

A new strategy for NATO?

Schmidt and the EMS force a shift

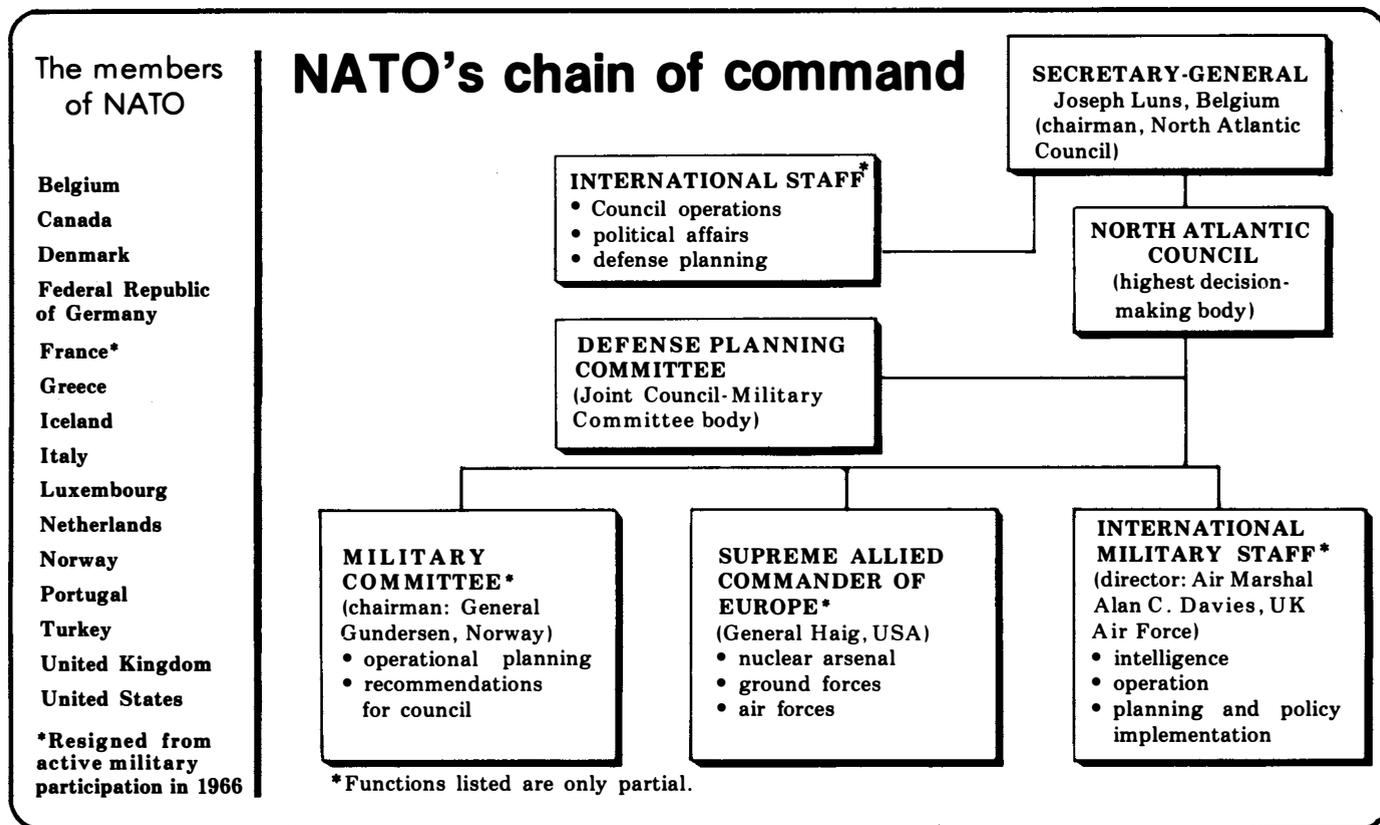
Four months ago, at the International Parliamentarians Union held in Bonn from Sept. 10-17, West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt was a lone voice calling on NATO to reorient its policy from one of confrontation with the East bloc to a partnership for global development.

"Today we need an all-embracing partnership of political security in the interest of peace" Schmidt said there. "This partnership must be binding for all states throughout the world, irrespective of social and political aims or conditions." The leader of the strongest industrial republic in Western Europe emphasized that the key to global peace was global development: "I also wish at this point to reaffirm my view that progress on the North-South Dialogue is indispensable if international economic problems are to be solved and peace and stability in the world safeguarded."

