

## Western Europe charts military independence

by Susan Welch

A major speech on defense policy Sept. 11 by French Premier Raymond Barre—totally ignored by the U.S. press—and certain developments surrounding NATO's ongoing "Autumn Forge" maneuvers, portend a fundamental policy realignment on the part of Western Europe. Without fanfare but with determination and a long-range perspective, West Germany and France are putting together an independent military alliance whose policy content will be vastly different from that currently governing NATO.

"France has the mission, due to its history and its geography," Barre said, "of giving back to Europe the political influence which crises and wars set back during the first half of the century."

At the highest levels of government and among second-level advisory layers, the shape of the new Europe is presently being debated and hammered out. A highly unusual discussion piece in the current issue of the West German military magazine *Europäische Wehrkunde*, which we excerpt here, calls in the most direct manner to date for the formation of an independent European Defense Union. This alliance is necessary because NATO does not adequately represent European interests, the author states. Thus, a defense union should be allied to the United States, but with autonomous European control over the British and French nuclear arsenals.

Washington's refusal to support the urgently adopted war-avoidance policies devised by its European allies, and its determination to heighten the danger of world war by encircling the Soviet Union with instability and hostile regimes, have forced Western Europe to look to

its own defense. France and West Germany created the European Monetary System and pursued détente with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe because they believed that only these policies could prevent war. The United States has strenuously opposed both initiatives, and proceeded to adopt a new military doctrine this summer—Presidential Directive 59—which foresees "limited nuclear war" and the launching of selective strategic nuclear strikes against Soviet military targets and political command centers. This "counterforce" strategy is intended to partially replace NATO's previous emphasis on all-or-nothing "countercity" targeting.

Continental Europe is the battlefield in which any nuclear war would be mainly fought—"limited" or not. Therefore, European leaders viewed the announcement of the Carter administration's PD 59 with alarm, even if not with surprise. Barre's rejection of the concept in his Sept. 11 speech to the Institute of High National Defense Studies is the most explicit yet to come from a high government official.

"In a situation of crisis involving us," he said, "a tactical nuclear exchange which would not spread to the whole of our national territory is unthinkable. . . . There is no counterforce strategy which is not a countercity strategy in the highest degree, a deterrence strategy. For our country there can be no question of choosing between a counterforce strategy and a countercity strategy. The zone of eventual conflicts would be in the immediate vicinity of our country and the risk of a confrontation escalating and affecting our national territory is highly probable. And any atomic action on French soil has

strategic significance, due to the high density of the population; it would therefore automatically lead to a countercity nuclear reprisal.”

Barre went further than any French official to date in offering a French nuclear umbrella to West Germany and other non-nuclear neighbors. “The dialectic of the relationship between Russians and Americans demonstrates why we must remain the masters of our decision whether to engage our forces. We mean to avoid being drawn into a conflict against our will in cases where our vital interests are not at stake. In Europe, let me recall, we are directly concerned by the security of our immediate neighbors. We could consequently not remain indifferent regarding any action that would affect their liberty.”

“Our notion of defense cannot be restricted to France,” Barre said. “It involves not only the protection of our soil and interests, but also our engagement for the ideals and values of civilization, for the peace and balance of the European continent.”

Barre’s speech reiterates the careful formulation of French President Valéry Giscard d’Estaing in a June 26 national address on defense policy, that “France is directly concerned with the security of neighboring West European states.” Giscard also affirmed that France had successfully tested an enhanced radiation warhead (“neutron bomb”), and would decide within a few years’ time whether or not to produce the weapon. While Giscard’s speech was widely heralded in the U.S. press as an indication that France was moving closer to NATO, *EIR* asserted July 15 that precisely the opposite was the case.

This analysis was borne out when Giscard went to the Federal Republic of Germany for his first official state visit there during the second week in July. Giscard and West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt together inspected a parade of French soldiers in Baden-Baden, and emphasized their intent to strengthen the two countries’ military cooperation. “Your security is indivisible from ours and our security is yours also,” Schmidt said.

### **‘Europe’s contribution to peace’**

Barre underlined in his speech that Europe’s defense policy is not aimed against détente, but is part of its war-avoidance concept. As such, the policy is not only military, but also political and economic. “Abroad, our consistent policy is naturally to ensure respect for the legitimate interests of our dependents and to maintain free access of our trade to the supply resources indispensable to the economy. But thus to limit our intention would be to deny our age-old tradition. . . .

“France intends to contribute throughout the world to the development of peace, it aims at reducing the inequalities of development through dialogue and co-

operation by its initiatives; it has the intention to be everywhere, to the extent of its means, a factor of order and progress. . . . France has enjoyed a global defense concept and organization for the past 20 years. The law of Jan. 7, 1959 poses the principle of defense as not uniquely military but as extending to all the domains under the action and responsibility of the State.”

The basic concepts outlined by the French Premier were seconded this week by high-ranking West German leaders. Defense Minister Hans Apel, a close associate of Schmidt, gave a press conference Sept. 16 while inspecting German troops taking part in NATO’s massive Autumn Forge maneuvers. He declared that the policy of the Federal Republic remains détente, and that the country will not increase its military manpower, since it anticipates that the Vienna East-West troop reduction talks will be successful. Bonn is under pressure from the United States to increase its own deployments in Europe to free up U.S. troops for the Middle East and Asia.

