
Documentation

World leaders oppose 'decoupling' moves

French Premier Jacques Chirac gave an interview to the Nov. 17 issue of the magazine *Valeurs Actuelles*. Asked what conclusions he draws from the Reykjavik summit, Chirac replied:

The American government very faithfully communicated to its allies, the day after the summit, what was said, and the perspectives that have opened up concerning reduction of strategic armaments such as the SDI.

The Soviets made also known their conclusions, which of course are not similar. . . .

The U.S.S.R. tended to use its presentation of the conclusions as a means of psychological pressure on the West. We are not impressed.

I would only say that Europe must be vigilant, in order to not be victim of an agreement between the two superpowers. This implies being very watchful, of everything that could signify "decoupling" of Europe and the U.S. on defense matters. Especially this "zero option," whose definition is not very clear, but about which I remain rather cautious. I would say in any case, that if Europe were to become, after a process (which has not yet begun), a de-nuclearized zone—with the exception of the French and British forces—whereas the U.S.S.R. and the United States were to keep considerable nuclear arsenals, it would be a great danger. The consistent purpose of Soviet diplomacy—to place itself in a position to take Western Europe hostage—would be quite close to being met. In particular, because the imbalance between the conventional and chemical weapons arsenals of East and West is quite to our detriment.

U.S. Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, in a speech on Nov. 17 at the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis in Washington, stressed that U.S. offers to negotiate a reduction in Europe of intermediate nuclear force (INF) missiles would not jeopardize the security of the European allies.

"My jaundiced view," he said, "is that the Soviets were never serious about any of the arms-control proposals they

made the first morning at Reykjavik. Their only aim was to get President Reagan to abandon the Strategic Defense Initiative, so I don't think we were really close to any kind of agreement at all."

Weinberger stressed that the U.S. negotiating position at Geneva for eliminating all medium-range missiles from European soil is dependent upon deep "asymmetric" reductions to achieve parity in short-range missiles (the total number of Soviet warheads exceeds NATO's 10 to 1). "Asymmetric," he explained, would have to mean demobilizing far more of the Soviets' short-range missiles than NATO's."

Any arms-reduction agreement, Weinberger said, would have to be predicated on "air-tight" verification—which has always been the biggest stumbling block to any agreement.

Weinberger added that it is important to improve NATO conventional forces, "regardless of whether we achieve deep reductions in nuclear forces."

The defense secretary reasserted President Reagan's commitment to the Strategic Defense Initiative: "The President has always been interested in using the SDI for the defense of people, not missile sites. . . . If the Soviet Union's goal is to protect itself, it should embrace the arms reduction proposals of the President. . . . The staged elimination of the most threatening weapons known to mankind, linked to the deployment of strategic defenses, should be attractive to all nations seeking to preserve their national security. But if this is not the Soviets' goal, if instead Moscow wishes to gather around itself a potent arsenal useful for threatening others, and has not abandoned its policy of seeking world domination, then the prospects for arms reductions are grim indeed."

General Bernard Rogers, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander in Europe (SACEUR), told a conference at the Hanns-Seidel Foundation in Munich on Nov. 19 that the elimination of all medium-range nuclear missiles from Europe—the "zero option"—would leave the Western alliance in a worse position than before it decided in 1979 to deploy the weapons.

Earlier in the month, Rogers was quoted widely in the West German press saying that he and many other military leaders are worried that the post-Reykjavik diplomacy could lead to the dismantling of nuclear strike capabilities in Western Europe. They fear that a summit agreement to withdraw nuclear missiles would leave the West Europeans, and the 330,000 U.S. soldiers stationed in Europe, defenseless against an overwhelming superiority in short-range missiles and other airborne attack capabilities. Rogers further called for the development and stationing of an efficient air defense and ATBM (anti-tactical ballistic missile) system in Western Europe.

General Bernard Rogers, SACEUR, elaborated these concepts in an interview to *Air Force magazine*, published in the

November 1986 issue. Excerpts from the article follow (bracketed additions are by the Air Force editor, except where indicated):

Proposed U.S. Pullout Spells Disaster: "I can't think of anything that will move the Soviets more quickly down that road toward the objectives 'they have set for themselves] than the withdrawal of U.S. forces" that is being sought by some elements in Congress as well as by former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and former Carter Administration National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, the SACEUR asserted with visible frustration.

