

# European nations expand defense cooperation, but sidestep INF debacle

by Mark Burdman

During their two-and-a-half hour meeting in London Feb. 2, mostly devoted to issues of agriculture and financing in the European Community, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl made proclamations concerning the defense of the West, which opened the door for expanded Anglo-German military cooperation in the future. The two leaders, however, failed to address the main barrier to the defense of Europe: the INF treaty signed between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Chancellor Kohl stated his opposition to the idea of a nuclear-free Europe, and reaffirmed his belief in the need for independent British and French nuclear deterrents. Kohl was setting himself up against the chief appeaser in his government, Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher. On her side, Mrs. Thatcher paid what the *Financial Times* of London Feb. 3 called a "ringing tribute to Mr. Kohl's staunch support for NATO."

In the days and weeks leading up to the Thatcher-Kohl get-together, numbers of British conservative commentators had been issuing calls in the press for the British to awaken to the threat the Soviets are posing to the Federal Republic of Germany, and to make political and military overtures to the Germans. An editorial in the Jan. 31 *Sunday Telegraph* of London, by feature writer Anthony Hartley, called on Britain to end its "neglect" of West Germany, stressing that the Federal Republic "is the country whose weight in the European scales can tip the balance between East and West, the arbiter of a delicately poised equilibrium of power. It is also a country whose present seems unsatisfactory and future direction uncertain."

"For the West, the outlines of the coming problem should be clear enough," Hartley affirmed. "Soon Mikhail Gorbachov will unveil the European panel of his grand foreign policy design. Western Europe will be offered a new package, and much of this bait will be designed for German consumption. The Soviet Union has some tempting goods to offer. . . . Were the Bonn government to accept such offers, then this would mean in practice West Germany's defection from the alliance and a slide into neutralism. Dr. Kohl himself is opposed to this, but it would be difficult for him to resist were Mr. Gorbachov allowed by his Politburo colleagues to put together a really imaginative offer."

Hartley called on the Thatcher government to "counter siren voices from Moscow" by strengthening European defense, strengthening European and Anglo-German political and cultural relations, and reaching a "new Anglo-German treaty" that would make Germany's "Western stance more attractive and dissuade it from a leap in the dark toward the East." Britain, he advised, should follow France's lead in making initiatives toward Germany, and deal with Germany "on a higher level than bickering over the price of cereals."

Broadly, Hartley's polemic is consistent with the predominant mood in Britain's military establishment, which is committed to ringing the alarm bells about the continuing Soviet strategic threat, especially in the era after the Dec. 8, 1987 signing of the U.S.-Soviet INF treaty. On the same day as the Thatcher-Kohl meetings, and four days after the British and French governments had reached new agreements on unprecedented bilateral cooperation at an Anglo-French summit in London Jan. 29, British Defense Minister George Younger traveled to Copenhagen, to speak before an invited audience. Younger warned Western leaders not to be deluded by rhetoric from Soviet leader Gorbachov, or by the conclusion of the INF treaty, into expecting irresistible progress toward wider disarmament. "The central security problem in Europe is Soviet military power, far in excess of any need for defense or keeping its satellites at heel," said Younger, adding, "Soviet strategic aims in Europe remain what they always were, to fragment the NATO alliance, to de-nuclearize Europe, and above all, to undermine the credibility of the U.S. commitment to European security."

Younger's statements were echoed by those of West German Deputy Defense Minister Lothar Ruehl, in a one-page feature in the West German daily *Die Welt* Feb. 3. Ruehl compared key articles published in Soviet military journals since 1985 by Marshals Ogarkov, Yazov, Akhromeyev, and others, with military writings by Lenin and Trotsky and earlier Soviet military leaders like Frunze and Tukhachevsky, and concluded that the doctrine of the "crushing offensive into the enemy's territory" is still Soviet policy. "Since Lenin and Trotsky, the Soviet strategy is attack and victory," he warned. Ruehl has recently emerged as an outspoken critic of the Wohlstetter-Iklé Long-Term Strategy Commission report on *Discriminate Deterrence*.

