.
53. Herbert Hoover to J. Reuben Clark, October 6, 1943, box 125, Hoover Papers, emphasis added.
54. R. H. Kelley to Taft, January 13, 1953; C. Y. Semple to Taft, July 7, 1953, box 1221, Taft Papers.
55. “Defend America First!” Pamphlet from the America First Committee, Chicago, Illinois, ca. 1940, box 14, Hoover Papers.
56. George Brada to Taft, June 30, 1953, box 1222, Foreign Policy file, 1953, Taft Papers.
57. Edmond E. Lincoln to Bourke Hickenlooper, June 7, 1949, Hickenlooper Papers, box 8, HHPL.
58. Walter Steele, “Communism vs. Ten Commandments,” *National Republic*, 36 (March 1949), in the Hickenlooper Papers, box 82, HHPL.
59. Nora Williams to Taft, July 10, 1953; A. L. Summe to Taft, May 5, 1953, box 1221; Paul Flory to Taft, June 6, 1953; Charles Randolph Tyson, ed., *Patrol news: Tyson’s timely topics*, American Patrol, Los Angeles California, June 25, 1953; C. Y. Semple to Taft, July 7, 1953, box 1222, Taft Papers. It is difficult to compare the use of gendered rhetoric in neo-isolationist rhetoric with the language of the liberal “vital center.” Suffice it to say, these letters rely heavily on masculine tropes to assert the value of self-reliance. An American First Committee pamphlet from 1940 called for a “two-fisted defense for America,” with which “no nation on earth will dare attack us,” an expression not far from LeMay’s thoughts on Massive Retaliation. See “Defend America First!” Pamphlet from the American First Committee, Chicago (ca. 1940), Hoover Papers, box 14, HHPL.
60. “Club Votes Decisively for ‘Seize Initiative’ Policy in Asia,” Attachment to Frederick R. Peake to Dwight D. Eisenhower, July 9, 1953, box 1222, Taft Papers.
61. Knowland, Speech to the Republican National Committee Luncheon, January 19, 1952, attachment to Knowland to Hoover, January 17, 1952, Hoover Papers, box 115.
62. Memo, “The Present American Setting,” Hoover to Douglas MacArthur, April 15, 1951, Hoover Papers, box 129.
63. Hoover, “The protection of Freedom,” address at the reception given by the State of Iowa on Hoover’s 80th Birthday, West Branch, Iowa, August 10, 1954, Hoover Papers, box 161, HHPL.
64. Mrs. R. N. Childs to Taft, n.d. [ca. 1953]; Douglas Hill to Taft, April 30, 1953, box 1221, Taft Papers.
65. Mrs. A. L. Summe to Taft, May 5, 1953, box 1223; E. D. Anderson to Taft, July 6, 1953, box 1222, Taft Papers.
66. Hoover’s private list of military authorities who he was told supported his doctrine included Air Force General George Kenney, Brigadier General Bonner Fellers, SAC commander Le May, and civilian Alexander De Seversky. Paul Palmer to Hoover, February 10, 1951, Hoover Papers, box 114, HHPL.
67. Quoted in White, *The Taft story*, 163–64.
68. *Congressional Record*, vol. 97, part 1, 82nd Congress, 1st Session, January 3, 1951–February 21, 1951 (Washington: GPO, 1951), 55–61.
69. Taft, *A foreign policy*, 101; Armstrong, “The Enigma of Senator Taft,” 226; see his remarks on having a “free hand” in Asia, *New York Times*, May 28, 1953.
70. Lodge wrote in 1932 that internationalists “see the similarities between the United States and other nations instead of the differences.” Whereas the believer in preparedness, “after agreeing that nothing fundamental is being done to remove the war danger, seeks for a quarantine for his country against that danger.” Moreover, “his is a mind which makes him see the unique differences

- between the United States and the other nations—and the differences to him seem sources of strength.” *The cult of weakness*, 12–13.
71. Jonas, *Isolationism in America*, 286–87.
  72. Eisenhower described his foreign policy as being a “middle ground solution,” unacceptable to both the “‘do-gooders’ and to the strict isolationists.” Eisenhower to Ed Bermingham, February 8, 1951, Hoover Papers, box 53, HHPL.
  73. Judith Goldstein and Robert Keohane, “Ideas and foreign policy,” in Goldstein and Keohane, eds., *Ideas and foreign policy: beliefs, institutions and political change* (Ithaca, 1993), pp. 3–4; Jonathan Fox, “Religion as an overlooked element of international relations,” *International Studies Review*, 3, 3 (2001), 54.
  74. Peter L. Berger, *The sacred canopy: elements of a sociological theory of religion* (Garden City, NY, 1967), 43; J. Mechling, “Rethinking (and reteaching) the civil religion in post-nationalist American studies,” in J.C. Rowe, ed., *Post-nationalist American studies* (Berkeley, 2000), pp. 65–66.
  75. John Lewis Gaddis, “The unexpected John Foster Dulles,” in Richard Immerman, ed., *John Foster Dulles and the diplomacy of the Cold War* (Princeton, 1990); Ronald Pruessen, *John Foster Dulles: the road to power* (New York, 1982); R. Immerman, *John Foster Dulles: piety, pragmatism, and power in U.S. foreign policy* (Wilmington, 1999); M.A. Guhin, *John Foster Dulles: a statesman and his time* (New York, 1972). For Dulles as schizophrenic, see Neal Rosendorf, “John Foster Dulles’s nuclear schizophrenia,” in Gaddis et al., *Cold War Statesmen confront the bomb: nuclear diplomacy since 1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).
  76. Mark G. Toulouse, *The transformation of John Foster Dulles: from prophet of realism to priest of nationalism* (Macon, GA, 1985), xxiii.
  77. LeMay quoted in Kohn and Harahan, eds., “U.S. strategic air power,” 89.
  78. Seth Jacobs, “‘Our system demands a Supreme Being’: The U.S. religious revival and the ‘Dien Experiment,’ 1954–55,” *Diplomatic History*, 25, 4 (Fall 2001), 589–624.
  79. “Leader” in Douglas T. Miller and Marion Nowak, *The fifties: the way we really were* (New York: Doubleday, 1977), 90; “revival” in Stephen Whitfield, *The culture of the Cold War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991, 1996), 90.
  80. Quoted in James T. Patterson, *Grand expectations: the United States, 1945–1974* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 329.
  81. R.N. Bellah, W.M. Sullivan, A. Swindler, and S. Tipton, *Habits of the heart: individualism and commitment in American life* (Berkeley, 1985), 54.
  82. James Hudnut-Beumler, *Looking for God in the suburbs: the religion of the American dream and its critics* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1994); A. Roy Eckardt, *The surge of piety in America: an appraisal* (New York, 1958); and Robert Wuthnow, *The restructuring of American religion: society and faith since World War II* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); Talcott Parson, “Social strains in America,” in Bell, *The radical right*, 221–29; Hofstadter, *Anti-intellectualism in American life*, 221–29; Lipset and Rabb, *The politics of unreason*, 209–47.
  83. Sonya Rose, “Cultural analysis and moral discourses: episodes, continuities, and transformations,” in Victoria E. Bonnell and Lynn Hunt, eds., *Beyond the cultural turn: new directions in the study of society and culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 218–19; Kai Erikson, *Wayward puritans* (New York: Wiley, 1966), 68–69. In 1956, John Kouwenhoven wrote in *Harper’s Magazine* that the 1950s had seen an increase in the interest Americans had in knowing and defining themselves. “Magazines here and abroad provide a steady flow of articles by journalists, historians, sociologists, and philosophers who want to explain America to itself, or to themselves, or to others.” “What’s American About America?” *Harper’s Magazine*, July 1956, 25–33.
  84. Quoted in Whitfield, *Culture of the Cold War*, 81.
  85. Richard Wightman Fox, “Experience and explanation in Twentieth-Century American religious history,” in Harry Stout and D.G. Hart, eds., *New directions in American religious history* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 403–09.



86. Daniel Bell, *The end of ideology: on the exhaustion of political ideas in the fifties* (Glencoe, Ill: Free Press, 1960), 400.
87. Quoted in Whitfield, *Culture of the Cold War*, 87.
88. Stephanson, *Manifest Destiny*, 5, 7–10.
89. This is consistent with studies of the sexual disciplining of Cold War America as well. The restoration of moral order at home, in terms of reaffirming traditional gender roles in the family, and linking homosexuality to deviance to political insecurity are important dimensions to the “boundary crisis” I describe here. See Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward bound: American families in the Cold War era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988, 1999); Carol Cohen, “Sex and death in the rational world of defense intellectuals,” *Signs: Journal of women in culture and society*, 12 (Summer 1987), 687–718; Frank Costigliola, “‘Unceasing pressure for penetration’: gender, pathology, and emotion in George Kennan’s formation of the Cold War,” *Journal of American History*, 83 (March 1997), 1309–39; Geoffrey Smith, “National security and personal isolation: sex, gender, and disease in the Cold War United States,” *International History Review*, 14 (May 1992), 307–37; and Robert D. Dean, *Imperial brotherhood: gender and the making of Cold War foreign policy* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001).
90. Doenecke, *Not to the Swift*, 181–82; Graebner, *The new isolationism*, 27–28; Freeland, *The Truman Doctrine and the origins of McCarthyism*, 336–37.
91. Dulles, “How my faith helped me in a decisive hour,” *The Christian century*, March 19, 1952.
92. See Jacobs, “‘Our system demands a supreme being,’” 594–95; Ole Holsti et al., *Enemies in politics* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1967), 28.
93. Weber’s idea of “elective affinity” is in *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism* (New York: Scribners, 1976), 90–92. He argues not that the Reformation provided the cultural basis of capitalist activity, but that certain “religious forces have taken part in the qualitative formation and the quantitative expansion of that spirit over the world. . . . In view of the tremendous confusion of interdependent influences between the material basis, the forms of social and political organization, and the ideas current in the time of the Reformation, we can only proceed by investigating whether and at what points certain correlations between forms of religious belief and practical ethics can be worked out.”
94. At the time of the Revolution those deeply held religious convictions targeted Catholicism and were sometimes held in abeyance to preserve freedom of conscience (especially by Madison) and sometimes, in the case of Tom Paine, were disingenuous instruments to mobilize public opinion. See Rogers Smith, *Civic ideals: conflicting visions of citizenship in U.S. history* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), chap. 3.
95. “Our spiritual heritage,” Address at *New York Herald Tribune Forum*, October 21, 1947, in Henry P. Van Dusen, ed., *The spiritual legacy of John Foster Dulles* (New York: Books for Libraries, 1960), 64–66; Dulles, “A righteous faith,” *Life* (December 28, 1942).
96. “The American vision,” address at the opening of the churches’ National Mission on World Order, Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York, October 18, 1943, in Dusen, ed., *The spiritual legacy*, 58–60; “The importance of spiritual resources,” address, Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island, January 27, 1950, John Foster Dulles Papers (henceforth JFDP), Box 47, Seeley Mudd Library, Princeton, New Jersey.
97. “The American vision,” *ibid.*
98. *Ibid.*, 61. Toynbee’s quote in an address delivered at the Interdenominational Community Service celebrating the one-hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the First Presbyterian Church, Watertown, New York, October 11, 1953, in *ibid.*, 223.
99. Speech delivered March 18, 1939, attachment to Robert A. Low to George Elsey, September 22, 1952, in Hoover Papers, box 51, HHPL. This letter is also in the George Elsey Papers, Harry S. Truman Library. Emphasis added.
100. George Kennan was another deeply religious diplomat with whom Dulles found himself at odds. Kennan advocated what John Lewis Gaddis has called a “particularist” policy that tolerated ideological diversity in the world as long as the balance of global power was maintained. When

he suggested to Dulles that the United States should not use its own moral systems as a template by which to judge others, Dulles insisted there were “certain basic moral concepts which peoples and nations can and do comprehend, and to which it is legitimate to appeal as providing some common standard of international conduct.” Dulles to Kennan, October 29, 1952, JFDP, Box 61.

