

## FOREIGN POLICY &amp; DEFENSE



Richard M. Nixon

Syrians, who subsequently withdrew. But his repeated efforts to pressure Moscow to force Hanoi to sue for peace met with failure.

Toughness in U.S. foreign policy has been intended only to preserve the status quo, to ward off threats or attacks by others, says Wildavsky. It is the natural reaction of "a satisfied superpower happy to hold on and unwilling to act except when provoked." The United States acts like a defensive power because it is a defensive power. Except for supplanting Soviet influence in Egypt after the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, Nixon took no actions that put the United States in a stronger position than it was before.

Can defensiveness provide a sound defense? Not in the long run, Wildavsky argues. There is no deterrence if the aggressor does not risk losing as much as he hopes to gain. Tough talk and no action is just an invitation to the aggressor to try again.

## No Amazons Are They

"The Israeli Fighting Women: Myths and Facts" by Cecile S. Landrum, in *Air University Review* (Nov.-Dec. 1978), Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

The image of the Israeli fighting woman firing a weapon in combat alongside her male counterpart is a myth, writes Landrum, a U.S. Air Force manpower analyst. Women in the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) serve almost exclusively in administrative and technical jobs that require little or no training, in order to free men to fight.

In contrast to American service women, who enjoy equality with men in pay and wide career opportunities, Israeli women do not seek or obtain parity with men in the military.

All women are drafted into the IDF as enlisted personnel at the age of 18 for 24 months, but because of exemptions for marriage, pregnancy, religious convictions, and lack of education, only 55 percent of the draft-age women actually serve (compared with 95 percent of Israeli men).

Women conscripts train for only three and a half weeks. They have no field exercises or night training, and their handling of weapons is minimal. Only 10 percent of them become regulars. Women officers are selected through identification in training and by interview.

Female draftees with high IQs and at least 12 years of education may apply for technical training as airframe and engine mechanics or electronic specialists. They serve an extra 12 months and are not released

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for marriage. Women are no longer accepted for flight training; until late 1977, they were permitted to serve as pilots if they could pass the severe entry requirements demanded of men and finish combat training.

Israeli women in the IDF perform an essential but auxiliary role, says Landrum, one that is secondary in their minds to marriage and motherhood—and one that subjects them in wartime to the least chance of injury or capture by the enemy.

### *The Fragile Partnership*

"Western Europe's Relations with the United States" by Uwe Nerlich, in *Daedalus* (Winter 1979), 165 Allandale St., Jamaica Plain Station, Boston, Mass. 02130.

The reconstruction of postwar Western Europe and the creation of the Atlantic Alliance (1949) were historic achievements of American foreign policy, even though they were more the result of improvisation than of any grand design. The Alliance brought an awkward dependence on U.S. nuclear power, but it also helped create unprecedented economic prosperity, political unity, and stability.

Today, the Atlantic partnership seems passé, says Nerlich, vice president of the European-American Institute for Security Research in Los Angeles. There is no longer the old rapport between Western Europe and the United States. Pro-American political parties are a rarity in Western Europe, and an anti-American stance is a political necessity in places like Greece.

Although Soviet military power is growing and Western Europe's dependence on the United States increasing, politicians on both sides of the Atlantic view national interests in narrow, competitive terms. Such attitudes led, for example, to futile U.S. efforts to pressure West Germany into a policy of more rapid economic growth so as to ease pressure on the U.S. dollar.

Maintenance of the Alliance is still the cornerstone of West European survival, says Nerlich, but Western Europe's vital interests now extend beyond the framework of institutions like NATO. Meanwhile, key U.S. leaders, notably in Congress, who have been traditionally most committed to trans-Atlantic cooperation, now take issue with various European moves. They oppose European initiatives for dealing with the radical Left (e.g., permitting the Communists to share power in Italy), establishing close ties with Arab oil-producers, or competing with the United States in markets, such as Latin America, for high technology.

How Washington and Europe each handle their relations with the Middle East and other "third parties" will be crucial, says Nerlich. Joint action in international affairs can reinforce the old ties, but it will take strong political leadership on both sides of the Atlantic to overcome domestic special interests and to design policies to reduce present U.S.-West European cleavages.