At the time Schmidt went unheeded, as many Western leaders tried to latch on to the initial euphoria sparked by

the bogus Camp David settlement by predicting an expansion of NATO's purely military role into regions outside of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, such as the Middle East and Africa. Nelson Rockefeller, the former U.S. Vice President, was foolish enough to predict that "NATO's frontier—the frontier of free Europe—is no longer just the frontier of Central Europe but is to be found in the Middle East and Africa as well... Soviet flanking moves in the Horn of Africa, the southern end of the Arab peninsula, and other areas must be matters of concern to the NATO nations...."

Faced with the plans of the Kissinger and Brzezinski faction within the U.S. government to set up two secret U.S. NATO bases in the Sinai peninsula, the threat of war between the Warsaw Pact and NATO prompted both West Germany and France to set up the European Monetary System. West Germany, the strongest European military power in NATO, and France, a member of the



NATO Council but not the military alliance, have begun the process of securing the economic stability that will bring peace.

As a result, their efforts on behalf of the EMS have also succeeded in bringing about a significant shift in NATO.

THE END OF LIMITED NUCLEAR WARFARE?

Recently NATO policies were typified by the Autumn Reforger maneuvers in West Germany last September, which not only was an explicit provocation against the Soviets but left 16 people dead and caused over \$20 million worth of damage. Now the evolution to conceptions similar to Schmidt's is easily evidenced by the proposals that NATO policy boards adopted after they were presented by West German Defense Minister Hans Apel and his West German colleague, Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher.

Apel publicly attacked three decades of British control of NATO at the NATO Council Meeting on Dec. 7 by calling for public debate, beginning no later than April 1979, on the doctrine of tactical nuclear warfare, the central doctrine in the updated version of British cabinet warfare promulgated by NATO General Secretary Luns, and NATO Supreme Commander General Alexander Haig. Expanding this debate outside of NATO, Apel said that the issue of tactical nuclear war will be "pursued both in the alliance and bilaterally," giving leverage to the debate over Franco-German proposals that have not passed through NATO headquarters in Brussels.

The widespread support that the NATO defense minister's conference gave this debate on what was previously accepted NATO dogma forced even U.S. Secretary of Defense Brown to promise, albeit vaguely, that there will be "a gradual change in the tactical nuclear warfare doctrine."

Development aid to Turkey

West German Foreign Minister Genscher's unprecedented proposal for NATO to support European Community aid to Turkey, Greece, and Portugal met with the same approval that Apel's proposal did. On Dec. 8, after the NATO Council session in which France participated, Genscher happily reported that the Council adopted his proposal "for a real political exchange, instead of just the usual prepared statements" by backing West Germany's plan for \$1.5 billion in an immediate EC grant to Turkey, and an eventual \$15 billion EC investment in Turkey's Five-Year Plan. According to Genscher, the NATO Council agreed because "the economic stability of a country is very important for securing democracy in some of the member and associated states."

The acceptance of this economic relief plan for the less developed countries of Europe is amazing since just three weeks ago NATO chief Luns was trying to use an aborted Spanish right-wing coup as an excuse to force Spain and Turkey into accepting International Monetary Fund austerity under the guise of NATO security. The more adamantly Turkey refused to surrender its sovereignty to the IMF's demands, the louder Luns talked about the

Soviet press reveals...

Pravda, "What Is Mr. Luns Worrying About?" by V. Mikhailov, Dec. 3:

At the regular session of the NATO Nuclear Planning Group, held with the participation of generals and defense ministers, the leading role as usual went to the military men right from the start. The generals delivered reports on plans for the "modernization" of atomic warheads, that is, their replacement with neutron warheads. But then a newcomer to NATO, FRG Defense Minister H. Apel, asked to speak.

The questions under discussion at the session, he said, directly concern the themes of the East-West negotiations on limitation of the arms race, and therefore their solution cannot be left solely to the consideration of generals and military experts. "Who, in the final analysis, is running things here?" the minister asked, turning to NATO General Secretary Luns, who according to his status has the main role in the policy of the military bloc.

Apel's demarche, in the words of the magazine *Der Spiegel*, produced the following impression on those attending the meeting: "The generals froze. Luns, who was presiding, and who usually permitted himself to take a snooze from time to time during the reports of the military men, was roused by this unusual speech, and exclaimed: 'Everything discussed here is political.' Luns could not compose himself even during the recess, after which he undertook to lecture the FRG Defense Minister". . .