## Jumping over a cliff

Younger and British military experts are sounding a different tone than Britain's Foreign Office Establishment, although the different tones are intrinsic to a schizoid British policy which is trying, at one and the same time, to deter Soviet aggression *and* support the INF treaty. During the week of Feb. 1, British Minister of State at the Foreign Office David Mellor traveled to Washington for a round of meetings with U.S. officials, with the motive of backing rapid U.S. Senate ratification of the INF treaty. One Foreign Office-connected insider said on Feb. 3, that Mellor's mission would be to "make it quite clear that we and Europe firmly believe in the treaty, and have no doubts about ratification." He praised the treaty for containing "extremely important elements which we have not seen before," and for creating a "global philosophical sea-change."

Mrs. Thatcher, too, has insisted on rapid Senate ratification of the treaty, whatever her views may be in private. Her classical position could be summed up as "thus far and no farther": Go with INF, but restrict any further disarmament talks to negotiations on conventional forces, thereby, in her view, avoiding the "denuclearization" of Europe. This is the gist of a document reportedly authored by British military professionals, for the NATO summit of March 2-3, and leaked by the West German *Welt am Sonntag* Jan. 31. Entitled, "the draft document of Brussels," it begins with the tricky formulation, "At every stage of the arms-control process, we will maintain the deterrence which allows us to respond to any threat in a flexible way." The "draft declaration" goes on to insist on American conventional *and* nuclear forces remaining in Europe, and rejects Soviet demands for non-modernization of the NATO arsenal, but leaves open options for further arms-control discussions on various levels.

This position is similar to that of a person who decides to jump from a cliff, and stop when he has gone 10 meters downward. As some of the more clever Soviet-linked arms-control politicians in Europe, such as West Germany's Social Democratic leader Egon Bahr, are stressing, correctly from their standpoint, that this position is untenable, since arms control takes on a dynamic of its own, not easily halted.

A Bahr co-thinker, British arms-control expert and military strategist Lawrence Freedman, made precisely this point, in an op-ed entitled, "The Next Nuclear Debate," in the daily *The Independent*, Feb. 3. Noting that the next phases of the disarmament debate and negotiations "could produce enormous strains in the alliance," he pointed out that the predominant mood in NATO now is "the call for thus far and no farther." The "real concern" here, said Freedman, is "once again the problem of holding the line against an apparently inexorable process of 'de-nuclearization.'" He stressed:

"Will it be possible to limit negotiations solely to missiles? . . . There will be pressure to include dual-capable artillery and aircraft, and NATO planners are starting to consider their nuclear-capable aircraft in particular as the minimum required to sustain deterrence.

"However, even if the artillery and aircraft could be protected from a 'triple-zero' negotiation, it is going to be extremely difficult to exclude them from all future arms control. They will be implicated in the new conventional arms-control talks, currently being put together in Vienna. These are the talks which Mrs. Thatcher and NATO are saying must have the highest priority and for which radical initiatives have been promised by both sides. Once NATO begins to demand cut-backs in the Warsaw Pact's tanks, then artillery and tactical air forces will soon be drawn in. Mr. Shevardnadze has already suggested that this will be the appropriate forum to discuss these dual-capable forces.

"Thus, the argument that future nuclear disarmament in Europe must wait on conventional disarmament is probably untenable."

## 'Far more extensive than expected'

At the same time, the shock of the INF treaty and the earlier U.S.-Soviet diplomacy at Reykjavik, has provoked the military establishments of Europe into unprecedented moves toward European defense coordination.

On the Franco-German level, recent efforts to create a common defense council and common brigade, have been upgraded still further, with the enunciation of a new strategic formulation. Going beyond the de Gaulle-era French notion of West Germany as the "foreground" of French defense, the discussion now is of the two countries forming "one common security space" in Europe.

On the Anglo-French level, a broad array of new agreements is in the process of implementation, worked out in significant part at the bilateral summit in London on Jan. 29, during meetings between, on the one hand, Mrs. Thatcher and French President François Mitterrand and French Prime Minister Jacques Chirac, and, on the other, Younger and French Defense Minister André Giraud. What is afoot, as de facto cooperation between the two nations' militaries, although not as a formal intergovernmental written agreement, includes the following:

- British right to use French ports and bases, as transit-ground for moving into Germany, in the event of war. Heretofore, since France left the integrated military command of NATO in the late 1960s, Belgium and Holland were the countries of transit.

