

IS NATO NECESSARY?

by Jeremiah Novak

Back in 1979 talk began about stationing Pershing missiles in Europe as a way of renewing Washington's time-worn pledge to its NATO allies and of preventing the U.S. from "decoupling" in Europe. This had the effect of opening a lively debate in foreign policy circles about the missiles per se as well as about the three-decade-old North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Congress took a serious interest, as did the peace movement in Europe. Yet not long ago, when the USSR shot down a Korean civilian airliner, the debate stopped. Such underlying issues as whether NATO should continue in its present form or indeed should exist at all never reached public consciousness.

Aware of this aborted debate, and with the commissioning of my elder son as a lieutenant in the U.S. Army, I decided to return to Europe to see for myself what was going on, to see how the situation had changed in the twenty years since I had finished my own Army tour in Germany. On my mind was an overriding question: Is NATO as necessary today as we felt it to be yesterday? Before leaving on the trip, I thought the answer was "yes." But the answer is not a simple one.

* * *

When my wife, Naomi, and I arrived in Brussels in June, we were received by a senior NATO official who was genuinely pleasant and helpful. He spoke frankly and openly, and though I would not want to quote him, it was then that I had the first inkling that things would not turn out as I had imagined.

At the time, Senator Sam Nunn was pressing a resolution in the Senate to withdraw ninety thousand troops from NATO unless the allies increased their defense expenditures. Joseph Luns, having led NATO through several dull years, was about to leave the organization, to be replaced by the more dynamic Lord Carrington. Chancellor Kohl of West Germany not only faced a metal-workers strike and a quiescent but smoldering antinuclear movement but was in deep negotiations with Herr Hoenecker of East Germany. Mrs. Thatcher of Great Britain was being raked over the coals for recent decisions about the Falklands, for the agreement she had made in Hong Kong, and for the domestic coal strike. In Belgium, unemployment was 12

per cent, the government deficit 30 per cent of GNP, and there were beggars on Brussels' rundown streets. In France, Mitterrand faced an economic and a government crisis. And in the U.S., the presidential primaries were ending and the country was preparing for an election.

The NATO official told us a number of disturbing things. First, he said that Britain would probably pull out its fifty thousand troops from the Army of the Rhine to "save foreign exchange" and in order to build up its navy (whose weakness had been shown in the Falklands) to meet the Soviet naval build-up in the North Sea. Second, he said the Germans were on the verge of adding ninety thousand troops to their army "to replace ninety thousand American troops which might be needed for duty in the Middle East." Third, he said that most NATO members regard U.S. policy in the Middle East as unnecessarily pro-Israel and anti-Arab. He also said that, politically, each NATO nation "opposed further military expenditures, as there were no votes in this." He expressed regret that Senator Nunn was pushing his resolution because "Nunn, of all people, is a friend of NATO."

I told our host that the Nunn resolution matched sentiments I had heard in Washington and New York and that, while Nunn was no doubt bluffing, he was reflecting a mood that exists and is growing in the U.S. Further, I ventured the opinion that Europe's, and in particular Britain's, pro-Arab tilt seemed somewhat hypocritical and that Israel ought to be more respected in Europe than it is. When we discussed the Middle East later on, he said the Europeans are depending on the U.S. to hold that flank and that he doubted European forces would be used there. The implication was that the U.S. would have to save Europe's oil.

We stayed in Brussels one additional night, as the press office gave us the names of some people to contact. Curiously, the press officer had never heard of our destination, Bamberg, or USAREUR, with responsibility for the U.S. Army forces we'd be visiting there (he's British and concerned only with the northern zone). He tried to link us up with the U.S. European Command (EUCOM) in Stuttgart, despite my pleas to the contrary, and thus a few days were lost until he got the chain of command right. It dismayed me that a NATO press officer was so uninformed. It was also sad to note the condition of the press building: Offices are dingy, press handouts are covered with dirt, the cafeteria is dark and depressing. In the lobby the guards yawned, and no one we saw appeared to be working,

Jeremiah Novak, a writer and former Worldview columnist, was commander of A Company, 3rd Battalion, 35th Armor (Bamberg, Germany), from 1964 to 1965.

typing, or even walking anywhere with a purpose. Perhaps Carrington will revitalize the place.

