

Former French Admiral Advocates Europe's Disengagement from NATO

In a two-part article published in Le Monde Jan. 12 and 13, former French Admiral Antoine Sanguinetti called for Europe's "disengagement" from NATO on the grounds that "the Atlantic Alliance has slipped toward new finalities, tending to irreversibly ensure the United States' economic and political control over a Europe which is potentially its main industrial and commercial rival." The following are excerpts from Admiral Sanguinetti's article.

(...) The evolution of American strategy, from the alliance's inception, has always resulted from the US' concern to protect itself from the risks of a European war. Begun at the time of the American atomic monopoly under the aegis of 'massive retaliation' against any Soviet aggression in Europe, it evolved, along with the rise in power of Soviet nuclear forces, toward the 'graduated response' of Mr. McNamara, who announced, in June 1963, a counterforce strategy to 'incite the enemy to spare American cities.' In 1974, as the Soviet force had acquired the capacity to annihilate the U.S. territory, Mr. Schlesinger continued to evoke a strategy of attack against enemy military objectives; but the doctrine became more refined, to limit even more the risks of extension of the hostilities to the American sanctuary....

To this end, (Mr. Schlesinger) breaks all the means of deterrence and defense down to a 'triad': conventional forces are designed to oppose conventional attacks; theater nuclear forces to oppose nuclear attacks against the theater; finally, the strategic forces, directed against the enemy's sanctuary, will tend exclusively to prevent a general nuclear conflict, although they can, if necessary, reinforce the theater nuclear forces in the carrying-out of their limited mission.

The fact that the tactical nuclear forces have become theater nuclear forces means, unambiguously, that their use is conceivable only on theaters which do not involve the U.S. sanctuary. On these theaters, there will henceforth be a tendency to accept defensive combat rather than to deter it....

Such conceptions are perfectly coherent, one could even say judiciously reasoned from the exclusive standpoint of American interests. They are more difficult to accept for a European conscious that American security is to be won at the price of accepting additional and exorbitant risks for the people of our continent....

Whereas Mr. McNamara's 'graduated response' doctrine did not, in fact, assign any a priori limit to escalation and maintained as a last resort, for the protection of the European theater, the diffuse threat of a total American strategic involvement, the Schlesinger doctrine eliminates this possibility. It is impossible to better notify the adversary that, in case a conflict becomes necessary in Europe, he can throw himself into it without extraordinary fears regarding his own sanctuary.

Such an attitude involves, of course, the major danger of facilitating a future armed intervention by the Soviets in Europe. But it has essential advantages for the Americans, in case they should find it in their interest to detonate the conflict.

In this regard, one cannot overstress the importance of Europe in a conjuncture marked by a confrontation of the two superpowers for world domination. The spiritual, demographic, cultural and economic weight of our continent is such that its definitive collapse into one or the other camp would guarantee that camp with a decisive advantage in its overall design. Consequently, it is preferable for both that Europe be totally destroyed rather than appropriated, unharmed, by the adversary. Let those who are still too naive and doubt this find another explanation for the stockpiling by both camps of over 12,000 tactical nuclear warheads, all ready to explode, as well as for their possible use.

Indeed, beyond the ravages and suffering already unleashed by a conventional conflict, the use of such a high number of atomic weapons on our continent would necessarily mean its desertification and the annihilation of its population, with no risks to the main protagonists. The very idea of such a possibility should be intolerable to the threatened Europeans....

The coming to office of Mr. Jimmy Carter in the U.S. has elicited certain hopes. Let us, however, remember the continuity of American options... and let us note that, among the old political roaders who gravitate around the new president-elect, we precisely find Mr. James Schlesinger, a member of the 'Committee on the Present Danger' and an open supporter of preemptive warfare....

In the coming months, there will be no shortage of more or less real causes for conflicts, nor even of possibilities to manufacture some. At a time when storms are brewing on all sides of the international skies—monetary disorder, economic enslavement, general indebtedness, impoverishment of Third-World

countries as well as of the immense majority of individuals, and, finally, the temptation to substitute confrontation for dialogue, we must remember the teachings of history. History shows that societal conflicts have often been treated through violence and persecution, and internal difficulties masked by external adventures. And we must reflect that things do not only occur to others.

It is urgent that the citizens of European countries free themselves from the control of pressure groups, which place ideological enslavement or material interest above the independence and the freedom of action of their nations. It is urgent that European countries disengage from the ideological blocs, whose primitive antagonism may very rapidly lead to a cataclysmic confrontation.

USSR Answers 'Team B' Report

The official Soviet press has stepped up attacks on Western propaganda about a "Soviet threat" to the U.S., identifying its source as the Committee on the Present Danger (CPD), the American Security Council, and the "Team A" vs. "Team B" strategic intelligence estimate controversy. A major feature in the party daily, Pravda, on Jan. 8 located the "Soviet threat" campaign as an attempt to "shock the population" and step up arms spending and militarization in the West. The following day Pravda warned that "the danger stemming from this kind of hysteria must not be underestimated."

Pravda warned that a U.S. push to surpass the Soviet Union in strategic capability — the CPD-dominated "Team B" demand — would be viewed in the Soviet Union as a departure from the West's own notion of a "balance of forces." *The clear implication of the Pravda article is that if the CPD line becomes dominant in the West, the USSR will view this as a declaration of intent to go to war.*

The paper particularly debunked scenarios of Soviet tank invasions of Western Europe as completely incompetent. The real military issue in Europe, Pravda stressed, is not "tank superiority," but "the strategic conceptions and military programs" of NATO and the Warsaw Pact — for instance, the placement of "huge stocks of (NATO) tactical nuclear weapons" at the borders of the socialist countries. This deployment, known as "forward defense," has previously been characterized by Warsaw Pact spokesmen as a blitzkrieg strategy against the East.

Politics Decides

It is politics that decides everything in matters of war and peace, declared Pravda on Jan. 8. The perception of

U.S. politics, expressed in Pravda, and simultaneously in the Soviet military paper Red Star, is that the "Team B" line represents tremendous pressure on Jimmy Carter not to go for a new strategic arms agreement with the USSR.

The Soviet Union is publicly giving credence to Carter's ostensibly pro-détente utterances: his promised reductions in the defense budget and stated desire to succeed in negotiations with the Soviets to curb arms. This credulity is based on a profound *wish* that the Carter Administration might contract disarmament agreements and not give full rein to James Schlesinger (the ideologue of the CPD) to provoke confrontation, and that such agreements would make war less likely. The Soviet response to the "Team B" ruckus indicates that even this flawed hope that war could be avoided in a world still dominated by Schachtian economic policies is disintegrating.

The Soviet government daily, Izvestia, in a Jan. 8 feature on disarmament which also included the line that Carter is basically favorable to Soviet disarmament initiatives, also pointed to a fundamental factional issue in the United States — the question of development. Noting that massive military spending precludes solution of global problems such as food production and raw materials development, Izvestia observed that "it is possible that precisely these growing global needs will finally force some of the most stubborn people of the bourgeoisie to recognize the necessity of shifting resources for social purposes." Izvestia cited Edward Teller — the Rockefeller family scientist who in 1976 was brought to the point of advocating fusion power development by the impact of Soviet advances in that field — for his estimate that U.S. energy needs require investments seven times the size of what now goes for arms.