101. Immerman, *John Foster Dulles*, 39.
102. “Our foreign policy—is containment enough?” Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, October 8, 1952, JFDP, Box 59.
103. “Where are we?” American Association for the United Nations, December 29, 1950, New York, JFDP, Box 48, emphasis added; Dulles to Kennan, October 2, 1952, JFDP, Box 61.
104. “Principle versus expediency in foreign policy,” Missouri Bar Association, St. Louis, September 26, 1952, *Spiritual legacy*, 124–25.
105. “Faith in our fathers,” First Presbyterian Church, Watertown, New York, August 28, 1949, *ibid.*, 11–12.
106. “Morals and power,” Naval War College, June 16, 1953, *ibid.*, 81.
107. “Principle versus expediency in foreign policy,” 127.
108. This was the theme of “A policy of boldness,” *Life*, 32 (May 19, 1952).
109. “Where are we?” American Association for the United Nations, December 29, 1950, New York, Box 48, JFDP. Dulles claimed that he originated the “thesis of deterrent retaliatory power in connection with my work on the Japanese Peace Treaty.” He argued, in February 1951, that America’s allies could be strengthened conventionally to prevent what was then called “indirect aggression”—meaning, political subversion, coups d’état, or “trumped up” civil wars—but direct aggression from the Soviet Union or China could be countered by the “deterrent of our retaliatory striking power.” This position, he told *New York Times* columnist James Reston, had the approval of Truman and the Defense Department at the time. But his speech in December 1950 claimed that the only “effective defense” was “the capacity to counter-attack” with atomic weapons. See Dulles to Reston, December 13, 1954, Box 80, JFDP.
110. John Foster Dulles, “A policy of boldness,” *Life*, 32 (May 19, 1952), 151–52.
111. “A righteous faith,” *Life* (December 28, 1942) cited in *Spiritual legacy*, 55.
112. Dulles, “A policy of boldness,” 154.
113. Rev. John MacKay, interview, January 9, 1965, John Foster Dulles Oral History Project, Mudd Library, Princeton, New Jersey. FCC statement in Paul Boyer, *By the bomb’s early light: American thought and culture at the dawn of the atomic age* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 200.
114. John Foster Dulles, “Policy for security and peace,” *Foreign Affairs*, 32, 3 (April 1954), 358–59.
115. Dulles, “A policy of boldness,” 160.
116. The “relish” Dulles exhibited was seen by McGeorge Bundy, cited in Rosendorf, “John Foster Dulles’ nuclear schizophrenia,” in Gaddis, *Cold War statesmen confront the bomb*, 62–86.
117. Ernesto Laclau, “Identity and hegemony: the role of universality in the constitution of political logics,” in Judith Butler, Ernesto Laclau and Slavoj Žižek, eds., *Contingency, hegemony, universality* (London: Verso, 2000), 44–89.
118. “Foreign policy and the national welfare,” address before the National Farm Institute, Des Moines, Iowa, February 16, 1952, JFDP, Box 59.
119. A “symbolic universe” refers to a society’s subjective sense of history and an individual’s subjective sense of biography. Berger and Luckmann, *The social construction of reality*, 123–37.
120. “Question and answer with John Vorys,” House Committee on Foreign Affairs, n.d., JFDP. The only one of Dulles’s correspondents who pointed out that nuclear deterrence was a dialectical process by which the West’s deterrent could be construed by its enemies as a offensive capability, thus inviting a Soviet attack in the name of their own preemption, was Quincy Wright. See letter, Wright to Dulles, January 28, 1952, Selected Correspondence, Box 66, JFDP.
121. The oral history accounts from the Dulles papers offer a range of views as to what others thought Dulles meant. Most believe that he did not advocate sole reliance, but at the same time almost as many blame him for not making this clear. See especially the recollections of Robert

- Bowie, Arleigh Burke, John Hughes, Thomas Finletter, Andrew Goodpaster, Curtis LeMay, Lauris Norstad, and Matthew Ridgway, Oral History Project, JFDP.
122. Bernard Brodie, *Strategy in the missile age* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), 248–50; Trachtenberg, “A ‘wasting asset,’” 132–46; Tami Davis Biddle, “Handling the Soviet threat: ‘Project Control’ and the debate on American strategy in the early Cold War years,” *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 12 (September 1989).
  123. Gaddis, “The unexpected John Foster Dulles,” 49–56.
  124. Quoted in Richard Rhodes, “The General and World War III,” *The New Yorker*, June 19, 1995, 53–54.
  125. Twining, *Neither liberty nor safety: a hard look at U.S. military policy and strategy* (New York: Holt Rinehard and Winston, 1966), 55, 59–68. A recent version of the same argument can be found in Timothy J. Botti, *Age in the hole: why the United States did not use nuclear weapons in the Cold War, 1945 to 1965* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), reviewed in my, “Does America have a strategic culture?” *Journal of Conflict Studies* (Fall 1998).
  126. “Talk of atomic attack,” he told the NSC in August 1954, “tended to create ‘peace-at-any-price people’ and might lead to an increase in appeasement sentiment in various countries.” By the end of the year, he conceded that “experience indicated that it was not easy to go very much beyond the point that this administration had reached in translating a dynamic policy into courses of action.” Memorandum of NSC Meeting, August 5, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, II, pt. 1, 706; the 204th Meeting of the NSC, December 21, 1954, *ibid.*, 833.
  127. The 165th Meeting of the NSC, October 7, 1953, *ibid.*, 515–34; Cutler to Dulles, September 3, 1953, *ibid.*, 456; Hughes to Dulles, October 28, 1953, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 447–48; the 174th Meeting of the NSC, December 10, 1953, *ibid.*, 449–54.
  128. Williams to Dulles, May 19, 1952, Box 57, JFDP.
  129. For some of the conservative criticisms of Dulles and Eisenhower’s “Me too” internationalism, see “Why? What? Who?” Hoover Papers, Post-Presidential files, Campaign 1951–52 folder, box 102, HHPL; John T. Flynn, “Reasons every delegate must solemnly consider,” n.d., Hoover Papers, Post-presidential Files, Campaign 1952 Pre-convention struggle folder, HHPL; “Dulles brews a pot of dishwater,” *Chicago Tribune*, December 29, 1950.
  130. FO 371/109100, AU 1013/14, Makins to Foreign Office, March 20, 1954, PRO.
  131. In December 1951, Dulles publicly described America’s “punishing [atomic] power” as akin to a police force that makes it unnecessary for citizens to have weapons at home. The *Cincinnati Inquirer* reported that: “the basic views in his talk accorded with what Sen. Robert A. Taft has said, and they also were not inconsonant with the recommendations of Herbert Hoover some months ago.” *Cincinnati Inquirer*, December 5, 1951.
  132. Robert Divine, *Foreign policy and U.S. presidential elections, 1952–1960* (New York: New Viewpoints, 1974), 29–32; Bernstein, “Election of 1952,” 32–33. In December 1950, Dulles issued a “reply” to Hoover’s attack on the troops-to-Europe decision that he claimed was a result of pressure from the “State Department publicity people.” Dulles told Taft that his speech “pretty much presents the strategic concept which you and I have discussed.” Dulles to Taft, December 29, 1950; and “Where are we?” Address at a dinner of the American Association for the United Nations, December 29, 1950, JFDP.
  133. White, *The Taft story*, 212.
  134. Brodie, *Strategy in the missile age*, 248–50.
  135. “The Evolution of Foreign Policy,” U.S. Department of State *Bulletin*, January 25, 1954, 107–10; “Policy for Security and Peace,” *Foreign Affairs* 32, 3 (April 1954), 353–64.
  136. “[N]o foreign policy really deserves the name,” Eisenhower said, “if it is merely the reflex action from someone else’s initiative.” Quoted in *The public papers of the presidents: Dwight D. Eisenhower*, 1953 (Washington: GPO, 1960), 265; on his Clausewitzianism, see Campbell Craig, *Destroying the Village: Eisenhower and thermonuclear war* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 44; Christopher M. Gacek, *The logic of force: the dilemma of limited war in American foreign policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 130–31; Andrew P.N. Erdmann, “‘War no

- longer has any logic whatever': Dwight D. Eisenhower and the thermonuclear revolution," in Gaddis et al., *Cold War statesmen confront the bomb*, 87–119.
137. Morton Halperin, *Contemporary military strategy* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967), 46.
  138. Brodie, *Strategy in the Missile Age*, 258–59.
  139. Quoted in David Alan Rosenberg, "The Origins of overkill: Nuclear Weapons and American Strategy, 1945–1960," in Steven Miller, ed., *Strategy and nuclear deterrence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 143.
  140. Eisenhower to Dulles, September 8, 1953, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, II, pt. 1, 457–63; Trachtenberg, "A 'Wasting Asset,'" 132–46.
  141. Biddle, "Handling the Soviet threat."
  142. Memorandum by Wilson to the NSC, November 22, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, II, pt. 1, 785–87; the 225th meeting of the NSC, *ibid.*, 787–802; JCS 2101/160, JCS Records, CCS 381, United States (1–31–50), sec. 46; and Radford to Wilson, November 3, 1954, CCS 381, United States (1–31–50), sec. 47, USNA.
  143. "Talk of atomic attack," he told the NSC in August 1954, "tended to create 'peace-at-any-price people' and might lead to an increase in appeasement sentiment in various countries." By the end of the year, he confessed that "experience indicated that it was not easy to go very much beyond the point that this administration had reached in translating a dynamic policy into courses of action." Memorandum of NSC Meeting, August 5, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, II, pt. 1, 706; the 204th meeting of the NSC, December 21, 1954, *ibid.*, 833.
  144. Dulles, "Policy for Security and Peace," 357.
  145. Quoted in Robert R. Bowie and Richard H. Immerman, *Waging Peace: how Eisenhower shaped an enduring Cold War strategy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 184–85. Emphasis added.
  146. NSC 162, September 30, 1953, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, II, pt. 1, 508–09; the 165th meeting of the NSC, October 7, 1953, *ibid.*, 515–34; Cutler to Dulles, September 3, 1953, *ibid.*, 456.
  147. Hughes to Dulles, October 28, 1953, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 447–48; the 174th meeting of the NSC, December 10, 1953, *ibid.*, 449–54.
  148. Pearson's March 15 comments in *New York Times*, March 16, 1954, 8. For British reaction see *The Times*, April 6, 1954, 4; *New York Times*, March 18, 1954, 1, 10; and April 5, 1954, 10.
  149. "Dulles' advice," *Springfield Morning Union* [Massachusetts], January 10, 1953, Hoover Papers, box 134, HHPL.
  150. *Ibid.*; *Henderson Evening Journal* [Kentucky], January 28, 1953, Hoover Papers, box 134, HHPL.

## **Chapter Seven Hegemony Versus Multilateralism: Nuclear Sharing and NATO's Search for Cohesion**

1. DEFE 6/22, JP (52) 140 (Revised Final), December 3, 1952, PRO.
2. DEFE 4/63, COS (53) 76th meeting, June 22, 1953, PRO; Clark and Wheeler, *The British origins of nuclear strategy*, 184.
3. DEFE 6/23, JP (53) 25 (Revised Final), February 6, 1953; on the July 1952 costing see CAB 130/77, Gen. 411/19, July 16, 1952, and CAB 131/12, September 24, 1952, PRO.
4. Draper to Dulles, January 24, 1953, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 353–54; Dulles to Draper, January 27, 1953, *ibid.*, 354–56.
5. Draper to Dulles, February 23, 1953, *ibid.*, 357.
6. Memorandum of conversation, March 12, 1953, *ibid.*, 359.
7. RIIA, *Documents on International Affairs*, 1953 (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), 50–51; Steven Fish, "After Stalin's death: The Anglo-American debate over a new Cold War," *Diplomatic History*, 10, 1 (Fall 1986), 335. *Public papers of the presidents of the United States: Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1953*, 179–88; Department of State *Bulletin*, April 13, 1953, 524–25.
8. Draper to Dulles, April 4, 1953, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 364–65.

9. Smith to Frederick Anderson, April 11, 1953. *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 366–67; Smith to Draper, April 14, 1953, *ibid.*, 367–68.
10. U.S. delegation at the NAC to the Department of State, April 24, 1953, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 374; Dillon to Department of State, April 23, 1953, *ibid.*, 369–71, and 371–73; Draper to Eisenhower, June 5, 1953, *ibid.*, 406–07.
11. U.S. delegation at the NAC to the Department of State, April 24, 1953, *ibid.*, 373–75.
12. Dillon to Department of States, April 23, 1953, *ibid.*, 270.
13. Dillon to Dulles, April 26, 1953, *ibid.*, 385–88.
14. The 141st meeting of the NSC, April 29, 1953, *ibid.*, 397–99.
15. Dulles reported in July that the retreat of U.S. aid—though initiated by Truman—was seen as proof that the U.S. was “moving towards ‘isolationism.’ ” Memorandum for the president from Dulles, July 23, 1953, Dulles Papers, DDEL.
16. Lecheres in message for Vandenberg, December 11, 1952, Vandenberg Papers; Blanc–Ridgway talks in memorandum of conversation, January 13, 1953, Gruenther Papers.
17. Gruenther to Bradley, September 9, 1952, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 170, USNA.
18. *Ibid.*
19. Eisenhower’s memo (January 21, 1946) quoted in John J. Midgley, Jr., *Deadly illusions: army policy for the nuclear battlefield* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986), 7.
20. *Ibid.*, 8–9; David Yost, “The history of NATO theatre nuclear force policy: key findings from the Sandia Conference,” *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 15, 2 (June 1992), 242; Major Robert Doughty, *The evolution of U.S. army tactical doctrine, 1946–1976*, Leavenworth Paper no.1, August 1979, Combat Studies Institute, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS.
21. Quoted in Midgley, *Deadly illusions*, 10; Trachtenberg, “The nuclearization of NATO,” in Marc Trachtenberg, ed., *History and strategy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 156–57.
22. The Honest John was developed between the spring of 1950 and the summer of 1951, although the first production model was not delivered until 1954. Midgley, *Deadly illusions*, 13; Pace to Eisenhower, December 28, 1951, Eisenhower Pre-Presidential Papers, DDEL.
23. Midgley, *Deadly illusions*, 15–16.
24. Norstad to Vandenberg, August 25, 1951, Vandenberg Papers (emphasis added). Norstad had, from the beginning of his European tour, tried to establish the U.S. air force command as a semiautonomous organization with “unilateral planning responsibilities” in NATO. See Peter J. Roman, “Curtis LeMay and the origins of NATO atomic targeting,” *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 16, 1 (March 1993), 58–59.
25. Vandenberg to Norstad, August 30, 1951; Norstad to Vandenberg, same date; Vandenberg to Norstad, same date, Vandenberg Papers.
26. Twining to Norstad, August 1, 1952, Vandenberg Papers. Emphasis added.
27. Norstad to Twining, August 2, 1952, Vandenberg Papers. This team, known as “Group Able,” was charged with nuclear planning for SHAPE even though it was led by a USAF officer and had only one “foreign national” (a British officer) present. Yost, “NATO theatre nuclear force policy,” 245.
28. Norstad to Vandenberg, August 23, 1952 and Norstad to Twining, August 2, 1952, Vandenberg Papers. Norstad to Vandenberg is also found in the Norstad Papers, DDEL.
29. JCS 2073/553, April 9, 1953, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 212, USNA.
30. Gilpatric to Finletter, September 25, 1952, Vandenberg Papers, LC; JCS 2073/553, April 9, 1953, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3–12–48), sec. 212, USNA.
31. Finletter to Vandenberg, September [n.d.] 1952, and Vandenberg to Finletter, September 20, 1952, Vandenberg Papers.
32. Quoted in Robert A. Wampler, *NATO strategic planning and nuclear weapons, 1950–57 Nuclear History Program Occasional Paper 6* (College Park, Center for International Security Studies, 1990), 7.
33. Yost, “NATO theatre nuclear force policy,” 245, 260, fn. 50.