* * *

The next morning we got the autobahn outside Brussels and drove east to the Rhine, then south through Frankfurt to Würzburg, then east to Bamberg. Despite the Z-shaped route, it took only six hours to reach the forward line of NATO in northern Bavaria, just behind the border with East Germany and Czechoslovakia. I estimated that from Brussels to the East German border takes four hours at 60 mph. Tanks travel at 30 mph, so it would take Soviet tanks eight hours to reach Brussels if they were unopposed. The trip renewed my sense of how small West Europe is, although this sense of smallness is due largely to the fact that France, which provides depth, is not in NATO.

We drove through Louvain and Liège, both cities looking drab, gray, and dull. The factories at Liège were abandoned, and steel mills rusted by the Aisne Canal. As we crossed into Germany, life returned—for the Fatherland has every sign of having prospered. Villages all have factories on their outskirts and the highways soar across northern Germany. Cologne appeared to be a rich city from the perspective of the Rhine bridge; and Frankfurt has expanded beyond the autobahn ring, having gobbled up the nearby towns, a jungle of concrete ugliness.

Below Frankfurt at Aschaffenburg the rolling green mountains and forests of Bavaria came into view following a terrific thunderstorm; the land looked rich, prosperous, and well-tilled. The green of the forests, the yellow of the grain, the black church towers, and the mud-tan buildings of the villages all merged into the real Germany—a medieval Germany.

We got off the autobahn at Würzburg and headed east, passing through the city, which is well-preserved, medieval, and lovely beneath the wine terraces and the huge Marienberg fortress. We then drove along Bundesbahn Zwei and Zwanzig toward Bamberg. Except for the fact that the two-lane road is better paved and that farmers drive Opels to their fields instead of tractors and wagons, little had changed in twenty years. The men still dress in field hands' clothes and the women in wide, longish skirts and babushkas, looking like peasants in a painting by Van Gogh.

I was growing tense nearing Bamberg. Naomi had not been there, and I was afraid it had turned ugly-modern and that all my memories were out of date. When we saw in the distance the castle tower that rises above the city, my spirits soared. It is a graceful tower, as romantic a sight as you will see in Germany. As we neared it, however, my heart sank - for on the right of the road, just across from the tower on the hill, sits a twenty-story metallic blue building, heavy and ugly. Nevertheless, I quickly got my bearings and we drove back across the Regnitz to *old* Bamberg, to find the Bamberger Hof Hotel—in the heart of the city—which has not changed in two decades.

The next day we walked through the old town, over cobbled streets, in a perfectly preserved medieval city dominated by the cathedral of the Prinz Archbishop and a number of monasteries. Through the center of the city runs the Main-Regnitz-Danube Canal. With lovely old buildings reflected in the canal's waters, Bamberg resembles Amsterdam. The city was untouched by the war, so that the

old Rathhaus, the market platz, the old churches of this most Catholic of cities give a sense of *durée*, of presence.

In the days that followed we took wonderful drives around the countryside. Bamberg is in Franconia, the original home of the Franks. It is rural, down-to-earth Germany in a section of the country that never voted for Hitler. It is also the beer capital of Germany, where they brew Franken Pils, a gold lager that takes seven minutes to pour. It has no carbonation and has a sweet, tangy taste. They also brew *gschenkela* beer, in an old monastery in the heart of Bamberg. *Gschenkela*, with an aroma of roasted pine needles, is a potent drink of about 30 per cent alcohol.

The inexpensive beer and food made me feel at home, for they too have not changed since I left Bamberg in 1965.

* * *

The Third Brigade, First Armored Division, made up of the 3/35th Armor, 1/52nd Infantry, 2/54th Infantry, and a number of artillery, engineer, and rocket units, is based in Bamberg. So too is the 2nd Squadron/2nd Cavalry. They were all there twenty years ago; but at that time we were designated the 3rd Brigade of the 4th Armor. The only thing that has changed is the division number.

It might be worthwhile at this point to explain the deployment of troops.

The Germans and the British are responsible for the northern part of the line between Bremen and Frankfurt. The Americans are responsible for the southern portion. However, the deployment of forces is the same all along the border.

