

# The European Security Study: a military blueprint for Carrington's decoupled Europe

by Lonnie Wolfe

It is a testament to the state of affairs in the Atlantic Alliance that its military policy circles are today preoccupied, not with the development of a war-winning capability against the Soviet threat, but with the intricacies of a doctrine called "conventional deterrence."

That discussion was spurred by last spring's publication of a book by the European Security Study (ESECS) entitled *Strengthening Conventional Deterrence in Europe*. While it makes the obligatory references to the glaring imbalance in favor of the Soviets along the central front in Europe, the ESECS study amounts to a plan to further disarm NATO, under the guise of strengthening the alliance politically by reducing "dependence" on nuclear forces.

## What is ESECS?

ESECS was created as an "open conspiracy" in 1981 by the same oligarchical networks who created the Malthusian Club of Rome. Steering the operation was the late Carroll Wilson, himself a founding member of the Club of Rome and an associate of Bertrand Russell. Behind Wilson were individuals such as former NATO official and Club of Rome founder Alexander King; the leader of the American "Eastern Establishment," McGeorge Bundy; and Prof. Michael Howard of the Chatam House British intelligence networks. These individuals had for 30 years implemented the terms of Russell's Pugwash Conference deal with the Soviet Union, a "two-empire" arrangement which imposed the Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) doctrine on the West. Although the U.S.S.R. never stopped developing the ability to fight and win a thermonuclear war, the Pugwash strategists kept their end of the bargain by making sure that NATO members would remain vulnerable to nuclear destruction.

The ESECS conspiracy was directed against those forces in the West who, with the advent of the Reagan administration in 1981, began challenging the "assured vulnerability" of the West by moving to replace MAD with a doctrine of "Mutually Assured Survival" through building energy-beam shields against strategic nuclear attack. ESECS proposed to

change the terms of the debate, rejecting any talk of improving strategic nuclear forces or building new defensive strategic systems as President Reagan proposed in a March 23 address. The focus was placed instead on conventional weapons systems. These systems, which ESECS terms "defensive," would in reality never obstruct the Soviets in Europe or anywhere else. They were to be used in cabinet-warfare "police actions" in the developing sector—the free-fire zone established by Russell's Pugwash deal with the Soviets.

Wilson proceeded to assemble a core group of like-minded "experts," as well as a handful of misguided former military figures whose concern about the poor state of NATO forces who could be manipulated to enlarge Wilson's consensus. The plan, as Wilson told a reporter in 1982, was to produce such an overwhelming consensus in favor of conventional deterrence as to "overwhelm the strategic debate."

Throughout the ESECS process, future NATO Secretary General Lord Peter Carrington helped, through Howard and others to shape the final report. Carrington's prospective appointment was viewed by ESECS participants as the ultimate assurance that their plans would "seize NATO," as an ESECS member put it.

As Bundy and another prime MAD architect, former U.S. Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, began to publish articles in 1982-83 advocating that the United States adopt a policy of "no first use" of nuclear weapons, some ESECS members got cold feet and mounted a damage-control operation to prevent ESECS from declaring publicly in favor of such a stance.

Despite these efforts, at the point of the report's publication, defense intelligence sources report that the Wilson-Howard-Carrington grouping—the "conventional warfare *über alles*" boys, as they are derisively referred to in some circles—had won the day.

## A Europe decoupled?

The central thesis of the ESECS proposal can be restated as follows: If one assumes that strategic deterrence (the "nu-

clear balance of terror”) remains intact between the United States and Soviet Union, then the chief imbalance would occur on the central European front. If one further assumes that neither side will use nuclear weapons in a war-fighting situation, then the only way to stop a Soviet conventional attack on Europe is with improved conventional forces—a “conventional deterrent.” Since the Soviets possess an overwhelming superiority in numbers and depth, the only way NATO can counter them is with superior technology and mobile forces, which is what the study proposes to introduce.

This “conventional deterrent,” ESECS further argues, lacks the political liability of reliance on nuclear forces that are now under attack from the peace movement.