34. Robert Wampler, "Conventional goals and nuclear promises: the Truman administration and the roots of the NATO New Look," in Francis Heller and John Gillingham, eds., *NATO: the founding of the Atlantic alliance and the integration of Europe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 366.
35. It was not, as Wampler claims, the first study to assume the "use" of atomic weapons, since the MTDP was based on the idea that the U.S. contribution to NATO would be an atomic air assault. What was new was that this contribution was factored into the defense of Europe through an evaluation of the impact of SAC's offensive against retardation targets, and of the use of tactical atomic weapons that had not been available before. Wampler, *NATO strategic planning and nuclear weapons*, 9. See also "Draft statement by the US representative to the Military Committee" [Collins], December 5, 1953, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 254, USNA.
36. Wampler, *ibid.*, 10-11.
37. Robert C. Richardson III, "NATO nuclear strategy: a look back," *Strategic Review*, 9, 2 (Spring 1981), 38.
38. "Draft statement by the US representative to the Military Committee," [Collins], December 5, 1953, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 254, USNA; Wampler, *NATO strategic planning and nuclear weapons*, 11; JCS 2073/630, August 24, 1953, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 234, USNA. Emphasis added.
39. Anderson to Dulles, June 18, 1953, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, V, pt. 1, 408-12; Hughes to Dulles, July 2, 1953, *ibid.*, 423.
40. Anderson to Dulles, June 20, 1953, Dulles to embassy in France, June 23, 1953; Hughes to Dulles, June 24, 1953, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, V, pt. 1, 412-16.
41. Hughes to Dulles, June 27, 1953, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, V, pt. 1, 416-19; draft of memorandum, Merchant to Dulles, July 7, 1953, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, V, pt. 1, 427-29.
42. "We cannot permanently sell more to other countries than we buy from them or loan to them, unless we want to continue giving them free dollars. We can use more of their products and increase our own standard of living. At the same time we can permit them to buy more from us, and balance their accounts by trade rather than aid." Draper to Eisenhower, June 5, 1953, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, V, pt. 1, 406.
43. *Ibid.*, 401-08; JCS 2073/630, August 24, 1953, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 234, USNA. Draper's full study is in Office of the United States Special Representative in Europe, "Certain European issues affecting the United States," May 15, 1953, Records of the NSC, USNA. See Draper's letter to Eisenhower, March 9, 1953, same file.
44. The department did not believe that the downgrading of U.S. representation in Europe was a genuine source of fear in Europe, which they attributed principally to "uncertainty in Europe regarding basic US policy and declining US aid." Memorandum for the president, July 8, 1953, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, V, pt. 1, 433.
45. *Ibid.*
46. JCS 2073/630, August 24, 1953, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 234, USNA.
47. *Ibid.* There was a problem with trying to justify sacrifices on the basis of "ultimate success" if that success were measured by the mere absence of war: it would be difficult even with compensating atomic weapons to maintain the effort indefinitely.
48. The reference to the British 1952 GSP suggests that Eisenhower's New Look JCS did *not* view the new British strategy as an ideal division of NATO's labor. *Ibid.*
49. *Ibid.* Only the air force chief of staff, Twining, dissented. It was "obvious" that NATO could not continue to strive toward unattainable goals, he argued. "A strategy which is dependent on forces which cannot be attained can in no way be considered the best strategy." Twining contended that statements in support of staying the course on NATO strategy prejudged the review of national security that Eisenhower initiated for the autumn. JCS 2073/633, August 31, 1953, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 236, USNA.

50. JCS 2073/630, August 24, 1953, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 234, USNA. Emphasis added.
51. DEFE 4/59, COS (53) 16th meeting, February 3, 1953, and DEFE 4/64, COS (53) 85th meeting, July 7, 1953, PRO.
52. CAB 131/13, D (53) 14, March 2, 1953; D (53) 5th meeting, March 26, 1953; FO 371/105974, n.d., PRO.
53. CAB 128/26, CC 50 (33), August 25, 1953, PRO.
54. Bonbright to Dulles, September 24, 1953, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, V, pt. 1, 440-42; JSPC 876/780/D, November 20, 1953, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 251, USNA.
55. Bonbright to Dulles, September 24, 1953, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, V, pt. 1, 440-42. Some Europeans might have employed different reasoning. If the stretch-out was coupled with more interest in continental North America as well as a redeployment of U.S. forces from Europe, they might reasonably interpret this as a *lack* of confidence in the atomic deterrent.
56. JCS 2073/711, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 252, USNA; the 160th meeting of the NSC, August 27, 1953, and Robert Cutler to Dulles, September 3, 1953, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, II, pt. 1, 443-56.
57. Smith to the embassy in France, October 15, 1953, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, V, pt. 1, 444-46; JSPC 876/780/D, November 20, 1953, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 251, USNA.
58. Enclosure A, Army-Navy view, JCS 2073/671, October 16, 1953, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 244, USNA.
59. Enclosure B, Air Force view, *ibid.*
60. This was the point of Wohlstetter's famous 1959 article, in which he argued that the mere existence of devastating nuclear weapons had become a *casus belli*, regardless of other political tensions or conflicts between the nuclear powers. See "The delicate balance of terror," *Foreign Affairs*, 37 (January 1959).
61. DEFE 4/67, COS (53) 139th meeting, December 4, 1953, PRO.
62. Fourth Tripartite Foreign Ministers meeting, Bermuda, December 6, 1953, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, V, pt. 2, 1791-92; Collins to Radford, December 9, 1953, and Radford to Collins, December 9, 1953, JCS Records, CJCS 092.2, North Atlantic Treaty (1953), Radford file, USNA.
63. Raynor to MacArthur, November 16, 1953, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, V, pt. 2, 1715-18; Aldrich to Dulles, November 27, 1953, *ibid.*, 1723-25.
64. The Americans anticipated a French call for a fifty-year assurance that U.S. and British troops would not leave the continent (The timing corresponded with the term of the EDC). The United States answer was that it had "always reserved the legal right to withdraw forces assigned to NATO." When France pressed the issue at Bermuda, Eisenhower said that if France got on with the job of the EDC, the rest would fall into place. See U.S. Delegation at the Bermuda Conference, December 4, 1953, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, V, pt. 2, 1728-29 and, especially, Third Plenary tripartite meeting of the Heads of Government, December 6, 1953, *ibid.*, 1795-1806; see also Russel Fessenden, "US assurances," December 2, 1953, *ibid.*, 1731-36, and Eisenhower-Laniel meeting, December 5, 1953, *ibid.*, 1769-74.
65. Aldrich to Dulles, November 27, 1953, *ibid.*, 1724.
66. Third tripartite Foreign Ministers Meeting, December 6, 1953, second part, telegraphic summary by the U.S. delegation, December 6, 1953, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, V, pt. 2, 1788-91.
67. The 174th meeting of the NSC, December 10, 1953, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, V, pt. 2, 1847.
68. Hughes to Dulles, October 28, 1953, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, V, pt. 1, 447-48; 174th meeting of the NSC, December 10, 1953, *ibid.*, 449-54.
69. Statement by Dulles to the North Atlantic Council, December 14, 1953, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, V, pt. 1, 461-68; U.S. delegation at the NAC meeting to the Department of State, December 16, 1953, *ibid.*, 472.
70. Matthews to Nash, July 30, 1953, *ibid.*, 437-39; Dulles to the embassy in France, September 3, 1953, *ibid.*, 439-40; notes prepared by Merchant on the restricted session of the NAC,

December 16, 1953, *ibid.*, 476–79; the 177th meeting of the NSC, December 23, 1953, *ibid.*, 479–81. Emphasis added.

## **Chapter Eight “Our Plans Might Not be Purely Defensive”: Leading NATO into the Nuclear Era**

1. Marc Trachtenberg’s meticulous examination of NATO’s nuclear turn nevertheless relies on the standard refrain that “non-nuclear defense was simply out of reach for reasons of domestic politics and finance.” His own sources suggest that NATO never actually pursued a nonnuclear defense with any seriousness, but he claims to base his understanding of MC 48 on Robert Wampler’s. See Trachtenberg, *A constructed peace: the making of the European settlement, 1945–1963* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 158, and fn. 40.
2. Dulles, “The evolution of foreign policy,” U.S. Department of State *Bulletin*, January 25, 1954, 107–10.
3. Dulles, “Policy for security and peace,” *Foreign Affairs*, 32, 3 (April 1954), 357–58. Radford later clarified this to suggest that any formal prohibition on the use of nuclear weapons might incite aggression. He was convinced, and Dulles argued this in his *Foreign Affairs* article, that the Chinese had only entered the Korean War once they had become certain that the United States would refrain from bombing the mainland. On Radford, see Notes by General Foulkes on conversations held in Washington on March 4 and 5, 1954, DEA Files, NAC.
4. Pearson quoted in James Eayrs, *In defence of Canada: growing up allied* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 253; and Pearson, memorandum for the Prime Minister, February 2, 1954, DEA files, NAC.
5. Notes by General Foulkes, March 4 and 5, 1954, DEA Files, NAC.
6. Raymond Aron, *The Great Debate: theories of nuclear strategy* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965), 19–20.
7. The 204th meeting of the NSC, June 24, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, II, pt.1, 694; the 229th meeting of the NSC, December 21, 1954, *ibid.*, 833; Ronald W. Pruessen, “John Foster Dulles and the predicaments of power,” 21–45; Gaddis, “The unexpected John Foster Dulles,” *ibid.*, 52–53.
8. H. W. Brands, “The age of vulnerability: Eisenhower and the national security state,” *American Historical Review*, 94, 4 (October 1989), 968.
9. Biddle, “Handling the Soviet threat: ‘project control’ and the debate on American strategy in the early Cold War years,” *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 12 (September 1989), 286–87, 300 (fn. 84).
10. On the meaning of the gunfighter in 1950s U.S. Cold War culture, the way it symbolized the moral sanction of international violence, see Richard Slotkin, *Gunfighter nation: the myth of the frontier in twentieth-century America* (New York: Atheneum, 1992), 347–404.
11. Biddle, “Handling the Soviet threat,” 287, 290, fn. 84. This is an unstable definition of intent since the Soviets could be justified in striking first for the same reasons. No one asked the more abstract question as to who would be in a position to make moral assessments of criminality after a nuclear exchange. The purpose of such deliberations was to provide prewar political support for policies that might, under normal circumstances, be difficult to reconcile with the standards of peacetime morality.
12. *Ibid.*, 290. Work needs to be done to determine how cultures generate the belief that death is preferable to surrender. It is not a “rational” position, and doubtful that it is universal. It does, however, share something with religious systems and may surface under conditions in which sacred ideas are thought to produce cultural unity and self-sacrifice.
13. Radford in Biddle, “Handling the Soviet threat,” 292. Project Control ran into more concrete difficulties when it was tested in war games. Bowie’s prediction that it was based on “the fallacious theory that in a showdown the Soviet Union would back down” proved more accurate than