These proposals to remove 100,000 U.S. troops from Europe and assign them to an expanded rapid deployment force situated in the U.S. were born of two complementary notions. For one, the use of U.S. forces assigned to NATO to strike Libya last April suggested to some people that the U.S. presence is greater than needed for legitimate NATO support. Secondly, these analysts argue that by bringing 100,000 of these forces back to the U.S., the European NATO members could be coaxed to up their own military contributions to the Alliance. In lacerating this reasoning, the SACEUR suggested that bringing these forces back to the CON-US [continental United States—*EIR*] is tantamount to "taking them out of the structure. We have played that game before."

But the truly "disastrous" consequence of such moves—one was sponsored by Rep. Pat Schroeder (D-Colo.) in an amendment that the House subsequently defeated—is the signal it sends to Moscow. According to General Rogers: "The objective of the Soviets in Western Europe is to reach a point where the military situation—even for a defensive alliance—is beyond restoration." From the Soviet perspective, this condition obtains when "what they term the 'correlation of forces' is [so tilted in the U.S.S.R.'s favor] that she would have the opportunity to intimidate and blackmail Western Europe without having to fire a shot."

Such a potential checkmate, he said, is his "major concern as SACEUR. That is the direction [in which] we are heading, because every year that goes by—even though we get stronger because of the commitment by our [member nations]—the gap widens [because of the excessive military growth by the Warsaw Pact]. The day will come when [this imbalance] is beyond restoration." The Soviet Union, he warned, will know when that point is reached "the minute we know, if we operate under the assumption that everything we know about ourselves, she knows—and that is valid."

It follows, he asserted, that "if the U.S. withdraws 100,000 troops from Europe, this won't make the West Europeans do more [in terms of their contributions to NATO; rather, such an action] is going to send the kind of message that will lead [the European NATO members] to start to accommodate to the East. It will be an excuse for the U.K. to pull some of its forces back" and will cause similar reactions among the other member nations. . . .

The ATBM Imperative: For a variety of reasons that include the need to counteract the Soviet Union's SS-21, SS-22, and SS-23 theater ballistic missiles equipped with conventional warheads, General Rogers told *Air Force Magazine* during a recent press breakfast, his interest in developing and fielding antiballistic missile defenses within NATO is "very high." . . .

The fate and progress of NATO's ATBM [anti-tactical ballistic missile—*EIR*] project are also affected by the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative, especially by the fact that SDIO [the Strategic Defense Initiative Office—*EIR*] "is moving around Europe, dropping little piles of money on the desks [of NATO member countries, offering for instance, \$14 million to the British], and saying, 'Would you please develop an ATBM architecture for Western Europe?'" Claiming that he did not mean to be critical of SDI's managers, he suggested this approach was "fine, because the [NATO] nations have to get their industries involved, which is a key to getting the West Europeans to think about it." At the same time, he expressed reservations about the SDIO's policies on grounds that they encourage various parochial solutions by NATO members and their industries, "which have gotten quite powerful."

The SACEUR would instead like to see SDIO "take a big sack of money and plunk it down [in front of] the conference of NATO Armament Directors and say, 'Now here is the contribution the U.S. is willing to make as you decide how to fulfill these mission-need documents for an ATBM.'" He added that the U.S. ought to insist that the system should be built in Europe by the NATO member countries in close technical cooperation with the Strategic Defense Initiative Office. With SDI as well as West European ATBM efforts relying on similar technical advances—from boost phase interception to killing hostile ballistic missile warheads in their terminal target area—"we ought to be exchanging this information across the Atlantic," General Rogers suggested.

Most importantly, the SACEUR pointed out, this country "can't put itself into the position where it intimates to the West Europeans that [the U.S.] is going to deploy an ATBM in Western Europe at its own expense, manned by U.S. personnel. We must encourage the West European development of an ATBM architecture" and then be very supportive as it "is being deployed."

General Hans-Joachim Mack, deputy supreme commander of NATO, said on Nov. 17, in a speech in Munich before the Western German Military District Command, that NATO powers in Europe would face weakened deterrent capability if the superpowers dismantled medium-range nuclear weapons. "A zero option . . . without associated measures in the field of shorter range nuclear systems as well as on the conventional side would open up gaps in the deterrence spectrum of NATO in Europe by which conventional imbalance would weigh more heavily on NATO," he said.