Conventional deterrence, says ESECS, does not change existing NATO doctrine, but merely increases the viability of that doctrine, the McNamara-instituted “flexible response,” which posits that Warsaw Pact aggression will not necessarily be met by a U.S. nuclear counterattack on the Soviet Union. “We accept that NATO should maintain its doctrine of flexible response,” writes ESECS, “which calls for an initial resistance against aggression with conventional weapons, but reserves a capacity to use nuclear weapons. Within this doctrine, NATO should move promptly to upgrade its conventional capability in Europe and raise the nuclear threshold, i.e., make it practical to defer as long as is feasible and if possible prevent a situation in which NATO might be obliged to face a decision about the use of nuclear weapons.”

For the ESECS logic to hold, it is therefore paramount that the illusion of nuclear strategic parity be maintained. Thus ESECS refused to examine anything that would call into question the viability of the U.S. deterrent. “The panel did not deal with strategic deterrence on the nuclear strategic level,” Robert Bowie, the former CIA official who took over ESECS on the death of Carroll Wilson in December 1982, told a journalist. “We assume a credible deterrent between the blocs. It is axiomatically impossible that this deterrent is not credible.”

Thus, when it comes to the question of strategic antibalistic missile defense, ESECS maintains that the U.S. nuclear umbrella over Europe makes such a program unnecessary; when it comes to justifying the need for a “decoupled” Europe, ESECS readily affirms that the umbrella no longer exists. “I would say that it is not credible to assume that NATO could defend itself without improving its conventional defenses. It is no longer possible for us to simply rely on the nuclear option or even mainly rely on it,” stated Bowie. “The United States may not be willing to go to all-out nuclear war to save Europe from a conventional attack.”

Then what prevents the Soviets from moving against Europe? Their adherence to the MAD doctrine and their desire to maintain a stable “balance of powers,” as well as their fear of an unpredictable Western response, according to Michael Howard of British intelligence. “There can be no winners in a nuclear war or even a large-scale war of a

conventional nature, and they can’t be sure of what we would do,” he said in a 1982 interview. The Soviets have no real desire to occupy all of Europe, and even if they were to attack, they would probably only go as far as the Rhine, he said, and they would not use nuclear weapons. Therefore, if we build up our conventional defenses to stop such an advance, Europe is safe—so goes the argument.

### **NATO’s conventional weakness**

To sell their package, ESECS assembled overwhelming evidence of Warsaw Pact superiority over NATO’s conventional defenses. Among the decisive vulnerabilities they pointed to:

- NATO does not have effective battlefield target acquisition capabilities. For example, sophisticated U.S. surveillance aircraft such as AWACS are not “hooked up” to provide NATO with targeting data. Therefore, NATO would waste precious firepower on the wrong targets. Even if NATO possessed such target acquisition capabilities, they could easily be knocked out under current conditions by Warsaw Pact electronic warfare and related measures.

- NATO would be unable to withstand a Warsaw Pact conventional artillery barrage once an attack begins. Its forward-deployed forces would be wiped out almost immediately—without the enemy’s use of nuclear weapons.

- NATO is unable to defend itself against a massed Warsaw Pact conventional air strike against its air bases. ESECS found that NATO’s air defense lacks the ability to coordinate or operate in the same air space as its air units.

- NATO lacks the means to strike deep enough into Warsaw Pact territory to hit command and control centers, or even to identify such targets.

- NATO lacks the means to suppress Warsaw Pact air power operating over NATO territory.

- NATO lacks the firepower to break up Soviet armored attacks.

The study further states that the Warsaw Pact command now perceives NATO as being unable to take crucial steps in its own defense; this, they argue, would force an early resort to nuclear weapons.

ESECS neglects to acknowledge that this situation is the result of decisions made by its own members and collaborators.

### **Making matters worse**

ESECS recommends a \$30 billion program to acquire and place in the field what it describes as crucial conventional technologies. Most concern improvements of NATO’s air defenses, target acquisition, and acquisition of guided submunitions (such as hand-held rockets). ESECS would like nothing better than for the alliance to be consumed in endless debate over the relative merits of its individual proposals.

