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**POLITICS & GOVERNMENT**


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gains in human liberty and prosperity—was borrowed from the French Philosophes and other intellectuals of the 18th-century Enlightenment. These thinkers had a two-pronged notion of progress: the establishment of political rights and the growth of science and the economy. By the end of the 19th century, Wolin says, political “liberation” had been achieved in the West (with the exception of blacks and a few other “anomalies”) and enshrined in new constitutions, legislatures, and civil liberties. Progress gradually came to mean just scientific and economic advance; demands for more political rights (e.g., “participatory democracy”) were viewed as threats to material progress.

Thus, the idea of “progress” embraced by present-day conservatives, says Wolin, is “antidemocratic.” Though it grew out of the Enlightenment ideal of realizing all the powers of the human mind, its aim is to apply science and technology in a constant effort to “rationalize,” “modernize,” and improve the efficiency of society. Political, corporate, and scientific “experts” must be allowed to function free from meddling by the “ignorant” masses. According to Wolin, that is why conservatives habitually disparage popular protests (e.g., the antinuclear movement) as too uninformed to be taken seriously.

America’s liberals lost their way, Wolin believes, because they once shared this faulty notion of progress with conservatives and have now recognized its limitations. He argues that the Left must re-emphasize the idea of *political* progress and articulate a vision of a society where citizens have direct control over the nation’s political and economic institutions and “where taking care of people and things, rather than using them up, is the basic stance toward the world.”

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**FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE**


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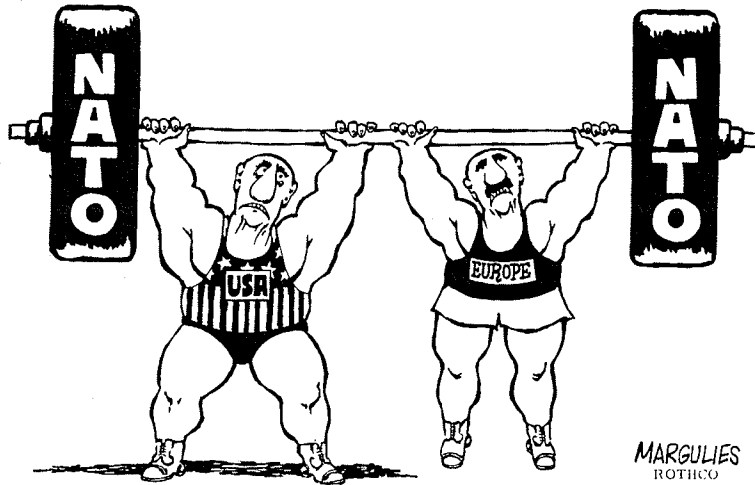
### *Sink or Swim*

“What’s Wrong with NATO?” by Irving Kristol, in *The New York Times Magazine* (Sept. 25, 1983), 229 West 43rd St., New York, N.Y. 10036.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) seems to be in perpetual crisis. For good reason, writes Kristol, a New York University professor of social thought. Now that the Soviet Union has achieved nuclear parity, NATO’s strategies no longer make sense. Almost the only thing that can save the Alliance, he argues, is for the United States to pull out.

An air of unreality pervades the Alliance today. Neither the NATO battlefield doctrine of “graduated deterrence”—escalating from conventional arms, to tactical nuclear weapons, then to intermediate and strategic missiles to halt a Soviet advance—nor the U.S. threat to “engage in nuclear holocaust” with the Soviet Union for the sake of Western Europe is much more than a bluff, Kristol contends. A defense that guarantees the annihilation of all the NATO nations is unworkable.

## FOREIGN POLICY &amp; DEFENSE



*Does Western Europe do its share? The United States pays 60 percent of NATO's bills, but most of the European nations demonstrate their resolve by requiring military service of their youth.*

Kristol believes that eventually Moscow will call the bluff—perhaps with a new blockade of West Berlin or an occupation of northern Norway. NATO would have to choose between nuclear war or a demoralizing acceptance of the situation. He doubts that NATO would fight. It lacks sufficient conventional power, and its nuclear strategy, he says, “scares Western Europeans more than it does the Russians.”

Building a NATO conventional force capable of repelling the Soviets, and backing it with a nuclear deterrent strong enough to discourage Moscow from initiating a *nuclear* conflict, is the only viable European defense strategy, Kristol argues. But that highlights another flaw in NATO: The Western Europeans are reluctant to pay for the necessary conventional build-up, because, unlike the United States, they take a benign view of Soviet intentions and because they find it easier to rely on the U.S. nuclear umbrella.

In effect, Kristol asserts, they “are asking the United States to run the risk of a nuclear holocaust so that they don’t have to cut their social welfare budgets.”

“Dependency corrupts, and absolute dependency corrupts absolutely,” Kristol declares. The pseudo-protection of the U.S. nuclear umbrella has sapped the political will of West Germany and other NATO members to defend themselves effectively against the Soviet threat. He calls for a new all-European NATO, with the United States an ally but not a member. The Europeans might then face reality and regain their self-respect, a feeling of control over their own national destinies, and the spirit of nationalism that is indispensable to any successful foreign policy.”