In the forwardmost position, right up against the border, units are lightly armed, use track vehicles, and are equipped with tanks, helicopters, and light infantry as well as mobile artillery. Their job is to keep tabs on an attacking enemy, report on its strength and concentrations, and, if possible, delay enemy penetrations. Anywhere from ten to thirty miles behind the cavalry are the main battle forces, which will deploy in such a way as to meet the enemy's spearheads. Too lightly armed to be more than support for the main force, in the event of war the cavalry would not stand and fight but withdraw, reporting the enemy's actions. Once the cavalry reached its main force, the latter would take over and engage the enemy's main forces. In the Bavarian area, the 11th Armored Cavalry faces East Germany in the north, and the 2nd Cavalry is expected to hold the southern areas of the border.

The main force units along the lines are comprised of heavy divisions of armor and infantry. Indeed, there is hardly any difference today between armor and infantry divisions, except that an armor division has one additional tank battalion. The divisions are made up of three fighting brigades, each consisting of either two tank and one infantry battalion or two infantry and one tank battalion. Since battalions are interchangeable, some brigades have three or four tank or three or four infantry battalions. Behind the brigade is an air cavalry helicopter brigade and a brigade of artillery with 155 mm tracked cannon and eight-inch multiple-launch rockets. There is also an anti-aircraft brigade as well as support troops.

The fighting brigades in the main forces are all armored and travel on tracked, not wheeled, vehicles. The 1st Armored, the 8th Infantry, and the 3rd Armored/2nd Cavalry Division use M-60 A-3 tanks and M-113 A-2 personnel

carriers; the 3rd Infantry Division and the 11th Armored Cavalry are being fitted with the new turbine-driven M-1 Abrams tank and the Bradley infantry personnel carrier, which looks like an infantry "tank."

At present there are two armored cavalry regiments and four divisions in the American sector, plus the forward units of the 2nd Armored and 1st Infantry, which would be reinforced by troops from the United States in the event of war. Two other divisions could be flown in from overseas if necessary. Thus, U.S. forces would have eight divisions if given ten days' warning.

Currently, the main NATO force is positioned near the East/West border, just behind the cavalry. The purpose is to engage the enemy as close to the border as possible and to contain a war in the narrow strip of land that represents West Germany. The idea is to throw the cavalry and the first-line main force into the enemy's teeth and to keep them there until reinforcements and reserves arrive.

Tactically, of course, the deployment of troops so far forward is wrong. The better approach is to deploy the main force further back until the enemy commits itself to a line of attack, and then to mass the main force for a knockout blow. However, the West German Government objects, saying that this would make the battlefield all of West Germany, and contends that the exposed deployment of troops spread heavily across the border is best. So much for the marriage of politics and strategy.

Right now the 1st Armored Division covers a front of some forty miles—an area at least eight times larger than a division is meant to cover. However, the division has deployed its brigades in such a way that it can meet an enemy spearhead on a smaller front if necessary.

Bamberg is about thirty miles from the border—three minutes flying time for a jet going 600 mph. At this distance a brigade can also be hit by short-range conventional weapons. Thus, the main force is very close to the firepower of the enemy and will have to maneuver under heavy air and artillery fire from the moment a war begins. At the same time, the brigade in Bamberg is extremely vulnerable

to a surprise attack, given its proximity to the border. For example, the barracks and the huge tarmacs where the tanks and personnel carriers are parked are completely unprotected. Nor are there bomb shelters. A surprise air or rocket attack could destroy at once both troops and vehicles. Deployed this close to the border, tankers could not reach their densely parked tanks quickly enough, much less disperse. Nearly the entire main American combat force is thus exposed.

Finally, the current troop deployment assumes that the enemy will use conventional weapons—this despite the fact that no one believes the Russians would risk an attack with only "gentlemen's" weapons. If nuclear weapons were used, U.S. forces would be pulverized before an alarm was sounded. Looking at my old base, I recalled something my battalion commander said in 1964: "Either the Army is perfectly convinced there can be no surprise attack or they have deployed the forces in such a way as to ensure total destruction."