- French nuclear submarine access to British ports. This opens up new possibilities of joint naval cooperation, and comes in the context of ongoing discussions to reach higher levels of cooperation in the deployment of the nuclear submarines of the two countries.

- Significant moves toward collaboration on military procurement.

Also, discussions on joint nuclear targeting, joint production of an air-launched cruise missile, and other forms of potential cooperation on nuclear weaponry, are ongoing.

*The Daily Telegraph* Jan. 30 reported that the scope of the agreements reached the previous day "surprised diplo-

## 'Manifesto of the will for European defense'

What follows is the translated text of a statement circulated by a leading think tank in France, opposed to the INF treaty:

The "Cercle d'Etudes et de Reflexion sur la Defense" [Circle for Study and Reflection on Defense] has analyzed the American-Soviet disarmament agreement signed in Washington on December 8, 1987.

This agreement constitutes a step in the process of deflation of the two main world powers' nuclear arsenals.

However, the European democracies must see the immediate consequences of this agreement and draw the conclusions concerning their defense.

In fact:

1) This agreement does not modify in any way the global potential threat constituted by the Warsaw Pact countries against a *Free Europe*; this threat is characterized by the following facts:

- the overwhelming superiority of their military means, all categories taken into account,
- the subversive manipulation of democratic public opinions notably through the encouragement of a pacifism aimed more at achieving total demobilization than any disarmament as such,
- the existence within the borders of those countries with totalitarian political systems which do not respect, nor guarantee, human rights.

2) This threat has been reinforced by the reduction of Western means of defense which has been the result of the

above-mentioned agreement. For these reasons, the CERD, which had already come to conclusions concerning the possibility of developing the will for a European defense, declares today the imperative and immediate need for this development.

CERD bases this affirmation on the following facts:

- There exist specifically European interests and fundamental values,
- There exist European institutions at the economic, industrial, and monetary levels which attest to the reality of the European construction,

CERD recommends urgently:

1) an emergency meeting of heads of governments as well as foreign affairs and defense ministers, of the seven member states of the Western European Union to define, on the one hand, a voluntarist attitude toward the development of a more autonomous defense of a *Free Europe*, and on the other, the determination of the practical and realizable steps that can be taken in the very short term in order to develop such a defense,

2) a "European summit" which would bring together the heads of state and of government as well as the ministers of foreign affairs and of defense of the 12 member-countries members of the EEC in order to revise the Rome Treaty to allow for the integration of defense, just as is presently the case with economics. . . .

3) the immediate launching of a study, at the level of the community, of a strategic project for *European Space Surveillance*.

CERD declares that the construction of a *United Europe* is urgent and for that reason public opinion must be adequately informed in order to participate actively. CERD regrets that so little echo was given to the common declaration published at The Hague last Oct. 27, 1987, where the member countries of the Western European Union developed clearly the basis for a European doctrine of defense which should be applied now as quickly as possible.

matic experts," were "far more extensive than had been expected," and "confounded predictions that the Anglo-French summit would be a largely symbolic affair." *EIR's* London sources report that the word from the British Ministry of Defense is that there is now "no limit to the possibilities for Anglo-French cooperation."

While the Anglo-French discussions are accompanied by much speculation about whether or not France is being pressured to join NATO, that is actually not the key question for the coming weeks. If the West is to avoid strategic catastrophe, European defense coordination must to be used as a lever, to increase the American commitment for defense of Europe. This is not a question of abstract "NATO structures" and so on, but of really upgraded transatlantic cooperation,

contrary to the trends of the Reykjavik-INF era.

This requires the toppling of the INF treaty, via its non-ratification by the U.S. Senate: All rumors, gossip, and threats, that such an option is "taboo," or that loyalty to President Reagan or to some impotent abstract principles precludes non-ratification, should be stopped.

Lastly, the countries of the West, including Britain, France, and West Germany, policy, and launch an economic mobilization, to produce the wealth that makes a Western military build-up possible. Without this, the irony in Europe remains that certain of the new weapons systems being discussed in the context of modernization plans, lack the necessary funding. This reality is not unknown to the Ogarkov military crowd in Moscow.