- Sleeper's. The Red Team (the Soviets) put up more resistance than expected and escalated to the nuclear war earlier than the Blue Team. Preemption was a two-way street and Control also gave the Soviets incentives to strike first.
14. NSC 5422, June 14, 1954, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, II, pt.1, 647-67.
  15. Park Armstrong to the Acting Secretary of State, April 28, 1954, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, II, pt.1, 646-47.
  16. This question is discussed in Craig, *Destroying the village*; Erdmann, "War no longer has any logic whatever: Dwight D. Eisenhower and the thermonuclear revolution," in Gaddis et al., *Cold War statesman confront the bomb*, 87-119.
  17. The 190th meeting of the NSC, March 25, 1954, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, II, pt.1, 640-42.
  18. Eisenhower to Jackson, December 31, 1953, DDE Diary Series, Ann Whitman File, Box 4, DDEL.
  19. The 190th meeting of the NSC, March 25, 1954, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, II, pt.1, 641. Emphasis added.
  20. Trachtenberg, quoting Eisenhower at a meeting he had with Radford and Maxwell Taylor in May 1956, believes that Eisenhower understood the logic of preemption and knew "retaliation" only made sense if the United States could make sure the Soviets did not "strike first." See *A constructed peace*, 162. The memos he uses are found in Eisenhower-Radford-Taylor meeting, May 24, 1956, *FRUS: 1955-1957*, 19, 313; NSC meeting, December 20, 1956, *FRUS: 1955-1957*, 19, 381.
  21. The 204th meeting of the NSC, June 24, 1954, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, II, pt. 1, 688-91.
  22. Annex 2 to NSC 5422, n.d., *FRUS: 1952-1954*, II, pt. 1, 675. Emphasis added. The suggestion at the end of this paragraph that the aim of a resolute policy would be peaceful coexistence between the Soviet Union and the West is betrayed by the fact that most military officials were skeptical of any *modus vivendi* with the Soviets. See memorandum by the JCS to the Secretary of Defense, June 23, 1954, *ibid.*, 680.
  23. The 204th meeting of the NSC, June 24, 1954, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, II, pt. 1, 688-91.
  24. Bowie to Dulles, August 4, 1954, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, II, pt.1, 699-700.
  25. This is a position that found favor with Clare Luce Booth and Herbert Hoover. In August 1954, Booth wrote on the need for a "new foreign policy." She argued that the United States could not plan for a war after "the Big Blow . . . America may never again be so strong as she will be *one hour before Nuclear D-Day*." Booth memo, August 21, 1954, Hoover Papers, HHPL.
  26. The 227th meeting of the NSC, December 3, 1954, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, II, pt. 1, 803-06. Ridgway's dissent from the Chiefs' affection for a nuclear strategy was caricatured by his colleagues as hopelessly backward-thinking, and motivated by bureaucratic and pecuniary bias. Eisenhower, who was more sympathetic to Ridgway than Wilson or Humphrey, thought that he was "sincere in his call for balanced forces."
  27. NSC 5422/2, August 7, 1954, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, II, pt. 1, 715-31. Emphasis in the original.
  28. Wilson to Lay, November 22, 1954, *ibid.*, 785-87. The CIA confirmed that U.S. allies would not only be unwilling to take risks in their own spheres, but would be increasingly reluctant to "engage in diplomatic or military action which seems to involve a risk of war" in "third areas, notably in Asia." See paper prepared Allen Dulles, November 18, 1954, *ibid.*, 777.
  29. The 225th meeting of the NSC, November 24, 1954, *ibid.*, 787-802; JCS 2101/160, October 18, 1954, JCS Records, CCS 381, United States (1-31-50), sec. 46; Radford to Wilson, November 3, 1954, *ibid.*, sec. 47, USNA.
  30. JCS to Wilson, December 17, 1954, *FRUS: 1952-1954*, II, pt.1, 828-30. Emphasis added.
  31. NSC 5440, December 13, 1954, *ibid.*, 814-16.
  32. NSC 5440, *ibid.*, 815, emphasis added. This phrasing was borrowed from NSC 5422/2's blunter version: "As a broad rule of conduct, the US should pursue its objectives in such ways and by such means, including appropriate pressures, persuasion, and compromise, as will maintain the cohesion of the alliances. The US should, however, act independently of its major allies when the advantage of achieving US objectives by such action clearly outweighs the danger of lasting damage to its alliances. In this connection, consideration should be given to the likelihood that the initiation of action by the US prior to allied acceptance. Allied reluctance to act should not inhibit the US from

- taking action, including the use of nuclear weapons, to prevent Communist territorial gains when such action is clearly necessary to US security." NSC 5422/2, August 7, 1954, *ibid.*, 720–21.
33. Paper prepared by the Department of State, November 15, 1954, *ibid.*, 772–76.
  34. The 229th meeting of the NSC, December 21, 1954, *ibid.*, 834.
  35. *New York Times*, March 16, 1954, 8; Don Bliss to Hayden Raynor, January 14, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, VI, pt. 2, 2116–17.
  36. *New York Times*, January 19, 1954, 1, 7.
  37. French suspicion of U.S. leadership was not only related to defense issues. In the spring of 1954, there was widespread press coverage in France of Washington's problems with Senator McCarthy. French intellectuals no longer believed that McCarthy was part of a "lunatic fringe" in America, and they wondered aloud why Eisenhower did not act more forcefully to end the chaos. Under these conditions, neutralism appeared more palatable. See memorandum by the Special Assistant to the Secretary of State to Dulles, April 3, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, VI, pt. 2, 1405–07.
  38. First quotation in Wall, *The United States and the making of postwar France*, 273–74, second in paper prepared by Leon Fuller of the Policy Planning Staff, September 10, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 2, 1170.
  39. Bonbright to Murphy, February 1, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 482–84. Bonbright argued that European fears were reinforced by negotiations for base-rights in Spain, rumors of plans to deploy U.S. forces behind the Pyrenees, and other indications that the JCS wanted to move to the periphery. See the 144th meeting of the NSC, May 13, 1953, *FRUS: 1952–54*, VI, pt. 2, 1939–45; NSC 72/6, June 28, 1951, *FRUS: 1951*, IV, pt. 1, 820; Planning Board of the NSC to the NSC, May 11, 1953; Wilson to the NSC, May 19, 1953; and NSC 5418/1, June 10, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, VI, pt. 2, 1937–38, 1945–47, 1980–85.
  40. Murphy to Bonbright, February 10, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 484–85.
  41. Gruenther unwisely fanned the flames of these expectations when he announced in January that while he did not know the extent to which new weapons would allow NATO to reduce its forces, it followed that some reduction would take place: that if a conventional line needed 70 divisions, then that same line would need 70 minus *X* divisions if they were equipped with atomic weapons. SACEUR's job was to find out the value of *X*. *New York Times*, January 8, 1954, 2.
  42. NIE 11-4-54, August 13, 1954, *CIA Research Reports: the Soviet Union, 1946–1976*; CAB 131/13, D (53) 45, October 1, 1953, PRO. Both studies noted a leveling-off of Soviet defense expenditures, including cuts in conventional forces after Stalin's death in 1953.
  43. Memorandum for Radford, January 29, 1954; memorandum for Ridgway, March 8, 1954, both in CJCS 092.2, North Atlantic Treaty (January 1954–July 1954), RG 218, USNA; JSPC 876/851, May 21, 1954, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 279; JCS 2073/828, June 4, 1954, *ibid.*, sec. 281.
  44. *The Times*, 12 March, 1954, 5.
  45. DEFE 4/69, COS (54) 34th meeting, March 26, 1954 and COS (54) 43rd meeting, April 12, 1954, PRO.
  46. CAB 131/14, D (54) 21, April 3, 1954; DEFE 6/25, JP (54) 39 (Final), April 29, 1954, PRO.
  47. This is based on Richardson's account in "NATO nuclear strategy: a look back," 39. Richardson's recollection as a SHAPE planner under Gruenther, though probably accurate, must be seen in light of the fact that it was written as a defense of first-use in the early 1980s. Fred Icklé's critique of first-use appeared in the same journal a few months earlier. Icklé, "NATO's 'first-use': a deepening trap?" *Strategic Review*, 8 (Winter 1980).
  48. JCS 2073/765, February 24, 1954, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 265, USNA.
  49. *New York Times*, March 17, 1954, 1, 5. Privately, Dulles agreed that there was "no constitutional basis to shift to the President through a treaty the Congressional power to declare war."
  50. Emphasis added. See conversation with Mr. Dean, March 18, 1954, *Telephone Conversations of John Foster Dulles*, reel 2.
  51. *ibid.*; *New York Times*, March 18, 1954, 1, 14.

52. *New York Times*, March 17, 1954, 6.
53. CAB 131/14, D (54) 3rd meeting, February 19, 1954; DEFE 4/69, COS (54) 43rd meeting, April 12, 1954; DEFE 6/26, JP (54) 77 (Final), September 3, 1954, PRO.
54. Memorandum of conversation, April 12, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 501. The British and Americans may have agreed in their appreciation of Soviet nuclear technology but they were also wrong. Matthew Evangelista has concluded the first Soviet tactical nuclear bomber did not roll off the assembly line until 1959. Evangelista, *Innovation and the arms race: how the United States and the Soviet Union develop new military technologies* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 174–99.
55. Memorandum of conversation, April 12, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 501.
56. A CIA estimate in August 1954 reasoned that the Soviets did not expect to overrun Europe by first blackmailing U.S. allies into denying permission to the Americans for base rights, and then attacking with conventional forces. Soviet leaders, the CIA thought, believed that Western nuclear capabilities would remain “sufficient to make the outcome of general war extremely hazardous and uncertain for the USSR.” It was more likely that nuclear restraint would exist in peripheral areas. NIE 11–4–54, August 13, 1954, *CIA Research Reports: the Soviet Union, 1946–76*, reel 2.
57. George C. Herring and Richard Immerman, “Eisenhower, Dulles, and Dienbienphu: ‘The day we didn’t go to war’ revisited,” *Journal of American History*, 71, 2 (September 1984), 353–55; Herring, “‘A good stout effort’: John Foster Dulles and the Indochina crisis, 1954–1955,” in Immerman, *Dulles and the diplomacy of the Cold War*, 218.
58. Coincidentally, on the day Dulles addressed the NAC, 71-year-old retired Admiral William Halsey, then a director of the International Telephone and Telegraph Company, stopped off in Pearl Harbor on his way to commemorations of the Battle of the Coral Sea. He took the occasion to complain about the unseemly nuclear hysteria gripping the United States. “I hate to see people in our country appearing to be jitterish [*sic*] right now. That’s not becoming for an American. I can’t see any difference between being killed by an atomic or hydrogen bomb and being killed by a hand grenade.” *New York Times*, April 24, 1954, 8.
59. “US for NATO shifts because of H-bomb,” *New York Times*, April 23, 1954, 1, 4.
60. Statement by the Secretary of State to the NAC closed ministerial session, Paris, April 23, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 511.
61. Secretary of State to the NAC, April 23, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 512–13.
62. *Ibid.*, 512. The view that Dulles did not expect a Soviet conventional attack but thought a doctrine of “first-use” would help dispense with reticent allies is confirmed in a letter written by Livingston Merchant, Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, to the U.S. Permanent Representative on the NAC, John Hughes. See Wampler, *Ambiguous legacy*, 657, fn. 34.
63. Watson, *The History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, V, 305.
64. NSC 151/2, December 4, 1953, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, II, pt. 2, 1256–85.
65. Quoted in Watson, *The History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, V, 305.
66. “Gruenther briefs NATO’s ministers,” *New York Times*, April 25, 1954, 27.
67. Richardson, “NATO nuclear strategy,” 41; Wampler, *Ambiguous legacy*, 613–14.
68. Wampler, *Ambiguous legacy*, 612.
69. JSPC 842/168, August 23, 1954, JCS Records, CS 381, US (5–23–46), sec. 46, USNA. Emphasis added.
70. Robert A. Doughty, *The evolution of US army tactical doctrine, 1946–76* (Fort Leavenworth, KA: Combat Studies Institute, U.S. Army and General Staff College, 1979), 14.
71. Quoted in *ibid.*
72. FM 100–5, *Field Service Regulations, Operations*, 1954, in Doughty, *ibid.*, 15.
73. *Ibid.*; Jonathan House, *Toward combined arms warfare: a survey of 20th century tactics, doctrine, and organization*, Combat Studies Institute Research Survey no. 2. U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, August 1984), 154.

74. Robert C. Richardson, "NATO nuclear strategy: a look back," *Strategic Review*, 9,2 (Spring 1951), 41.
75. Richardson, "NATO nuclear strategy," 41; Robert A. Wampler, *Ambiguous Legacy: the United States, Great Britain and the foundations of NATO strategy, 1948–1957* (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University: Cambridge, MA, 1991), 617.
76. *New York Times*, April 23, 1954, 4.
77. *The Times*, March 16, 1954, 8; *New York Times*, July 31, 1954, 5; *New York Times*, September 29, 1954, 6. For an intriguing internal evaluation of the doctrinal conflict between Ridgway and his fellow army officer Gruenther, see memorandum for Radford, "Differing philosophies, Generals Ridgway and Gruenther," September 11, 1954, JCS Records, CJCS 092.2, North Atlantic Treaty (August–December 1954), USNA.
78. Memorandum by the Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, June 10, 1954, JCS Records, CCS 381 US (1-31-50), sec. 37, USNA. See split views in NSC 5422, June 14, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, II, pt. 1, 655–60; memorandum by the Director of the Policy Planning Staff to the Secretary of State, August 4, 1954, *ibid.*, 699–700; paper prepared by the Department of State, November 15, 1954, *ibid.*, 772–76; and the 227th meeting of the NSC, December 3, 1954, *ibid.*, 803–06.
79. Millis's article appeared in the *New York Herald Tribune*. It is quoted in James M. Gavin, *War and peace in the space age* (New York: Harper, 1958), 152.
80. JCS 2073/848, July 20, 1954, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 289, USNA; and Watson, *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, V, 306.
81. Wampler, *Ambiguous Legacy: the United States, Great Britain and the foundations of NATO strategy, 1948–1957* (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University: Cambridge, MA, 1991), 621–22.
82. Wilson to Dulles, August 16, 1954, in Watson, *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, V, 306.
83. Radford to the JCS, September 7, 1954, JCS Records, CCS 092, Western Europe (3-12-48), sec. 296, USNA. Although the United States did not have a firm policy on what to do of the EDC failed, as Saki Dockrill has said, it is not true that its failure was unexpected. Washington could not discuss alternatives before the French had made up their mind. JCS provisions for the collapse of the EDC, initiated about a year before the French decision, consisted mostly of strongly worded assertions about how much more strategically important Germany was than France. See, JCS 2124/119, June 24, 1954, JCS Records, CCS 092 Germany (5-4-49), sec. 22; JCS to Wilson, June 25, 1954, *ibid.*; Twining to the JCS, July 2, 1954, *ibid.*, and Saki Dockrill, "Britain and the settlement of the West German rearmament question in 1954," in Michael Dockrill and John Young, eds., *British foreign policy, 1945–56* (New York: Macmillan, 1989), 155.
84. Peter Fischer, "West German rearmament and the nuclear challenge," in Heller and Gillingham, *NATO*, 387–88.
85. Dockrill, "Britain and West German rearmament," 156; Olaf Mager, "Anthony Eden and the framework of security: Britain's alternatives to the European Defence Community, 1951–54," in Beatrice Heuser and Robert O'Neill, eds., *Securing peace in Europe, 1945–62: thoughts for the post-Cold War era* (London: Macmillan, 1992), 125–38; and John W. Young, "German rearmament and the European Defence Community," in Young, *The foreign policy of Churchill's peacetime administration, 1951–1955* (Leicester: University of Leicester Press, 1988), 81–107.
86. JCS 2124/129, September 16, 1954, CCS 092, Germany (5-4-49), sec. 23; Twining to the JCS, September 17, 1954, *ibid.*, sec. 24. For JCS views of the aftermath of the EDC failure, see also memorandum for the Secretary of Defense, September 21, 1954, CJCS 092.2, North Atlantic Treaty (August–December 1954); corrigendum to JCS 2124/133, September 22, 1954, CCS 092 Germany (5-4-49), sec. 25; JCS to Wilson, September 22, 1954, *ibid.*; JCS 2124/135, September 22, 1954, *ibid.*; and Carney to the JCS, September 24, 1954, *ibid.*, sec. 24, all USNA; and three JCS memoranda to Wilson, all September 22, 1954, in *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 2, 1247–53.
87. The 215th meeting of the NSC, September 24, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 2, 1263–68; NSC 5433/1, September 25, 1954, *ibid.*, 1268–71; memorandum of conversation by the Director of the PPS, September 27, 1954, *ibid.*, 1275–78; memorandum of conversation by the