The western press has expressed the view that Apel's demarche was caused by the NATO leadership's maneuvers around the problem of the neutron weapon. The FRG government has not spoken out clearly against this weapon of mass destruction, but its previously adopted wait-and-see position, based on the premise that "the USA itself must decide first," has now become increasingly untenable. . . .

At the same time, the NATO military apparatus, as the Nuclear Planning Group session showed, is acting as though the neutron weapon were already part of the NATO arsenal. This attempt by the Atlanticist strategists to induce the FRG surreptitiously to accept the "inevitability" of the neutron weapon, frightens many people in Bonn. Won't such a step destroy the system of new peaceable relations in Europe, and deprive the FRG of the possibilities that it enjoys as a result of the achievement of political detente?

...why Luns is worried

From all indications, Apel's statement was meant to prevent the FRG from being drawn into the conspiracy of the proponents of the neutron weapon.

More and more reports are appearing in the western papers about Bonn's efforts to get the NATO leadership to review its outdated strategic conceptions. "The good old days of NATO," notes the West German magazine *Stern*, "have already gone by. The long years are drawing to a close when NATO generals played with spreading inventions about the 'threat from the East' to force the NATO countries to new allocations for weapons."

The policy of the NATO military bloc, with its roots in the "Cold War," has become exceedingly dangerous for contemporary Europe, and this is evidently understood by sober-thinking political figures in the West. Opposition to this position is the essential precondition for the successful development of detente, for the achievement of agreement on reducing the exorbitant burden of armaments, the building of new peaceful relations on the European continent.

Krasnaya Zvezda [the Soviet military daily], "By NATO's Scenario," by Col. M. Ponomarev and V. Vinogradov, Dec. 3:

... In its basic characteristics the work of the North Atlantic assembly session (in Lisbon — ed.) took place according to the scenario worked out in the NATO headquarters. During the discussions there was no lack of the usual Atlanticist calls for continuing the arms race. However, not everything went smoothly for the directors of the latest NATO spectacle. The winds of positive change blowing across Europe could not help but penetrate the Lisbon hall where the parliamentarians of the NATO countries were meeting.

The report by Dutch labor party parliamentarian K. de Fries, evoked a hostile reaction from the orthodox Atlanticists, since he spoke out against the deployment of the neutron weapon in Western Europe, called for a realistic analysis of the international situation, and warned against attempts to use China as an "ally of the West." The American Senator J. Javits was furiously indignant. He introduced a counterresolution, with the support of the British delegation, rejecting that report. . . .

necessity for a "firm," dictatorial government for that country.

As a result of the West German proposal, the European Economic Community, now has an officially NATO-approved request to work out aid for Turkey through its channels, not the British-controlled IMF.

Genscher drove home the West German connection between development and security by insisting that the "contextual conditions for NATO's security" require that industrial countries contribute to the real independence and sovereignty of Third World nations through economic development. In a break with past NATO Council meetings, he also did not deliver the standard denunciations of the Warsaw Pact.

Outflanking Britain

It did not take the British representatives to the NATO meeting, Foreign Minister David Owen and Defense Minister Fred Mulley, long to figure out the danger to both the tactical nuclear warfare doctrine and to the IMF's role as arbiter of Third World loans, both cornerstones of Britain's foreign policy. To reassert British hegemony, Owen proposed holding a special "political dialogue" between NATO and Warsaw Pact foreign ministers. As numerous British press accounts of the recent NATO meetings confirm, Owen's purpose in holding such a conference would be to destroy potential East-West cooperation through the use of the "human rights" issue, and by attempting to split Romania from the Warsaw Pact.

Genscher politely dismissed Owen's proposal as "premature," but France's new Foreign Minister, Francois Poncet, held a special press conference later to denounce Owen's proposal as "superfluous." The French government had already proposed disarmament talks around the Helsinki conference, Poncet said. The NATO Council did approve Owen's idea "in principle," but then effectively killed the ploy by making its implementation dependent on "further progress" in East-West negotiations.

The changes in NATO's stand on both limited nuclear warfare and development aid, with its implied attack on British strategy, has even knocked some sense into the Carter Administration, which usually is eager to play the "East bloc dissident" card. Right after the NATO Council meeting, U.S. Undersecretary of State Warren Christopher thoughtfully refused to gloat over Romanian differences with the Warsaw Pact, stating that the Pact "is only changing slowly and only in a matter of degree."