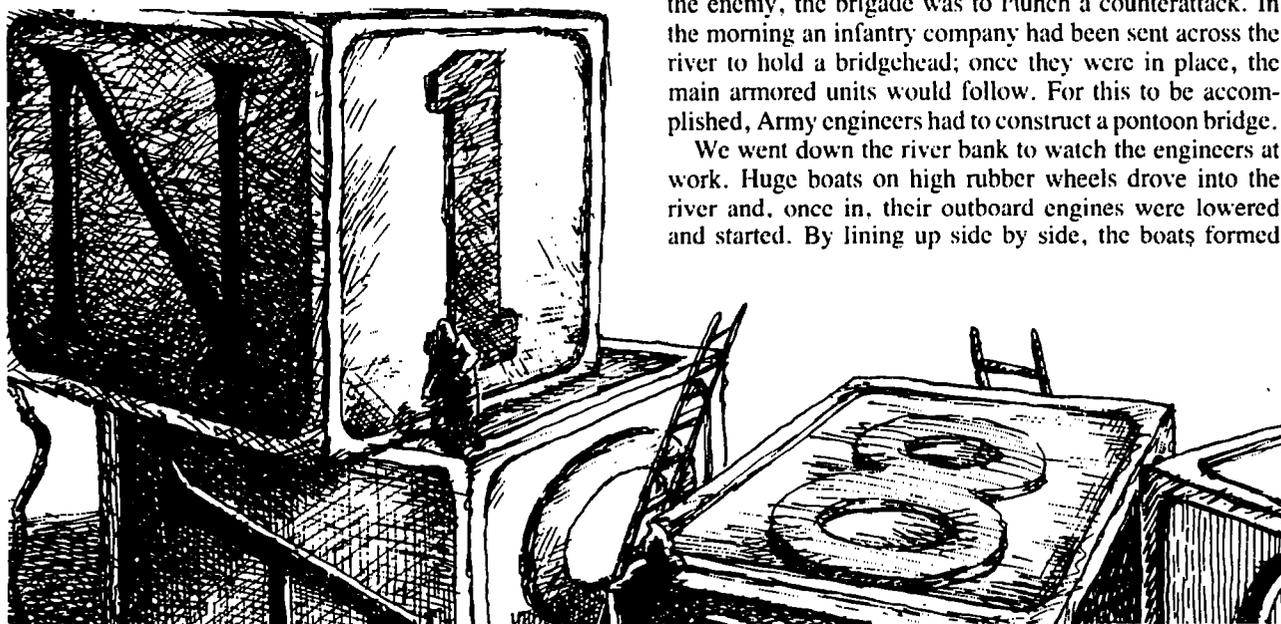
* * *

On the day I was scheduled to meet with the Third Brigade in the field, I arrived at the tank park to find all the vehicles gone. They had left for an exercise. I was pleasantly surprised, for in my day we would have been forced to leave behind up to 20 per cent, owing to a lack of spare parts. A young captain picked me up and drove me along the Main River to the brigade field headquarters. It hadn't moved in twenty years.

Inside, looking at the exercise maps, I discovered that the exercise itself hadn't changed. The deployment of units was the same, as if nothing had happened in two decades to merit revision. Even my old Company A was positioned exactly as it had been. The only new element was the legend, "Assume enemy air superiority." Since the Russians surely know that the U.S. Army has not changed its troop deployment in twenty years, their new air superiority has an excellent strategic target.

The exercise I watched that morning went something like this: The 2nd Cavalry had made contact with enemy forces and was falling back toward the river. To slow down the enemy, the brigade was to launch a counterattack. In the morning an infantry company had been sent across the river to hold a bridgehead; once they were in place, the main armored units would follow. For this to be accomplished, Army engineers had to construct a pontoon bridge.

We went down the river bank to watch the engineers at work. Huge boats on high rubber wheels drove into the river and, once in, their outboard engines were lowered and started. By lining up side by side, the boats formed



a bridge. Voila! The only disheartening aspect of the maneuver was that these were the same type of boats used twenty years ago. Surely the technology had advanced in two decades.

As soon as the bridge was in place, Delta Company of the 3/35th Armor came down to the bridgehead. Again I was dismayed, for the tanks were M-60 A-3s, hardly different in appearance from the M-60 A-1s used in 1965. I climbed inside one and was pleased to learn it had a new sighting system—a laser sight for daytime and a thermal sight for night. I also learned that the tankers like the new sights and find them to be accurate when combined with a new electronic computer that replaced our old mechanical ballistics computers. This is tremendously important, for to survive against a well-equipped enemy, a tank must be able to find and fire quickly at a target. In the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, battle losses due to antitank weapons were staggering; and not a few people believe that the day of the tank is past. Improved sights are critical.

Still, I was not much encouraged. After twenty years of huge defense budgets, the Army hadn't greatly improved the tank. True, the M-1 tank is now in production, but it has been under development since at least 1964. Whatever is claimed, it is not a "new" tank, though it is a better one. Surely by now we could have developed a tank with such aircraft-type advantages as the "black box" and "stealth" equipment. How could we allow our technology to stagnate where the Army's main fighting tool is concerned?