- assistant secretary of state for European affairs, September 17, 1954, *ibid.*, 1283–88; Rolf Steininger, “John Foster Dulles, the European defense community, and the German question,” in Immerman, ed., *Dulles and the diplomacy of the Cold War*, 103–08.
88. Hughes to Dulles, September 16, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 522–24; and Radford to Wilson, September 27, 1954, JCS Records, CJCS 092.2 North Atlantic Treaty (August–December 1954), USNA.
  89. Watson, *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, V, 311–12.
  90. Joseph Wolf to Benjamin Moore and Joseph Palmer, June 15, 1954, quoted in Wampler, *Ambiguous legacy*, 626. Emphasis added.
  91. Wampler, *ibid.*, 627–28. On the State Department’s fear of disunity over the political implications of the New Approach, see Merchant to Dulles, November 1, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 527–29.
  92. Watson, *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, V, 312.
  93. Dulles and Wilson to Eisenhower, November 2? [*sic*], 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 530.
  94. MC 48 (Final), November 22, 1954, paragraph 6, in the collection of the Directorate of History, Department of National Defence, Ottawa, Canada. I thank Peter Haydon for providing me with a copy of MC 48.
  95. MC 48 (Final), paras. 5, 7–9.
  96. Dulles and Wilson to Eisenhower, November 2? [*sic*], 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 531; Collins in memorandum of conversation, November 3, 1954, *ibid.*, 532–33.
  97. Goodpaster to Dulles, Wilson, and Radford, November 4, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 533–34.
  98. The first portion of this paper is in Goodpaster’s memorandum, November 16, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 534–35. The second part, dealing with bringing the allies into the atomic era by a *quid pro quo* was not printed in *FRUS*, but is in the Eisenhower Papers, Ann Whitman File, box 27, NATO file; and WHO, Office of the Staff Secretary, box 3, NATO file no. 1 (4), DDEL.
  99. Memorandum of bipartisan briefing of Congressional leaders, November 17, 1954, Eisenhower Papers, Ann Whitman file, DDEL.
  100. Eden’s statement—all was now “equal in the grim reckoning”—was not as pessimistic in its context. It was said as a justification for Britain’s hydrogen bomb project which would give the United Kingdom “the quills of the porcupine and they should be deadly against any power. I believed that to own and control a stock of hydrogen and atomic bombs in these islands, and the means to deliver them, would increase the security of the population against sudden attack.” Eden, *Full circle* (London: Cassell, 1960), 368.
  101. Ian Clark and Nicholas Wheeler, *The British origins of nuclear strategy 1945–1955* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 200–11.
  102. DEFE 5/52, COS (54) 116, April 9, 1954; and DEFE 6/28, JP (54) note 10, April 20, 1954, both PRO.
  103. Clark and Wheeler, *British origins of nuclear strategy*, 218–21. Both Buzzard and Blackett dissented from this view, with Buzzard attempting to advance a theory of “graduated deterrence” “predicated on the tenability of distinctions between gross categories of weapons and hence on the possibility of limiting even a nuclear war.” *Ibid.*, 221.
  104. DEFE 6/26, JP (54) 76 (Final), September 2, 1954; and JP (54) 77 (Final), September 3, 1954, PRO.
  105. MC 48 (Final), para. 7; DEFE 4/73, COS (54) 115th meeting, November 3, 1954, PRO.
  106. DEFE 4/74, COS (54) 130th meeting, December 7, 1954, and COS (54) 128th meeting, December 1, 1954; DEFE 4/72, COS (54) 96th meeting, September 8, 1954, PRO; SNIE 11–8–54, September 10, 1954, *CIA research reports: the Soviet Union, 1946–1976*, reel 2.
  107. DEFE 6/28, JP (54) note 22, October 21, 1954; DEFE 5/55, COS (54) 396, December 31, 1954, PRO.
  108. DEFE 4/72, COS (54) 98th meeting, September 13, 1954, PRO.

109. DEFE 4/73, COS (54) 117th meeting, November 8, 1954, PRO.
110. DEFE 4/73, COS (54) 111th meeting, October 27, 1954, and COS (54) 117th meeting, November 8, 1954, PRO.
111. Quoted in Osgood, *NATO: the entangling alliance*, 110; *The Times*, October 22, 1954, 5. Montgomery's remarks put Churchill under pressure in the House. He was berated for allowing the military to control the bomb. Churchill denied that such a transfer of authority had taken place, but he was unwilling to answer questions about control of tactical weapons, or whether Montgomery's views reflected SHAPE policy. *The Times*, October 29, 1954, 5.
112. Gérard Bossuat, "France and the leadership of the West in the 1950s: a story of disenchantment," in Beatrice Heuser and Robert O'Neill, eds., *Securing peace in Europe, 1945–62: thoughts for the post-Cold War era* (London: Macmillan, 1992), 108–10; Wall, *The United States and postwar France*, 277, 295–96.
113. Lawrence Scheinman, *Atomic energy policy in France under the fourth republic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 215.
114. Georges-Henri Soutou, *The French military program for nuclear energy, 1945–1981*, Nuclear History Program Occasional Paper 3 (Centre for International Security Studies at Maryland, School of Public Affairs, University of Maryland, 1989), 2; Maurice Vaïsse, "Le choix atomique de la France," *Vingtième Siècle Revue d'Histoire*, 36 (October–December 1992), 21–30, reprinted as well in Vaïsse, ed., *La France et l'atome* (Bruxelles: Bruyant, 1994). See also Dominique Mongin, *La bombe atomique française, 1945–1958* (Bruxelles: Bruyant, 1997); and Marcel Duval and Dominique Mongin, *Histoires des forces nucléaires française depuis 1945, Que sais-je?* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1993).
115. Soutou, "La politique nucléaire de Pierre Mendès France," *Relations internationales*, 59 (Autumn 1989), 319–20. Soutou's otherwise excellent study is unfortunately based on the common but persistently false assumption that the Lisbon program stated NATO would only use nuclear weapons as a last resort.
116. Gabrielle Hecht, *The radiance of France: nuclear power and national identity after World War II* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998), 76.
117. Soutou, "La politique nucléaire de Mendès France," 321–23; Steininger, "The EDC and the German question," 107; Kaplan, *The United States and NATO*, 65.
118. Dominique Mongin, "Forces armées et genèse de l'armement nucléaire français," *Relations internationales*, 59 (Autumn 1989), 313; Joylon Howorth and Patricia Chilton, "Introduction: defence, dissent and French political culture," Howorth and Chilton, eds., *Defence and dissent in contemporary France* (London: Croom Helm, 1984), 8–9.
119. Neville Waites, "Defence policy: the historical context," in Howorth and Chilton, *ibid.*, 39. France did not acquire a tactical nuclear capability of its own until the early 1970s. See Patricia Chilton, "French nuclear weapons," *ibid.*, 144–45.
120. Memorandum of conversation, November 20, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 535.
121. Merchant to Hughes, November 24, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 538; see also Martin to Dulles, November 24, 1954, *ibid.*, 536–37.
122. Hughes to Dulles, December 4, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 539–41.
123. Quoted in memorandum for Radford, December 8, 1954, JCS Records, CJCS 092.2, North Atlantic Treaty (August–December 1954), USNA.
124. Memorandum of telephone conversation, December 7, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 541.
125. Quoted in memorandum for Radford, December 8, 1954, JCS Records, CJCS 092.2, North Atlantic Treaty (August–December 1954), USNA.
126. "Press conference by the Secretary of State," December 16, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 542–47.
127. *Ibid.*, 545; "The President's new conference of December 15, 1954," *Public papers of the presidents of the United States: Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1954*, 110–05; *The Times*, December 15, 1954, 8; December 16, 1954, 8; December 17, 1954, 4; *The New York Times*, December 18, 1954, 1, 4, 6;

- December 19, 1954, E1; and December 23, 1954, 4; *The Christian Science Monitor*, December 13, 1954, 4; December 14, 1954, 4; December 18, 1954, 17; December 18, 1954, 2, 3.
128. Memorandum of conversation, December 16, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 547–48.
129. *Ibid.*, 548.
130. Wampler, *Ambiguous legacy*, 639–40.
131. U.S. delegation at the North Atlantic Council meeting, December 18, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 557–58. The NAC’s communiqué is in Department of State *Bulletin*, January 3, 1955, 10–12; the British version is in DEFE 4/74, COS (54) 133rd meeting, December 22, 1954, PRO.
132. U.S. delegation at the North Atlantic Council meeting, December 18, 1954, *FRUS: 1952–1954*, V, pt. 1, 558–59.
133. *Ibid.* Emphasis added.
134. The 229th meeting of the NSC on December 21, 1954, December 22, 1954, *ibid.*, 562.
135. MC 48 (Final), para. 10c.
136. *Ibid.*
137. Wohlstetter, “The delicate balance of terror,” *Foreign Affairs*, 37 (January 1959).
138. James B. Conant recalled that the Eisenhower administration “planned to rearm Germany and pull American troops out.” It was Conant’s opinion that “if any hint of such a thing had got to the Germans, it would have been impossible for the Chancellor to have rearmed the Germans. Therefore, we were dealing with a very, very delicate situation in which hypocrisy [*sic*] verging on straight prevarication was about the only thing that could be used.” Conant in Dulles Oral History Project, Dulles Papers.

## **Conclusion    What Does Culture Tell Us About NATO Nuclear Strategy That We Were Afraid To Ask?**

1. Quoted in Burke Interview, Dulles Oral History Project, Dulles Papers, Seeley Mudd Library, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ.
2. Trachtenberg, “A ‘wasting asset,’ ” *History and strategy*, 100–52.
3. Eisenhower’s litany of complaints about Congressional restrictions on nuclear sharing is recorded in Trachtenberg, *A constructed peace*, 196–97. Trachtenberg argues that Eisenhower, as part of his original “concept” to restore Europe’s military self-sufficiency, was in fact “the driving force behind the nuclear sharing arrangements,” even though the form of sharing often appeared to be extraordinarily lax and careless.
4. See Trachtenberg, *A constructed peace*, chap. 6.
5. *Ibid.*, 202–04. Dulles’s enthusiasm for nuclear sharing is supported by the recollections of one-time U.S. NATO ambassador W. Randolph Burgess. When Dulles was visiting the U.S. embassy in Paris, sometime in 1957–58, he reportedly argued with Burgess and Livingston Merchant over the question of giving the Europeans authority over nuclear weapons. Burgess believes that he and Merchant persuaded Dulles to give up the idea. See Burgess Interview, Dulles Oral History Project, Dulles Papers.
6. David Bruce believed that Dulles was as committed to European integration—“in all of its forms”—as Jean Monnet. See Bruce Interview, Dulles Oral History Project, Dulles Papers.
7. Including an ironical reversal of cultural fortunes, if Robert Kagan is to be believed. Today, American conservatives face the apparently undesirable prospect of a thoroughly pacified, Kantian Europe unable to help prop up American global interests. See Kagan, *Of paradise and power: America and Europe in the new world* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 2002).

8. Trachtenberg, *A constructed peace*, 204–05. Couve de Murville quoted in the Dulles Oral History Project, Dulles Papers.
9. On the “impossibility of society” as the bases for the politics of hegemony, see Laclau and Mouffe, *Hegemony and socialist strategy*; Laclau, “The impossibility of society,” in *New reflections on the revolution of our times* (London:Verso, 1990), 89–92; and Robert Corber, *In the name of national security: Hitchcock, homophobia, and the political construction of gender in postwar America* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993).
10. Eisenhower to Dulles, June 1952, Dulles Papers, Selected Correspondence, Dwight D. Eisenhower File (1952).
11. Quoted in Burke Interview, Dulles Oral History Project, Dulles Papers.
12. Finletter Interview, Dulles Oral History Project, Dulles Papers.