Even Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher of the liberal Free Democratic Party, whom former U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance once characterized as “our strong tower” in the Bonn government, is making unusually assertive manifestations. The political status of the Federal Republic must be changed internationally, he said in a speech Sept. 16, since the country has “turned from an occupied country with no rights into a nation with great responsibility in the world.” His party’s electoral campaign has suddenly begun to feature the theme “cooperation between France, Germany and the Soviet Union.”

### **The NATO maneuvers**

The NATO maneuvers occurring from Turkey to Norway for two months this fall have brought to the surface the deepening crisis in the Atlantic Alliance. Belgium withdrew from the Turkish phase of the maneuvers Sept. 15, following the coup in Istanbul. NATO headquarters greeted this decision with “acute malaise,” according to Agence France Presse.

AFP also reported that West Germany had registered a protest at the U.S.-proposed scenario for the “48 Hours to Save Europe” maneuvers. Washington wanted to increase the simulated use of tactical nuclear weapons in the exercises, reversing the trend over recent years to curtail such provocative demonstrations. Also under dispute were plans for simulated chemical warfare.

### **What kind of alliance**

The exact nature of the European military alliance which will emerge cannot yet be predicted, and official spokesmen have remained purposely vague. The author of the *Europäische Wehrkunde* article does not agree

with the entire approach taken by Giscard or Schmidt—particularly in his hostility to the Soviet Union and his endorsement of stepped-up U.S. military deployments outside Europe. (These, he says, are an additional argument in favor of a European Defense Union). Yet he agrees that a military alliance in Europe's interest would have to be constructed with a key role for France based on strategic principles closer to those adhered to by France.

This emphasis on the Franco-German alliance distinguishes the new line of thinking from many past "pan-Europeanist" calls for a "Third Way" between the two superpowers. Those proposals came most frequently from British "Europeanists" and Jesuit-linked political currents on the continent who sought to form a new feudalist "united Europe" under British domination, as a battering ram against the republican traditions of both the United States and continental Europe. But the policy content which Schmidt and Giscard have given their alliance assures that no such alignment can now emerge.

## 'A European Defense Union'

*Retired General-Major Fritz Birnstiel wrote the article excerpted here in the current issue of Europäische Wehrkunde, the monthly magazine of West Germany's leading military think tank.*

... Significantly, all previous efforts [for European unity] have concentrated on an economic community. A common European defense policy was not created, because NATO was thought to be responsible for this, even though only NATO's minimal demands were ever met. . . .

Even if the integration of the Western partners in the alliance has proven successful and has led to a firm relation of trust, it seems that the time has come to examine whether the form or the content of the NATO alliance is still suitable in view of the changed political and strategic circumstances, and whether the increased weight of Western Europe would not dictate a stronger concern with Europe's own interests.

The implementation of European political union will take some time, but this should not create an obstacle to looking for preliminary solutions in the military field, as they were found before in the economic field by the creation of the European Community. In times of growing tensions which affect Europe, such considerations of strengthening our own position seem to be urgently required. . . .

NATO has now existed for 30 years. Since its foun-

ation, many of the conditions which existed at its creation have changed. Due to the results of World War II, the European states were not capable at that time of organizing their own defense based on their own power. They willingly subordinated themselves to the U.S. nuclear umbrella and were content with more or less adequate conventional forces. Today, Western Europe is the second-largest industrial and economic power in the world, but this fact is not reflected in the structure of NATO.

The Soviet encirclement strategy, visible above all in the Persian Gulf zone and Africa, will make it necessary to reorient American defense policy and will lead to increased presence of U.S. forces found in these regions. The European NATO partners must face up to the need of filling emerging defense gaps in Europe. If it is possible to turn this necessity into a goal and to arrive at a "European Defense Union," the present ominous development could be turned into a forward-looking creative phase with new impulses.

This should not at all be understood as a third power between the two big powers. Solidarity between the unified Western Europe and the U.S.A. must be maintained. But the inner structure of NATO has to change after the creation of an EDU, basing itself on only two remaining pillars of defense—the U.S.A./Canada as Atlantic partners, and the European Defense Union as the continental component. . . .

The role of France in this concept would be of crucial importance. . . . Maintaining the present structure and strategy in NATO under strong American influence would make it hopeless to expect that France's military disengagement from NATO could be reversed.

A common European defense policy could not work, however, without France. Only by a differently structured concept could her commitment to renewed participation be elicited and French forces be brought back into the European defense grid.

The precondition for such a solution is a strategic concept for NATO which better approximates France's considerations, which first of all view nuclear defense more from a European point of view than from the standpoint of the different interests of the U.S.A. . . .

One must take into account that the U.S.A. endorses the political unification of Europe, but will probably not agree to pass command over the Euromissiles to the European NATO/EDU. But the changed situation also demands a rethinking process in the U.S.A. If NATO has long been accustomed to the idea that the American President alone can decide on nuclear deterrence, the example of France shows that there are also other possibilities. Long negotiations will be required to reach a consensus. But the equality of the U.S.A. and Europe should also cover the field of nuclear weapons, since European interests are concerned about that first and foremost. . . . ■