Turning from the tank, I noticed that the infantry had a new personnel carrier—an updated version of the M-113 that, in 1963, had been a basic vehicle. All that had changed here was the addition of an antitank missile and a diesel engine. Further, an antiaircraft platoon in tracked vehicles now accompanied the battalion. I was glad to see it, although it confirmed what I feared: that the U.S. has lost air superiority in Europe. Moreover, the new antiaircraft gun, though radar-guided, is a vulcan Gatling gun able to fire three thousand rounds a minute—but only at up to a thousand meters accurately. It is hardly a killer weapon.

The real shock of the day was that it took an unbelievable six hours to get the battalion across the river. Had this been war, the infantry that had been sent across in the morning would have been dead. And yet the battalion commander and the sergeant major, instead of pushing the battalion to move faster, spent most of the morning more concerned with serving sausage sandwiches and coffee to the troops and to the dozens of spectators—wives, friends, and the just plain curious.

The river-crossing problem is easy to define: A pontoon bridge is narrow and tanks are wide. Furthermore, a tank driver cannot see the bridge in front of him. The solution is to get the tank commander or the gun loader from the tank turret to stand outside and direct the driver across the bridge. For a reason I couldn't determine, only the engineers, who don't really understand the situation from inside a tank, sought to guide the drivers. No one thought to get the gun loaders down to help. I asked the old sergeant major about it. He shrugged and said: "Of course, that's what we used to do, sir." Then he added: "But this ain't the old Army."

What I saw at that exercise fit the pattern of everything I was to see and hear that trip, from brigade headquarters

on down. Today's Army has a laid-back attitude, a sort of Valium look to it. Officers do not raise their voices; NCOs look the other way rather than reprimand; and soldiers salute and say "good morning, sir" with something of a sneer or glutinous subservience. As to raising voices against the troops, an M.P. set me straight. "It's not 'in,' " he said. He explained that soft voices were part of the "family feeling, the feeling of community in the new Army." Likewise, the battalion commander serving sausages and coffee was doing his community relations work. The idea of an exercise, he explained, was not to simulate real war but to practice techniques. Speed didn't matter; what did was that the troops practiced and participated.

* * *

Major General Crosby E. Saint, the division commander, is a graying man of about fifty, a bit plump, with gray eyes and a fine, handsome face. Saint served in the 2nd Cavalry in 1965 as a captain—slightly older than I am, but still a contemporary. His comments, he told me, were for the record.

He had learned I'd been asking about the slowness of the bridge crossing. He said simply that, in today's Army, one trained people slowly by example, and that the Army had changed since my day. "The Army you served in," he opined, "died at Tet in Vietnam. After that, we went through a period of drug-takers and hoodlums. Today's new Army is comprised of volunteers, who are more dedicated than the post-Tet Army, but are nothing like the soldiers you served with."

"Are drugs currently a problem?" I asked.

"Definitely not," he replied. "I think we're getting past that now. But to overcome that problem, we had to spend more effort on the community. Today, officers and their men spend more time together. Also, there's more married couples' housing, more activities, movies, on-post entertainment. There's much more counseling of soldiers and their families. Today's officer is a sort of community leader and psychologist. We have stress clinics, drug counseling, alcoholic counseling, marriage counseling. And you wouldn't believe the scale of economic benefits the troops get."

"It seems to me," I ventured, "that the Army has turned rather soft-hearted."

"You're both right and wrong. You must keep in mind that the methods of your day really wouldn't work today. We lost a lot more in Vietnam than a war. We're rebuilding the American Army, and that takes time."

"How about the officers?"

"They're pretty good, but this is not the macho Army it used to be. Leadership today is more subtle...as I said, community oriented."

"To change the subject, sir, I was impressed by the maintenance of the tanks."

"You should be. We don't have the troubles with tracked vehicles we used to have. Maintenance is pretty good. It's our wheeled vehicles that are always breaking down. Do you know that we haven't had a new wheeled vehicle in this division in ten years?"

"I didn't realize that."

"Well, they say we'll get some new ones soon, but it can't be soon enough. Our wheeled vehicles are a disgrace."

"When are you getting the new M-1 tanks and Bradley infantry vehicles?"