## INDEX

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- Acheson, Dean (U.S. under secretary of state, 1945–47; secretary of state, 1949–53), 73–5, 77, 131  
EDC, 120  
“Gap” problem, 113–14  
Great Debate, 97–8, 101–3  
importance of American atomic supremacy, 142  
internal affairs of European states, 91–4  
Korean War’s effect on NATO, 86, 88–9  
Lisbon conference, 121, 124, 126, 243  
NATO’s Financial and Economic Board, 111, 113  
NATO’s strategic concept, 80–1  
NSC 68, 84
- Adenauer, Konrad (German Chancellor, 1949–1963), 3, 121–2, 129
- Ailleret, Colonel Charles, 129
- Air Policy Commission (Finletter Commission), 63
- Alexander of Tunis, Field Marshal Harold, 204–5
- “alliance security dilemma,” 72; *see also* Snyder, Glenn
- Alphand, Hervé, 111, 120, 190
- Alsop, Joseph, 153
- American Association of Small Business Men, 163
- American Farm Bureau Federation, 163
- “Americanism,” 12, 159, 162–7
- American Legion, 163
- American Medical Association, 163
- The American Way of War*, *see* Weigley, Russell
- Anderson, Benedict, 9
- Anderson, Clinton (U.S. secretary of agriculture), 63
- Annual Review (NATO), 120, 136, 139, 190, 199, 204–6, 221
- Arnold, Matthew, 24
- atlanticism, 6, 8, 11, 48–9, 52, 252
- atlantic community, 4, 73, 117, 186, 210
- transatlanticism, 62, 185
- atom bomb, 55, 99, 100, 108, 141, 146, 168, 195, 225, 229
- Atomic Energy Act (1947), 244
- Attlee, Clement (British Prime Minister), 55–6, 93–4, 130–1
- autonomy, 8, 15, 20, 24, 30, 32, 40, 44, 69
- allied, 41, 211, 218, 233
- American, 12, 44, 62, 66–7, 75, 233
- British, 57
- European, 6, 42–3, 45, 47–8, 52, 62, 66, 70, 191, 240, 245–7
- French, 236
- nuclear (U.S.), 13, 246, 248
- strategic, 75, 185, 226
- West German, 48, 58
- Azores, 106
- Bannister, Ward, 161
- Beaufre, General André, 59, 88

- Belgium, 114, 117–18, 120, 237
- Bell, Daniel, 173
- Bellah, Robert, 173
- Bercovitch, Sacvan, 29
- Bergeron, Paul, 129
- Bergson, Henri, 175, 178
- Bermuda Conference (1953), 207–8, 219, 224
- Bevin, Ernest (British foreign secretary, 1945–51), 52–4, 56–7, 59, 64, 89
- Bidault, Georges, 64, 121
- Big Three (U.S., Britain, France), 6, 8, 19, 49–50, 67, 127, 208
- Billotte, General Pierre, 58
- Blackett, Patrick, 55
- Blanc, General Amédée, 192
- Bloom, Allan, 20
- Boegner, Jean-Marc, 236
- Bohlen, Charles, 86
- Bolte, General Charles, 227
- Booth, Ken, 30
- Bourdieu, Pierre, 25
- Bowles, Chester, 156
- Bradley, General Omar (U.S. JCS chairman, 1949–53), 73, 78, 82, 85, 136–9
- Brands, H.W., 67
- Bretton Woods, 248
- Bricker, John, 163–4  
Bricker Amendment, 163
- British Empire, *see* imperialism
- Brodie, Bernard, 183
- BROILER (U.S. war plan), 64
- Brussels Treaty (1948), 64, 230  
Brussels Pact, 59
- Buchan, Alastair, 132
- Bundy, McGeorge, 4
- Bureau of the Budget (U.S.), 85, 147, 150
- Burke, Admiral Arleigh, 242, 250
- Burley, Anne-Marie, 32
- Bush, George W., 1
- Butler, John, 96
- Buzzanco, Robert, 22
- Buzzard, Sir Anthony (British director of naval intelligence), 133
- Cabot, Thomas, 110–11
- Canada, 2, 53, 94, 106, 110, 112, 130, 185, 237–8, 250
- Carney, Admiral Robert, 147, 199
- Carte Blanche, 3
- Checkel, Jeffrey, 23
- Chiefs of Staff (COS, British), 51, 54–6, 94, 139–40, 189, 235
- China  
Nationalist, 248  
People's Republic of, 99, 106, 114, 132, 139, 162, 164–6, 168, 170, 177, 181, 235
- Churchill, Sir Winston (British Prime Minister), 125, 130–2, 140, 207, 223, 237
- Clausewitz, Carl von, 3, 35
- Claxton, Brooke (Canadian minister of defense), 94, 112, 123–4
- Clifford, James, 23–4
- Cohen, William (U.S. Secretary of Defense), 2
- Collins, General J. Lawton, 84, 200
- Colville, Sir John, 140
- Comité d'action scientifique de Défense nationale*, 129
- Commissariat à l'énergie atomique (CEA)*, 60, 129, 236
- Commonwealth (British), 51–3  
conservatives (U.S.), 18, 178, 248  
Dulles and, 156  
Eisenhower and, 144, 297n8  
Great Debate, 96, 98–9, 111, 114, 125–6  
NATO allies, 75, 233, 243  
neo-isolationism, 61, 159–60, 162, 164–6, 168, 173–4, 183, 269n57  
New Deal, 53, 72, 248  
view of American history, 32
- constructivism, *see* social constructivism
- containment, 43, 97, 144–5, 156, 168, 181, 212, 215, 224, 244, 250  
Dulles's critique of, 171–2, 176–9, 185–6
- Conze, Eckart, 7

- Costigliola, Frank, 38
- Council on Foreign Relations, 97, 155, 211
- counterforce targeting, 56
- Couve de Murville, Maurice, 237, 246–7
- Cripps, Sir Stafford, 90
- cultural imperialism, 21
- culture, 6–11, 14–15, 20, 32–8, 41, 44, 47–8, 49, 52, 63, 66, 99, 112, 137, 159, 162, 170
- American, 10–11, 44, 47, 103, 156–7, 159, 162, 173, 234–5, 242, 248, 252
- Atlantic community, 112
- definition of, 21–31, 251–2, 257n10
- European, 52, 69, 118
- French, 33, 128
- neo-isolationist (U.S.), 156–7, 159, 162
- realpolitik* and, 66
- see also* organizational culture; strategic culture
- Cunningham, Admiral of the Fleet Lord John, 56
- Cyprus, 106
- Czechoslovakia, 103, 144
- Czech Coup, 70, 103
- Daughters of the American Revolution, 163
- DC 13, 82
- DC 28, 93, 112
- DeConde, Alexander, 61
- Defense Committee (NATO), 80
- De Gaulle, Charles, 58–9, 128
- De Greef, Édouard, 114
- De Lattre, General Jean, 88
- Denmark, 2, 79, 112, 225, 237
- Dennis, Lawrence, 75
- Department of State (U.S.), 70, 76, 86, 93, 102, 114, 137, 151, 165, 202, 205, 214, 218, 229–31
- De Staercke, André, 120, 237
- deterrence, 2, 3, 5, 6, 35, 45, 80, 102, 104, 141, 152, 155, 172, 179–80, 182, 187, 214–15, 227–9, 239–41, 244, 247–9
- British concept of, 51, 55–6, 134, 207, 234
- extended, 5, 172, 186–7
- Massive retaliation and, 155, 170–86
- nuclear (atomic), 2, 3, 13, 17–19, 35, 102, 141, 152, 170, 179, 180, 205, 216, 232, 241, 249, 255, 303n20
- Dickson, Air Marshall William, 55–6
- Dirksen, Everett, 96
- Douglas, Lewis, 88
- Douglas, William, 173
- Douhet, Guilo, 129
- Draper, Theodore, 190, 201–3
- Dr. Strangelove*, 1
- Dulles, John Foster (U.S. secretary of state, 1953–1959), 13, 100
- British views of, 140
- Eisenhower and, 144, 181, 183–5, 221
- Massive Retaliation, 18, 152, 155–7, 169, 171–2, 174–87, 210–12, 245, 248–9
- New Look, 145–7, 154, 171–2, 174–87, 189–92, 217–19
- nuclear first-use, 208–9, 219–25, 230–3, 237–40, 244
- nuclear sharing with allies, 246–7
- “Policy for security and peace” article (1954), 155, 183, 211, 222
- “A policy of boldness” article (1950), 178
- the West as “spiritual community,” 38
- see also* Massive Retaliation
- Economic Cooperation Act (1948), 54
- Eden, Sir Anthony (British foreign secretary), 223, 230, 234, 237–9
- Einstein, David Lewis, 160
- Eisenhower, Dwight, 1, 135, 154, 161, 179, 182–5, 187–92, 194–5, 199, 201, 205, 208, 212, 214–16, 219–24, 226, 229, 231–3, 244–6, 248–9
- Bricker Amendment, 163

- Churchill, 140, 223
- Conservatives, 98, 140, 156–7, 166, 168, 189
- election (1952), 139–40, 144, 156, 176
- Great Debate and, 96, 98
- Internationalism of, 61, 157, 159, 166, 171, 183, 185, 301n72, 304n129
- MC-48, 231–3
- Medium Term Defense Plan, 93, 98
- Neo-isolationism, 156–7, 171, 189
- New Look and, 13, 17, 43, 108, 137, 140, 143–8, 151–2, 154, 182, 184, 187, 191, 194, 208, 220, 233, 244
- Nuclear sharing, 43–5, 66, 208, 245–6
- Nuclear weapons as conventional weapons, 3, 142
- Preventive war, 181, 184
- Project VISTA, 107
- religion and, 173
- Republican Party and, 144–6, 156, 249
- SACEUR, 91, 94, 96, 98, 107, 113, 137, 144, 199
- Temporary Council Committee (NATO), 117, 120
- Truman, 94, 108–9, 143, 156, 166, 183, 189, 191, 246, 248
- Eisenstadt, S.N., 31
- Eliot, George Fielding, 153
- Ely, General Paul-Henri-Romuald, 128
- Empire*, 8, 39–41, 43; *see also* Hardt, Michael; Negri, Antonio
- “empire by invitation,” 41–2, 52
- Erikson, Kai, 173
- Europe (Western), 10–12, 42, 46, 51, 57, 62, 71, 77, 83, 87, 101–2, 114, 119–20, 128, 137, 149, 196–7, 202, 220, 229, 240, 246–8, 252
- European Defense Community (EDC), 15, 91–2, 120–2, 128–9, 190, 207–8, 210, 219–20, 226, 229–30, 235
- Europeanism, 8, 15, 47–8, 52, 121–2, 126, 129, 235
- European Recovery Program (ERP), 54, 70–1
- Fair Deal liberalism, 99
- Faure, Edgar, 80, 123, 125
- Federal Council of Churches, 178
- Fellers, General Bonner, 98
- Financial and Economic Board (FEB), 111–13
- Finletter, Thomas, 108, 197–8, 250
- first-use, 6, 8–9, 13, 15, 18–19, 21, 50, 188, 210, 217, 226–7, 241–3, 246, 249, 253
- Dulles, 211, 224–5, 231, 240, 244
- Eisenhower, 231–3
- Massive Retaliation and, 185
- no-first-use, 4
- pre-emption and, 212
- recent NATO debates on, 1–5
- SACEUR’s pre-delegated authority and, 193, 231–2
- Fischer, Joschka, 2
- Flexible Response, 3–4
- Foreign Affairs*, 4, 155, 183, 211, 222
- Foreign Assistance Correlation Committee (FACC), 76
- Foreign Office (British), 52, 54, 56, 140, 205, 235
- Fortress America, 41, 62, 146, 170, 181
- France, 2, 6, 15–17, 33, 35, 47–50, 91–2, 120, 166, 168, 175, 187–8, 191, 211, 216, 225–6, 234–8
- American hostility toward, 166, 168, 219
- Atomic/nuclear thinking, 57, 60–1, 128–30, 187, 208, 235–6, 240–1, 244–7, 250
- EDC, 92, 121, 219, 229–30
- Great Britain, 51–4, 56–7, 59, 67, 78, 190, 207–8
- identity, 11–15, 48, 59–61, 67, 128
- interwar strategic culture, 33
- isolation from Anglo-Americans, 50, 56–8, 70, 73, 79–80, 192–3, 236, 238
- MC 48, 237
- nationalism, 59, 122, 235

- France—*continued*  
 NATO force goals, 110, 112–13  
 New Approach, 207, 226, 229–30, 236, 240–1  
 strategic planning for Europe, 60, 70, 73, 78–80, 110, 192  
 Temporary Council Committee, 118, 120, 123–5  
 Third Force concept, 52–3, 59  
 United States, 58–9, 70, 82, 91–2, 102, 110, 121–5, 128, 152, 166, 168, 192, 207–8, 219, 226  
 West Germany, 12, 15, 58, 60–1, 121–2, 125, 128–30, 152
- Gaitskell, Sir Hugh (British Chancellor of the Exchequer), 110, 114
- Gallois, General Pierre-Marie, 236
- Gavin, Major-General James, 228
- Geertz, Clifford, 8, 24–5
- Germany, West, 2–5, 12, 15, 48, 60, 61, 65, 86, 106, 122  
 admission to NATO, 230  
 nuclear weapons, 152, 236, 246  
 rearmament, 61, 84, 90–1, 96, 102, 120–1, 124–5, 127–8, 130, 149, 152, 188, 219, 229–30, 241, 247  
 reintegration, 48, 50, 57–8, 90–2, 121–2, 125, 129, 202, 230, 236, 241
- Giddens, Anthony, 28
- Gimbel, John, 65
- Global Strategy Paper of 1952 (GSP), British, 17, 132–41, 152, 154, 189, 198, 207
- Goodpaster, General Andrew, 231, 233
- Gordon, Lincoln, 118
- Graham, Billy, 173
- Gramsci, Antonio, 15, 31, 44–5; *see also* hegemony
- Gray, Colin, 35–6
- Great Britain, 2, 6, 7, 11–17, 22, 47–61, 64, 70, 73, 86, 122, 124–5, 127–8, 160, 164–6, 182–3, 187, 224–5, 230
- American conservatives' views of, 97–8, 113–14, 159, 164–6
- Atlanticism, 52–3, 88–90
- continental commitment, 15, 50–4, 56–7
- France, 67, 88, 124, 135, 190, 192–3, 207–8, 234, 240, 244–6, 250
- hegemony, 42
- New Look, 132, 137, 154
- nuclear strategy, 17, 51, 55–7, 79, 125, 130–41, 153–4, 187, 188–9, 197–9, 203–8, 221, 223, 227, 234–41
- strategic culture, 14–15, 34–5, 49, 51, 67, 138, 140
- Temporary Council Committee, 116–18
- Third Force, 15, 17, 52–3, 59
- United States, 53, 54–5, 64, 77, 79, 82, 88–90, 91, 93, 97–8, 105–6, 110, 113–14, 130–1, 134–43, 159, 164–6, 190, 192–3, 197–9, 201, 203–8, 212, 223, 227, 234–41, 245–6
- “Great Debate,” 96, 98–9, 101, 103–4, 156, 170, 178, 183, 186
- Greece, 2, 116, 220, 237
- Greenland, 106
- Groves, General Leslie, 63
- Gruenther, General Alfred, 113, 198, 200
- JCS Director of Joint Planning, 70
- “New Approach,” 220, 222, 226, 229–31, 237
- SACEUR, 137, 193–4, 198, 200, 206, 220–2, 226, 229–31, 237
- Guillaumat, Pierre, 236
- Hall, Stuart, 20
- Halperin, Morton, 183
- Hammond, Paul, 64
- Harding, Sir John, 234–5
- Hardt, Michael, 10, 38–41, 43, 45; *see also* *Empire*; Negri, Antonio
- Harmon Report, 85