The China option repudiated

The debate on arms sales to the People's Republic of China provided the third opportunity for NATO to reconsider its past policy. The NATO Assembly, the parliamentary arm of NATO, condemned the sale of arms to China "as a threat to world peace" at its Nov. 30 meeting in Lisbon. This resolution was immediately, and correctly, recognized as a major attack on Britain's proposed sale of Harrier military jets to China. The British delegate to this meeting, one Mr. Wiggins, was so surprised at this turn-

around that he did not publicly reveal his plea for support for the projected British sale.

By the time the NATO Council meeting convened one week later, on Dec. 8, the rethinking of this attempt to play the "China card" caused Luns to admit that NATO would neither openly encourage, nor stop, the sale of arms to China. U.S. representative Christopher acted cautiously and merely requested that NATO define its entire policy toward China.

National sovereignty vs. NATO

This strong support for the West German attacks on British NATO strategy has been building for a period of three months, ever since the end of the Autumn Reforger maneuvers.

During September, Apel was formulating his decision, based on the political damage caused by the maneuvers, that "there has to be a debate by politicians on military policy, because it cannot be that in NATO only the military authorities get to speak . . . here is an area where political leadership has to be demonstrated."

On the same day, Sept. 22, Apel also let it be known that he would personally review the scope and size of the 1978 Autumn Reforger maneuvers, which had the dubious distinction of being the largest war maneuver ever held. He also said the size of the 1980 maneuvers would probably be reduced.

The NATO official responsible for the maneuvers, Supreme Commander Haig, held a press conference with Apel in Hanau, West Germany right after the maneuvers, in an attempt to play down the criticism. This backfired, however, as Apel insisted before the press that he would still demand that the section of the NATO charter in which overall responsibility is held by elected officials and their representatives is upheld.

By Oct. 24, NATO Secretary General Joseph Luns, who had worked together with General Haig to convince Western Europe of the necessity of tactical nuclear warfare, made a special visit to Schmidt in Bonn, trying to tone down Apel's criticism. As a concession from Haig, Luns reported that the 1979 maneuvers would be smaller than those just held, but Schmidt refused to muzzle Apel.

The same day that Luns was rebuffed by Schmidt, Norwegian Defense Minister Hansen publicly rebuked British NATO Gen. Sir Peter Whitley for daring to criticize his country's parliamentary decision not to in-

crease its NATO budget beyond 3 percent in 1979. Hansen told Whitley, in one of the bitterest intra-NATO quarrels since the French left NATO's military arm in 1965, "Do not intervene into affairs which you do not understand, and do not interfere into the relations between the government and parliament in Norway."

Luns was subsequently publicly criticized by Apel at the Nuclear Planning Group meeting in Brussels, in a burst of invective rare for any defense minister. According to the Oct. 25 *Sddeutsche Zeitung*, Luns monopolized the discussion at the meeting, after which Apel became angry and said this was to prevent any political discussion. Luns immediately interrupted him, "We are always political here," only to be cut off in turn by Apel, who insisted "that as a minister with governmental responsibility, I will not allow anyone here to censor me."

In his commentary on this clash the well-known military correspondent for the *Zeitung*, Christian Potyka, wrote that "the real issue is the relation of the sovereign state of the Federal Republic of Germany to the inner core of NATO in Europe: Brussels headquarters. On a legal level, there cannot be any fight on the issue . . . but NATO is so fragile now, that it would not survive two of these publicly fought conflicts."

Potyka went on to reveal that Luns was particularly angry about the limitations Apel placed on him and on his plans for the modernization of tactical nuclear weapons. According to an article in the daily *Die Welt*, Apel told Luns, in some earthy dockworker language, that "Bonn will never give a blank check to the military," and that a clarification is needed on the issue of tactical nuclear war.

The West Germans kept this pressure up on Haig and Luns's operations in November, when Apel announced the long-awaited outcome of the Bundeswehr's reorganization plans. As the plan was originally formulated in the early 1970s by Theo Sommer, himself a leading member of the British Institute for International Strategic Studies, the Bundeswehr would be stripped of its independent intelligence, logistics, and training branches, in order to put as many West German soldiers as possible into a front-rank "meat wall" to oppose the Warsaw Pact. But in Apel's announced reorganization plan of Nov. 8 the only change was an increase in the number of brigades from 33 to 36, with no shift in the Bundeswehr personnel level, and no destruction of the army's independent support facilities.

—James Cleary