"I'm sucking hind tit on that. We get refitted in 1989 or 1990."

"My God," I said. "You mean that one of the best and biggest divisions must wait until 1990?"

"That's the schedule. Now don't get me wrong. Until last year we thought we'd never get them; but now that the 3rd Infantry is getting them, there is a schedule. Believe me, the outlook is brighter. For example, we've been given the new rocket launchers, and that's a help; and now more antiaircraft equipment and the new air cavalry brigade in each division. We're getting more than we did for years, so I'm not complaining."

"What have you heard about the M-1 Abrams? Is it good?"

"All I have is hearsay, but the troops seem to love it."

"I hear it burns fuel."

"That it does. Too much. But that's offset by its speed and fighting ability. Besides, it takes years to work out the bugs."

"What about the Bradley?"

"Oh, that. The problem is that it's too good. The infantry use it like a tank, and they don't want to dismount, deploy, and fight. There will be a disaster unless the infantry gets out of it. It's supposed to be an armored personnel carrier, not a tank."

We talked a bit more about the old Army and the new, and then we parted.

* * *

Arriving back in Bamberg, I was picked up by Naomi and we drove out to the "war zone," where the exercise east of the Main had just been enacted. We saw little trace of the exercise, for two reasons. First, the area is forested, and it is easy to hide a tank brigade in a forest. Second, and more important, the zone in which they were operating consists of at least five hundred to a thousand square miles. In such an area, the five hundred tracked vehicles of a brigade mean but one vehicle per square mile. Pathetic. Launching a brigade in such an area, even allowing for the "channels" the terrain forms, channels through which tanks from both sides move, is perfectly pointless—as pointless as it seemed to me twenty years ago.

We drove to Lichtenfels, an old walled town in the Maintal, and found a cafe-konditerei in the town platz. It was a beautiful place, with salmon-colored plush cushions and small, round marble tables. We chose one by the window overlooking the square. Coffee was served in delicate Rosenthal cups and the strudel came heaped with whipped cream. We didn't talk much.

We could not be serious about deterrence, I thought, conventional much less nuclear, because the means are simply not there. Obviously, we must not believe an attack is possible or we wouldn't be deployed as we are. In other words, why are we doing so little if there is real danger? Or, conversely, if there is no danger, why are we bothering? Surely the Soviets are not deterred by an army so badly deployed. Do they really want to attack?

As for our allies, although they willingly allow the U.S. to contribute two-thirds of the NATO budget, they too lack any sense of urgency. True, it was Chancellor Helmut Schmidt who wanted the Pershings (which were promised

by Carter, not Reagan); and true, the allies want an American presence. Of course they also complain about it, but they themselves do little to make an American presence unnecessary. If the European allies feel no sense of urgency, why do we? If they believe there are no votes for a bigger NATO which they would have to help finance, why do we?

More basic to the whole subject, how real is the Soviet threat? NATO has at least 70 divisions, and while I was in Brussels NATO reduced its estimates of the number of Soviet divisions from 185 to 117. Surely that indicates no huge advantage on the Russians' part—not enough to ensure a Soviet victory, at any rate. And while it is true that the USSR has SS-20s and SS-22s all over Eastern Europe, so what? Any nuclear war would destroy so much of Western European industry that the Soviets would find little of value remaining. The Kremlin cannot be *that* nihilistic.

At the heart of the matter are two questions: What are Soviet intentions?; what means do they have? Up to now we have known little of their intentions and have placed heavy emphasis on bean counts of their tanks, planes, rockets, etc. Although the Soviets have improved their forces in the past two decades, the ratios between Warsaw Pact and NATO forces remain about the same, except for a huge increase in nuclear theatre rockets. Yet we do not know their intentions, and thus we do not know whether NATO has deterred, is deterring, or will deter them. And their means of attack? The Soviet Army is huge, as it was in 1914 and 1941, and their technology is much improved. Yet in 1914 and 1941 they were the attacked, not the attacker.

Is it not possible, then, that the Soviets view NATO forces as potential aggressors and the Warsaw Pact forces as a necessary line of defense? In asking such a question, one need not impute innocence to Moscow. After all, the Soviets are opportunists. If Western Europe were to fall apart politically or economically, they would capitalize on that weakness and use force or the threat of force to take over. But are they deterred by NATO? That is a different issue.