While most of what is recommended is in fact necessary, the overall approach is misdirected. The key to that misdirection is a passage stating that the ESECS authors “reject”

thinking about weapons systems that "could cause a quantum leap" in military technologies. This latter phrase is code for discussion of directed-energy battlefield or strategic weapons. The ESECS crowd recognizes that such technologies would end the MAD doctrine itself. This explains the hysterical denunciations by ESECS spokesmen of the March 23 proposals and their potential spinoffs for the European members of NATO.

"Why should we think about that?" expostulated ESECS director Bowie. "Our report and the Reagan proposals must remain unrelated. We are concerned with the here and now, not some Star Wars nonsense in the next century. We must deal with feasible and tested weapons that are available here and now."

Bowie became more precise: "We cannot have a strategy based on winning a nuclear war or making fighting a nuclear war feasible. What we are proposing is a real defensive strategy, a conventional strategy. Conventional deterrence is real deterrence, because we won't ever fight a nuclear war, and if we do, its outcome won't matter. Defensive technologies based on Star Wars systems make people think that you can fight nuclear wars. Deterrence collapses. . . . All we are trying to do is preserve flexible response within a realistic framework."

According to the Pugwash "Great Game," this insanity is projected to be the strategic thinking of the Soviet Union as well. When asked about Soviet development of beam weapons, Bowie replied, "Who is to say that they would deploy them even if they developed them? Why wouldn't they hold back and preserve the balance the way it is? They are at no disadvantage." If the Soviets were to cheat, he continued, the West could develop something to counter the deployment.

Suffice it to say that the Soviets make no distinction between "conventional" and nuclear weaponry of the sort maintained in NATO; their ground forces are completely nuclearized. No buildup of the sort ESECS advocates would stop them in Europe. But ESECS rejects out of hand equipment such as the neutron bomb which would be necessary (see interview, page 21) to repeal a Soviet advance in Europe.

ESECS plans to gain support for its conventional deterrence strategy from the peace movement as "a viable alternative to nuclear holocaust." "Much of the peace movement is composed of responsible people who are motivated by the fear of nuclear war," said Bowie last spring. "I am sure that they will be interested in what we have to say. We offer the alternative between holocaust and surrender. . . . We will see justification for our report in the unrest over deployment of the Pershings and cruise missiles [in Europe]. The more NATO concentrates on its nuclear deterrent, even within the theatre, the weaker it becomes politically. ESECS is the way out, the only way out."

A source linked to the senior levels of the U.S. Defense Department commented, "The whole defense debate is now skewed toward discussion of how to build up conventionally and why. This extends to all the top people in the Pentagon,

the Joint Chiefs, and NATO. Everybody is responding to it. In a way, ESECS is already succeeding."

To deter an enemy, a nation must be prepared to fight and win. It must have a war-winning doctrine that presupposes the use of all available weapons in its arsenal—including nuclear weapons. ESECS rejects development of directed-energy defensive weapons because that would supersede the MAD doctrine. ESECS does not propose a defense of NATO, but a defense of MAD; as its members, though not its report, admit, ESECS seeks an "independent Europe" and a United States relying on nothing but the passivity of the U.S.S.R. for its survival. This, then, is the deal Lord Carrington and his ESECS accomplices are offering the Soviets: a disarmed West, with Europe and its "conventional deterrent" more vulnerable than ever to the U.S.S.R.

## U.S. members of ESECS

*American members of the European Security Study (ESECS) include:*

**Robert R. Bowie**, professor of government, Harvard University; senior fellow, Brookings Institution; Council on Foreign Relations (CFR); Trilateral Commission; special adviser to the U.S. High Commissioner in Germany; former Director of Estimates, CIA.

**McGeorge Bundy**, CFR; former National Security Adviser to President Kennedy.

**Alton Frye**, Washington director, CFR; arms-control specialist.

**General Andrew Goodpaster**, former NATO Supreme Allied Commander in Europe.

**Milton Katz**, MIT; consultant to DOD and NSC; Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; formerly with RAND; former deputy director, OSS in Italy.

**Franklin A. Long**, Cornell University; former Arms Control Association director; former assistant director, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.

**William J. Perry**, investment banker; former undersecretary of defense for research.

**Marshall Schulman**, director of Columbia University's Russian Studies Institute; former director of studies, CFR.

**Richard H. Ullman**, Princeton University; editorial board, *New York Times*; director, CFR 1980s Project.