- Harriman, Averell, 74, 101, 153, 191  
 Temporary Council Committee,  
 113–14, 116–18, 120, 124
- Harrington, James, 39–41
- Hecht, Gabrielle, 60
- hegemony, 2, 6, 12, 13, 14–16, 20–1, 24,  
 45, 240–1, 252  
 American, 16, 20–1, 43–4, 46, 53, 123,  
 179–80, 232  
 British, 51  
 definition, 20, 29–31, 38–48, 123, 179  
 multilateralism versus, 18, 20, 38, 41,  
 45, 180, 187–209, 245–50, 260n44
- Herder, Johann, 24
- Hickenlooper, Bourke, 99, 165
- Hickerson, John, 54, 65–6
- “Honest John” rocket, 195
- Hoover, Herbert, 13, 99–100, 110, 140,  
 153, 164, 166–70, 179, 186, 223
- House Un-American Activities  
 Committee, 161
- Howard, Michael, 22, 34, 50
- Hughes, John, 201
- Humphrey, George (U.S. secretary of the  
 treasury, 1953–1957), 240–1
- Hunt, Michael, 22
- Huntington, Samuel, 88, 171
- hydrogen (thermonuclear) bomb, 3, 141,  
 149, 206, 234–5, 239
- Iceland, 106
- identity, 32–3, 46–7, 95, 122, 191, 242,  
 260n46, 260n54  
 American, 10, 12, 33, 36, 44, 84, 112,  
 157–8, 166  
 Atlantic, 8, 12  
 British, 51–2  
 conservative (U.S.), 164, 167, 174  
 European, 10, 15–16, 52, 210  
 French, 15, 48, 52, 59–60  
 German, 48, 122, 130  
 national identity, 10, 14, 23, 27–31,  
 36–7, 44, 49, 67, 179, 243, 250–2  
 strategic, 6, 11, 16, 32–4, 36–7, 51, 81,  
 91, 104  
 transnational/collective, 11, 23, 30, 38,  
 42, 46–7, 52, 73, 112, 191
- ideology, 6, 11, 14, 33–4, 52, 67, 76, 82,  
 168, 171, 173, 191, 213, 249, 257n10
- American, 11, 31, 36–7, 41, 47, 76, 84,  
 116, 138, 156–7, 159–60, 163,  
 165, 194
- culture and, 8, 11, 24–7, 29, 31, 34,  
 36–7, 84, 99
- hegemony and, 45–7, 122
- Ikenberry, John, 47
- imperialism, 7, 20, 40, 42–4, 159  
 American, 38, 41  
 British (Empire), 52, 166, 261n60  
 European, 39–40, 98  
 anti-imperialism, 59
- Indochina, 120, 125, 128, 191, 224
- Institut des Hautes Études de Défense  
 Nationale*, 73
- integration, 16, 19, 23, 49  
 economic, 54, 243, 246  
 empire by, 39, 41–3, 122  
 European, 16, 19, 22, 48, 52–4, 56–7,  
 59, 65, 69, 70–1, 92, 111, 121,  
 243, 246–7  
 nationalism versus, 8–9, 11–13, 48,  
 69, 79, 121–3, 126–7, 187, 219,  
 246, 250  
 nuclear, 107, 188, 194, 196, 200, 202,  
 206, 208, 210, 219–20  
 Transatlantic military, 17, 38, 57, 62, 69,  
 75, 98, 103, 118, 120–1
- internationalism  
 American, 8, 10–11, 19, 32, 42–3, 44–6,  
 53–4, 67, 72, 87, 96–8, 101, 111,  
 115–16, 126, 158–64, 168, 170–1,  
 248–9, 252  
 Dulles, 156–7, 171, 176, 180, 182, 185  
 Eisenhower, 61, 140, 157, 182–3, 185  
 Nationalism, 67, 96, 101, 171  
 Truman, 61, 156  
*see also* liberalism: liberal  
 internationalism
- International Security Affairs Committee  
 (ISAC), 103, 110–11

- Inverchapel, Lord (Sir Archibald John Clark Kerr), 54
- Iriye, Akira, 22
- Ismay, Lord General Hastings Lionel (first secretary general of NATO, 1952–1957), 190, 201, 207, 239
- isolationism, 55, 61, 75, 109–10, 115–16, 126, 152–3, 156–7, 159–62, 169–70, 180, 220, 233, 248, 252, 269n57
- Hoover, 110, 140, 153, 170
- neo-isolationism, 13, 18, 42, 53, 61, 152, 156, 162, 164–5, 167–8, 170–1, 180, 182–3, 185, 189, 192, 210, 213, 234, 241, 249
- Taft, 110, 140, 153, 162, 170, 182–3
- Italy, 47, 52, 110, 119, 175, 230
- Japan, 60, 146, 175, 179; *see also* Okinawa
- Jenner, William, 75, 163
- Johnson, Louis (U.S. secretary of defense), 64, 77, 85, 90
- Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), 13, 116–17, 168, 171, 179, 184–5, 193, 202–6, 210, 212, 214
- British Global Strategy Paper (1952), 136–9
- German rearmament, 90–1, 102, 229–30
- Medium Term Defense Plan, 90–1, 93, 105, 109–12
- nuclear tendencies, 63, 102, 136–9, 141–3, 147–8, 151–2, 203
- overseas bases, 64, 71, 77, 106
- redeployment of U.S. forces, 145–7, 150–2, 185, 220–1
- strategic concept for Europe, 71–4, 77–87, 104–12, 146–9, 151, 199, 202–4, 217, 227, 229–31
- unilateralist tendencies, 18, 43, 62, 65, 70, 72, 82, 87, 97–8, 179, 198, 217, 226, 229, 244
- Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, 141
- Joliot-Curie, Frédéric, 60; *see also* *Commissariat à l'Énergie atomique*
- Jonas, Manfred, 160
- Juin, General Alphonse, 128, 130
- Kaiser, Karl, 4
- Kier, Elizabeth, 32–3
- Kennan, George, 4, 45, 54, 65, 176, 302n100
- Kent, John, 52
- Keohane, Robert, 44
- Keyes, Roger, 149
- Kirkpatrick, Sir Ivone (British permanent undersecretary of state for foreign affairs), 223
- Knowland, William, 13, 99, 162, 168
- Korea, 90, 103, 145–6, 248
- Korean War, 13, 18, 75, 83–8, 90, 93, 95, 96–9, 102, 106, 126, 139, 143, 145–6, 150, 153, 155, 162, 165–6, 168–9, 170, 172, 176, 177, 181, 183, 195–6, 211, 218, 235, 244
- Kubrick, Stanley, 1
- Kupchan, Charles, 47
- Laclau, Ernesto, 15, 29; *see also* Mouffe, Chantal
- Leber, Georg, 4
- Lecheres, General Charles, 192
- Leffler, Melvyn, 22
- LeMay, General Curtis, 106, 155, 170, 172, 181
- liberalism, 32, 43, 65, 99, 111, 156–8, 162, 164, 171, 174, 185, 194
- liberal internationalism, 54, 67, 87, 111, 115, 158–9, 171, 248
- neo-liberalism (international relations theory), 27
- Libya, 106
- Liddell Hart, Sir Basil, 34, 234
- “The British Way of War,” 34
- Life* magazine, 178, 182
- Lippmann, Walter, 63, 160, 248
- U.S. Foreign Policy: Shield of the Republic*, 160
- Lisbon Conference (1952), 121–6, 135, 141, 188–9, 195
- Lisbon Force Goals, 16, 69, 95–126, 130–54, 188–9, 194, 200, 220, 243
- Livingston, James, 5

- Lloyd, Selwyn, 191
- Lodge, Henry Cabot, 160
- Lovett, Robert A., 123, 141–2
- Lundestad, Geir, 42; *see also* “empire by invitation”
- MacArthur, General Douglas, 13, 99, 139, 153, 162, 168, 170, 183
- MacDonald, Dwight, 63
- Machiavelli, Niccolò, 39–40
- Macmillan, Harold (British minister of defence), 239
- Madison, James, 39–40
- Mahan, Alfred Thayer, 177
- Maier, Charles, 21, 42
- Makins, Sir Roger, 153–4, 205
- Malenkov, Georgi, 190
- Manhattan Project, 63
- Marshall, General George, 99
- Marshall Plan, 52, 65, 71, 103; *see also* European Recovery Program
- Massive Retaliation, 17–18, 152, 155–7, 169, 171–2, 178–83, 185, 187, 210, 245, 249
- Matthews, Francis P., 161
- MC 26/1, 117, 198
- MC 48, 19, 231–5, 237–41
- McCarthy, Joseph, 97–8, 139, 153
- McCarthyism, 13, 100, 184
- McGrigor, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Rhoderick, 131, 134
- McMahon, Brien, 141
- McMahon Act (1946), 55, 107, 130, 137, 139, 193, 199, 208, 292n64
- McNamara, Robert, 4
- Mead, George Herbert, 49
- Medium Term Defense Plan (MTDP), 16–17, 69–94, 95–8, 101–2, 105, 107, 109–11, 113, 117, 125, 134, 187
- Mendès France, Pierre (French prime minister), 236–7, 241
- Mertes, Alois, 4
- Middle East, 52–3, 65, 134–5, 171, 191
- Middleton, Drew, 104
- military assistance, 16, 62, 65, 71–2, 76, 84, 91, 191, 201, 247
- Military Committee (NATO), 78, 117, 192, 201, 225
- Millar, Hoyer, 190
- Millis, Walter, 228–9
- Monnet, Jean, 114, 117, 120
- Monroe Doctrine, 76, 160
- Montgomery, Field Marshal Bernard Law, 51, 56, 88, 135–6, 235
- Mouffe, Chantal, 15, 29
- Mouvement Républicain Populaire* (MRP), 121
- multilateralism, 6, 10–11, 15, 17–20, 38, 41, 47, 66, 79, 99, 109, 118, 157, 180, 187, 201, 237, 245, 247, 249–50
- definitions, 32, 43–5
- liberal internationalism, 32, 44, 54, 158
- see also under* hegemony
- Multilateral Nuclear Force (MLF), 245
- Murphy, Charles, 131
- Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD), 2, 35
- Mutual Security Administration (MSA), 112–13, 131, 165
- National Economic Council, 163
- nationalism, 8–11, 27, 43, 46, 48–9, 69, 76, 123, 127, 171, 173, 179, 187, 245, 252
- American, 11–13, 17–18, 21, 33, 41, 43, 45–7, 61, 67, 76, 96–7, 99, 101, 103, 109, 116, 122, 126, 140, 157, 162, 165, 167–8, 170, 174, 187, 219, 244–5, 247–8
- European, 12, 16, 54, 62, 67, 69, 88, 116, 120, 129, 191, 246–7, 252
- French, 15, 17, 48, 59, 60, 122, 130, 235
- German, 58, 121–2, 125–6
- nuclear, 19, 106, 152, 219, 250
- National Republic*, 159, 167
- National Security Council, U.S., 63; *see also* NSC
- nation-states, 10, 12–13, 19, 28, 30, 32, 37