The degree to which NATO is united—at least symbolically—gives the Russians pause. No doubt the Soviets would like to see a correlation of political, economic, and military forces that is more in their favor. And that is the point. What counts is precisely Europe's political and economic forces. If the peace movement rebounds from the Korean Airline debacle, and if the Green movement in both Germany and England grows larger, the correlation of forces inside NATO could undermine NATO's existence. In such a situation, whether the U.S. had more or fewer troops, better or worse equipment, would become as academic as force levels became in Vietnam. Moreover, Western Europe's political will is not all that strong. In short, NATO as a military force is only as strong as the political will behind it.

The peace movement has a large following in Germany, England, and Holland—and it is anti-NATO and anti-American as well as antinuclear. In London last year I saw signs in Westminster reading "Make London a nuclear-free zone." In Bamberg, gate posts at the Army base have pictures and warnings against terrorism aimed at American troops. An M.P. captain I spoke with said the Army experiences more such incidents than is generally known and

that anti-American feeling is up. Read anti-NATO as well.

* * *

At Gschenkela, the old Bamberg monastery that serves the famous beer of the same name, we met a handsome young German couple, both medical doctors from Stuttgart. The old monastic refectory with its carved wooden tables, coat racks, and benches, its fireplaces working in June to counter the late spring chill, is the quintessential German gasthaus. Built in the fourteenth century and peopled largely by students and academic types, it has an intellectual atmosphere like that of a theological school to which a sprinkling of older professionals has come—all jammed together at long tables for a *gemütlich* evening.

After I explained why I had come to Bamberg, the young woman doctor asked: "Don't you Americans ever believe in preserving old things? I mean, don't you have a sense of the old and the beautiful?" The woman had embarked on making two points: first, that it is the Americans who are disrupting the peace of Europe; and second, that the Americans forced Schmidt to request the Pershings.

The young woman was polite and sweet and even bright. But I felt she represented that Old German righteousness, which always angers me. Such people seem to forget that

Hitler made the postwar era; Hitler signed the pact with Stalin that started the war; Hitler brought down the Iron Curtain. I knew this young lady had nothing to do with Hitler—but, my God, the man was walking this planet a mere forty years ago. He is not "ancient" history but is ever present in our era.

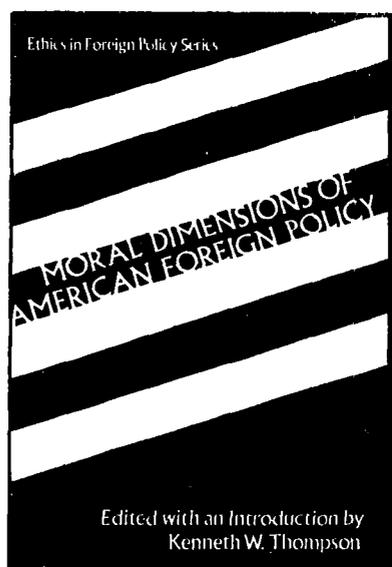
The episode brought to mind something my old battalion commander had said during a drunken happy hour twenty years ago: "I hope the Soviets attack and push us back to the Rhine, and then push us until our backs are against the English Channel. And then, in the counterattack, we'll be able to kick the shit out of France and Germany."

It's sad, but that's how one can feel when confronting a smug Stuttgarter.... Afterwards I reflected that, yes, Virginia, that's why we're in NATO: to keep the Germans down. And maybe that's why we and the Russians play this game: to divide Germany and maintain the peace. Well, who knows deep down what makes sense, given the fact that our Army appears in no shape to fight the Soviets and that we have no evidence they intend to fight us. But then gschenkela is a beer that makes one think terrible thoughts....

(This is the first part of a two-part article)

* * * * *

A Baker's Dozen



Assembled for the first time...thirteen timeless essays by thirteen of our nation's leading thinkers on ethics and international affairs: Kenneth W. Thompson, John Courtney Murray, Robert Gordis, Paul Nitze, Manfred Halpern, Paul Ramsey, Gordon Zahn, John C. Bennett, Victor C. Ferkiss, Robert W. Tucker, Theodore R. Weber, Denis Goulet, and Hans J. Morgenthau. 350pp./\$9.95

Moral Dimensions of American Foreign Policy

Send orders to: CRIA Publications, 170 E. 64 St., New York, NY 10021

From Transaction Books and the Council on Religion and International Affairs