FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

NATO's Problem

"Europe's Security Dilemmas" by Christoph Bertram, in *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1987), 58 East 68th St., New York, N.Y. 10021.

Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev's recent arms control overtures have hurt the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) by creating friction among the 16 member nations. The chief issue: Does NATO still face a major Soviet threat in Europe?

Bertram, diplomatic correspondent for West Germany's *Die Zeit*, argues that NATO should by no means ease up, since "it is precisely because of a heavy [NATO] investment in military strength that Europe enjoys considerable stability." Any unilateral lowering of NATO's military guard would "undermine that stability." Even a serious détente initiative by the Kremlin could end up strengthening the USSR's presence in Europe—especially if Moscow's new *glasnost* (openness) breeds trouble in the Eastern bloc, inviting a Soviet military crackdown.

Alliance leaders should not forget Europe's need for a nuclear deterrent, says Bertram. NATO might even consider deploying a force of U.S. sea-launched cruise missiles (e.g., 200 Tomahawks). During the coming decade, he adds, NATO may face "severe manpower reductions" in its conventional forces. With new curbs on the Pentagon budget, U.S. manpower will be the first item to suffer. Moreover, West Germany's *Bundeswehr* may shrink by as much as 10 percent during the next seven years, owing to a "decline in available conscripts."

"There cannot be a non-nuclear NATO doctrine," Bertram concludes. "There can be no notion of limiting the risks of war to Europe, and no alternative, in terms of deterrence, to U.S. nuclear weapons dedicated to the European theater."

Why? Even a more favorable balance in conventional weapons would not rule out a Soviet attack. "As history has repeatedly shown, resourceful attackers can be weaker than defenders and still succeed."

Backward Dominoes?

"Losing and Winning: Korea and Vietnam as Success Stories" by Douglas Pike and Benjamin Ward, in *The Washington Quarterly* (Summer 1987), 1800 K St. N.W., Ste. 400, Washington, D.C. 20006.

Many historians regard the Korean and Vietnam wars as U.S. military blunders. Pike, director of the Indochina Studies Project, and Ward, an economist, both at the University of California, Berkeley, disagree. They argue that the two wars were "twin U.S. successes."

The images of the fall of Saigon and of U.S. forces retreating from northwestern Korea, they note, "are not the stuff of which victory is made." Yet consider the circumstances under which the United States intervened in both wars: fighting was already under way, and the U.S. allies were losing. The main objective: to contain a looming communist

threat. Pike and Ward believe that the level of involvement Washington chose, that of a limited war, was a good one. The alternatives, either to "win" the wars (and occupy both countries) or not to intervene at all (and abandon Asia to the communists), would have been worse.

If the United States had won decisively in Korea, the authors suggest, a noncommunist Korean regime would have faced China and the Soviet Union, no doubt requiring U.S. troops for security. "One could easily envision a U.S. force as large as half the size of the present European forces" to perform that task. China and the Soviet Union might have used the border as an arena for their rivalry.

Winning in Indochina would have meant occupying North Vietnam. Yet "given the terrain and the non-nuclear limitation," Pike and Ward contend, "there is no plausible way U.S. and South Vietnamese forces could have induced the North Vietnamese to halt their efforts to take over the south in the name of unification." Guerrilla warfare "might have continued almost indefinitely." And Washington would have acquired yet another expensive border to defend.

If Washington had not intervened, the authors add, China might have seen "an invitation to tidy things up in Taiwan or even Hong Kong." South Korea would not have enjoyed its economic boom. Japanese industry might not have blossomed. Unchastened, Vietnamese communists would have installed stronger allies in Cambodia and Laos, and aided Thai insurgents,

*Loretta Swit, Gary Burghoff, and Alan Alda in a scene from "M*A*S*H." The durable television series, produced between 1972 and 1983, was an attack on the Vietnam War masquerading as a comedy set during the Korean War.*

with "grim implications" for Singapore and Malaysia.

Limited U.S. intervention in Asian wars, Pike and Ward conclude, brought stability to noncommunist governments. As Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Kwan Yew once remarked: "The dominoes did fall in Southeast Asia after the end of the Vietnam War; they fell backwards."

Missile Defense

"Why Are The Soviets Against Missile Defense—Or Are They?" by Anthony Carl Holm, in *Naval War College Review* (Summer 1987), The Naval War College, Newport, R.I. 02841.

The rhetoric surrounding President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) suggests that the Soviet Union is opposed to antimissile defenses. In fact, notes Holm, an American Political Science Association graduate fellow, both sides have long pursued some form of ballistic missile defense (BMD). As early as 1945, Washington considered BMD, though nearly 10 years passed before development efforts commenced.

"The Soviet Union," says Holm, "attempted to counter U.S. strategic weapons policy by creating an elaborate air defense system in the early 1950s." The Soviets continued BMD research and development throughout the late 1950s, while the Eisenhower administration, mistakenly perceiving a "missile gap" with the USSR, embarked on a massive arms buildup. In 1961, the U.S. had 13 times as many intercontinental ballistic missiles and 14 times as many deliverable nuclear warheads as the USSR.

Following Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev's ouster in October 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson proposed a U.S.-Soviet nuclear weapons "freeze"; Moscow declined, instead increasing the pace of BMD research. That same month, Soviet Major General Nikolai Talenskii outlined Moscow's BMD policy (the "Talenskii Doctrine"), noting that BMD was strictly "defensive," and, in concert with offensive weapons, would enhance "deterrence."

Washington was "lukewarm" on BMD, says Holm, until Moscow started to deploy an antiballistic missile (ABM) system in 1964—its Galosh missiles, "Hen House" early warning radar, and "Dog House" battle management radar. Soon the U.S. Army moved ahead on a phased-array radar, and, by June 1966, completed a prototype battle management radar system to guide Sprint and Zeus missile interceptors.

In November 1969, the two nations began arms control negotiations. The Soviets "aimed at using the ABM Treaty and the attitudes of the détente era to continue BMD research and development and maintain Galosh," observes Holm, "while the United States restrained its ABM deployments." Washington wanted to trim its missile budget, and ABM was not popular in Congress. Ultimately, a Soviet-American ABM Treaty was ratified in May 1972.

Since then, occasional talk of "limited" nuclear conflicts has increased the appeal of BMD to both sides, says Holm. Even a small BMD system could "prevent or neutralize" a limited nuclear attack. Moreover, such systems could "help protect the United States and the Soviet Union from