- Negri, Antonio, 10, 39, 256n26, 257n2;  
*see also* Hardt, Michael
- neo-realism (international relations theory), 27; *see also* realism
- Netherlands, 79, 110, 112, 237
- “New Approach,” 137, 144, 188, 220, 222, 226–7, 229–34, 241
- New Deal, 13, 32, 53, 72, 99, 158–61, 163, 173–4, 248
- New Look, 43, 108, 127–54, 182, 187, 189, 200, 203, 218, 228–9
- Army criticisms, 228–30
- British Global Strategy Paper (1952) and, 17, 132, 140, 154
- containment (compared with), 108, 143, 182, 191, 212, 244
- cultural logic of, 157–61, 170, 245
- European reactions, 18, 140–1, 152–4, 189, 208, 210, 219–20
- “great equation,” 144, 188, 194
- NATO’s role, 151–2, 206–8, 230, 233, 249
- nuclear unilateralism, 13, 17, 43, 183–6, 200, 229, 233, 241, 247, 249–50
- redeployment, 17, 146–7, 185, 206, 208, 220
- see also* Massive Retaliation
- Newfoundland, 106
- New York Times*, 104, 219, 224, 228
- Ninkovich, Frank, 22, 41
- Nitze, Paul, 71, 74, 84, 89, 92, 102–3, 109–10
- Nixon, Richard, 96
- Norstad, General Lauris, 107–8, 196–9
- North Africa, 106, 128
- North Atlantic Council (NAC), 79–80, 82, 87, 90, 111, 123, 136, 139, 142, 190, 192–3, 198, 201, 207, 222, 224–5, 231, 233–5, 237–8, 240
- Brussels meeting (1950), 93
- Lisbon meeting (1952), 121–6
- Ottawa meeting (1951), 112–14, 117, 144
- Paris meeting (1953), 208–9, 220, 238–9
- Rome meeting (1951), 113, 117
- Norway, 79, 179
- NSC 30, 63, 149
- NSC 68, 75, 80, 83–6, 95, 102–4, 108, 136, 142, 218, 249
- NSC 114/1, 108
- NSC 135/3, 142–3, 145, 149
- NSC 162/2, 147, 150–1, 183, 206, 211, 214–15, 220
- NSC 5422/2, 216–17
- NSC 5440, 218
- nuclear first-use, 4–5, 13, 18, 193, 224, 226, 231, 240, 242–4
- OFFTACKLE (U.S. war plan), 77–8, 82, 86, 93, 106
- Okinawa, 64, 106
- organizational culture, 13, 33–4
- Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), 111, 114, 201
- Osgood, Robert E., 101
- Ottawa, 130
- Ottawa Resolution, 118
- see also* North Atlantic Council (NAC)
- Pace, Frank, 195
- Pax Americana*, 38, 42
- Pearl Harbor, 170, 203, 212, 222–3, 234
- Pearson, Lester B. (Canadian foreign minister), 185, 211
- peripheralism, 11–12, 48, 194
- American, 6, 13, 16–17, 19, 50, 64, 70–1, 72, 82, 84, 87, 105, 116, 185, 188, 192, 221, 243, 245, 248
- British, 15, 50–1, 56, 127, 188, 192, 221
- Pipes, Richard, 35
- Pleven, René, 91, 129, 235
- Plowden, Sir Edwin, 114
- predelegation, 1, 149–50, 152, 185, 193, 206, 230, 234–8, 240
- preemption, 1–2, 56, 180, 184, 207, 212–13, 216, 227, 229, 231–2, 240–1
- preventive war, 1–2, 161, 168, 181, 184, 213, 254n1
- Project Control (U.S. Air Force), 184, 212, 214–15

- Radford, Admiral Arthur, 145–9, 154,  
184, 212, 214, 217, 220, 230–1,  
237, 244
- Reagan, Ronald, 4, 35
- realism, 21, 162, 257n10, 260n46
- realpolitik, 40, 58, 66, 172
- REAPER (U.S. war plan), 86, 93,  
105–6
- rearmament, 96, 120, 144, 152, 219,  
230, 241
- NATO's, 9, 17, 42, 50, 62, 72, 74–5,  
83–4, 87, 89–94, 101–3, 106–13,  
115, 119, 121, 124–6, 127–8,  
130–2, 134, 143, 188, 191–3, 210,  
220, 243, 247
- U.S. (under NSC 68), 45, 101–3, 108,  
113, 147
- see also* Germany, West: rearmament
- religion, 21, 29, 37, 40, 99–100, 159,  
163–4, 167–9, 171–5, 177–9, 181–2,  
210, 244, 249, 251
- republicanism, 39, 173
- Republican Party, 18, 33, 43, 96, 127, 140,  
152, 156–7, 159, 194
- Révers, Major General Georges, 73
- Revue de Défense Nationale*, 129
- Rhine defense, 71, 73, 77
- Rice, Condolezza, 1
- Richardson, Robert, 200
- Ridgway, General Matthew, 135–6, 139,  
192–3, 197–204, 216, 220, 228
- Rocard, Yves, 128
- Rogers, Bernard, 4
- Roll, Sir Eric, 113
- Roman empire, 39–40
- Rome, 113, 117
- Roosevelt, Franklin D., 160, 165–6, 237
- Rosenberg, David A., 106
- Rosenberg, Emily, 22
- Royal Air Force (RAF), British, 56, 112,  
131, 134, 196, 205
- Royal Navy, British, 133
- Ruggie, John Gerard, 29
- embedded liberalism, 32, 158
- multilateralism, 44
- SACEUR (Supreme Allied Commander,  
Europe), 4, 185, 231, 234–8
- Eisenhower, 94, 107, 110, 144, 199
- Gruenther, 137, 193–4, 198, 200, 206,  
220–2, 226, 229–31, 237
- Ridgway, 135–6, 139, 192–3, 197–204
- Scharping, Rudolf, 2
- Scheinman, Lawrence, 129
- Schmidt, Emerson P., 161
- Schneider, David, 24
- Schulze, General Franz-Josef, 4
- Schuman, Robert, 113, 121–2
- Sewell, William, 23–5
- SG 241/3, 230–1, 234
- SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters,  
Allied Powers in Europe), 113, 122,  
144, 187, 189, 201–3, 206, 216,  
221–2, 241
- American dominance, 107–8, 199,  
233, 245
- Atomic/nuclear planning, 189,  
192–200, 226, 228, 235
- authority to use nuclear weapons,  
235, 239
- collective identity formation, 95–6,  
122, 187
- Sherry, Michael, 64
- Shy, John, 35
- Simon, Herbert, 23
- Sleeper, Colonel Raymond, 184,  
212–14, 239
- Slessor, Marshal of the RAF Sir John C.,  
112, 131–40, 153, 197–8, 234
- Slim, Field Marshal Sir William, 131
- Smith, Gerard, 4
- Snyder, Glenn, 72, 145, 152, 156
- Snyder, Jack, 8, 34
- social constructivism, 7, 27–8
- Sokolsky, George, 163–4
- SOLARIUM, 145
- Soviet Union, 1, 11, 17, 45, 52, 108, 117,  
132, 137, 141, 152, 155, 160–1, 166,  
169–70, 172, 178–9, 181, 183, 192,  
201, 226, 244
- empire, 15, 146, 264n100

- Soviet Union—*continued*  
 military capabilities, 3, 81, 55–6, 73–4,  
 79–81, 83, 101, 103–6, 142–3,  
 146, 182, 202–3, 206, 210, 220,  
 223–4, 227, 242  
 preventive war against, 153, 168, 180–1,  
 184, 203–4, 212–15, 217  
 strategic culture, 35  
 threat from, 9, 12, 38, 42, 47, 57–8,  
 84–6, 125, 135, 144, 150, 153,  
 184, 188, 190, 194, 195, 207,  
 249, 180  
 war scenarios, 18–19, 56, 58–60, 62,  
 64–5, 77, 79–80, 84, 98–9, 101–2,  
 115, 105–6, 124–5, 133, 150,  
 215–18, 222, 224–5, 227–9,  
 231–2, 234–6, 239–40
- Spain, 90, 116
- Spofford, John, 114
- Stalin, Josef, 3, 58, 146, 188, 190
- Standing Group (NATO), 16, 121,  
 229, 237  
 Medium Term Defense Plan, 84, 93,  
 105, 109, 144  
 refusal to attend Ottawa NAC meeting,  
 113–14  
 “strategic concept” (1949), 78–9,  
 274n36
- Stehlin, General Paul M.V., 128
- Steinmetz, George, 22–3
- Stephanson, Anders, 22, 68, 173
- Stevenson, Adlai, 156
- Strategic Air Command (SAC), 18–19,  
 101, 106–8, 125–6, 131–2, 145, 155,  
 170, 172, 195, 199, 205, 238; *see also*  
 LeMay, General Curtis
- strategic culture, 6, 12–16, 20, 41, 49–50,  
 63, 69, 128, 158, 188, 200, 210, 245,  
 248, 251, 270n72  
 definition, 32–8
- subjectivity, 6–10, 12, 21, 28–9, 37, 50,  
 118, 251
- Sweden, 90
- Symington, Stuart, 106
- tactical nuclear weapons (TNWs), 2–3, 9,  
 102, 107–8, 141, 143, 147, 149, 151,  
 194, 206, 222, 227, 231, 234
- Taft, Robert, 13, 75, 159, 161
- Taylor, General Maxwell, 88
- Tedder, Air Chief Marshal Arthur, 56
- Temporary Council Committee (TCC),  
 114–24, 187, 190
- Third Force, 15, 17, 52
- Thompson, Kenneth, 161
- “Three Wise Men,” 114
- The Times* (London), 124
- Toulouse, Mark, 171
- Toynbee, Arnold, 175
- Trachtenberg, Marc, 43, 62, 243
- Treaty of Dunkirk (1947), 51
- Truman, Harry, 32, 43, 62–4, 70–2, 77, 83,  
 86, 92–4, 100, 103, 114, 123–4, 130–1,  
 137, 152, 156, 161, 189, 191, 246  
 Congress, 89, 96  
 conservative critics, 32, 54, 61, 96–9,  
 145–6, 158, 162, 166, 169, 172,  
 176–7, 183  
 defense budget, 64, 72, 85  
 nuclear bias, 17, 102, 108–9, 141–3,  
 189, 248  
 presidential control of nuclear  
 weapons, 63  
*see also* containment
- Turkey, 106, 116, 179, 220
- Twining, General Nathan, 136, 181
- United Nations (UN), 57–8, 99, 165,  
 167, 169
- United States, 1, 2, 4–21, 29, 31–3, 35–6,  
 38–48, 49–50, 52–67, 69–79, 80–4,  
 85–99, 100–21, 122–6, 127–42,  
 145–54, 155–9, 160–3, 164–76,  
 178–200, 201–19, 220–30, 243–6,  
 247–52  
 autonomy, 6, 12, 16–17, 19, 62, 65, 67,  
 70, 82, 84, 92, 114–18, 120,  
 138–9, 152, 189, 192, 221, 218,  
 225–6, 233, 237–8, 241, 244–5

- foreign policy, 10, 12, 18, 21, 38–9, 40, 45–6, 61, 68, 84, 87, 92, 100, 120–3, 157–70, 172–91, 207, 218, 246, 250
- France, 58–9, 70, 82, 91–2, 102, 110, 121–5, 128, 152, 166, 168, 192, 207–8, 219, 226
- Great Britain, 53–4, 55, 64, 77, 79, 82, 88–90, 91, 93, 97–8, 105–6, 110, 113–14, 130–2, 134–43, 159, 164–6, 190, 192–3, 197–9, 201, 203–8, 212, 223, 227, 234–41, 245–6
- imperialism, 12, 15, 17, 20, 38–44, 47, 52, 62, 105, 120
- nationalism, 12, 17, 43, 45–6, 101, 109, 122, 165, 174, 187, 219, 245, 247
- nuclear/atomic weapons, 6, 9, 63–6, 78–9, 81, 93, 99–103, 106–8, 126, 131, 135, 138, 141, 145–6, 150, 154, 168, 185, 193–7, 199–200, 203, 206, 208–9, 218, 228, 234, 236, 243, 248
- strategic doctrine, 1, 6, 12–13, 15, 18, 19, 35, 43–4, 61–8, 69, 70–3, 76–80, 86–8, 91, 95, 97, 105–9, 126, 141–6, 152, 157, 165, 170–1, 178, 188, 192–4, 197–200, 203, 206, 208–9, 212–26, 228–32, 236, 240, 243–7, 263n77
- United States Air Force (USAF), 1, 18, 63–4, 76, 80, 86, 104, 106–9, 112, 131, 134, 136, 140, 180, 184, 194, 196–8, 213
- United States Congress (House and Senate), 62, 66, 71, 75–6, 79, 81, 85–6, 89–90, 93–4, 96–8, 101–3, 110, 112–13, 116, 120, 124, 131, 143, 162, 170, 177, 179–80, 208, 210, 224, 232–3, 237, 243
- United States Navy (USN), 64, 80, 140, 161
- Valin, General Henri, 129
- Valluy, General Jean, 192
- Vandenberg, Arthur, 96
- Vandenberg, Hoyt, 85–6, 106, 108, 109, 139, 196
- Van Starckenborgh, Alidius Tjarda, 237
- Van Zeeland, Paul, 191
- VISTA, Project, 107–8, 144
- Vursell, Charles, 72
- Waever, Ole, 29
- Wampler, Robert, 199, 227
- war plans, *see* BROILER; OFFTACKLE; REAPER
- Warsaw Pact, 4–5, 47
- Washington Treaty (1949), 50, 73, 77, 179, 191, 195, 222
- Weapons Systems Evaluation Group (WSEG), 222, 228
- Weber, Max, 28, 14, 23, 37
- Weber, Steve, 43, 45
- Weigley, Russell, 35
- Wells, Samuel Jr., 102
- Wendt, Alexander, 257n3, 259n32, 265n111, 266n11
- Western Union (WU), 52, 54, 57, 65, 70–2, 74, 76
- Western European Union (WEU), 128, 236
- Wildavsky, Aaron, 30
- Williams, Raymond, 23
- Williams, William Appleman, 22
- Wilson, Charles E. (U.S. secretary of defense, 1953–1957), 145, 148, 161, 185, 205, 208–9, 213, 219, 226, 229, 231, 233
- Wilson, Woodrow, 18, 40, 160, 171, 175, 250
- Wohlstetter, Albert, 2, 241
- Wolf, Eric, 29
- Wright, Admiral Jerald, 109
- Wrong, Hume, 130
- Young, John, 52
- Žižek, Slavoj, 60