The dissertation is an attempt to study the issue of American troop levels in Western Europe in the general context of US involvement in Western Europe during the period 1950 to 1968. For the United States, no context of security has seemed more important, or been more carefully analyzed and organized, than that relating to Western Europe. American statesmen and military planners have repeatedly claimed that the security of their country is inextricably linked with that of Western Europe. Twice during the twentieth century the United States had gone to war to prevent the human, material, industrial and technological resources of that highly advanced region coming under the domination of a power regarded as hostile to American interest. Victory in the Second World War meant no change in the American concept of a favourable balance of power in Europe. Indeed, the identification in the minds of American policy-makers of the Soviet Union as the potential adversary reinforced their determination to spare no efforts to maintain such a balance. So formidable were the resources of the identified adversary and so deep the extent of its control and influence over Eastern Europe that American policy-makers felt called upon to respond in a manner that had no precedent in the history of their country. Evolving the interesting concept of "the Atlantic Community" American leaders sought to convince their people that the United States and the countries of Europe outside the Communist orbit shared the community of interest that was gravely endangered by a "threat" from the Soviet expansionism.
It was in the interest of the United States for security reasons to encourage, for such a period of time as was appropriate for its purpose, the development of a 'Western Europe'—in a political and military sense—which would work in harmony with the United States in its external relationships, especially relating to the principal adversary. And it was also the interest of the United States that in each of the countries in Western Europe, a regime functioned that would share the American perception of the source of the threat and co-operate with the United States in joint effort to meet it. The placement of a substantial body of United States troops in Western Europe and the huge outlays of expenditure that the United States incurred in supporting such a force have to be seen in that context.

The decision to station US troops in Western Europe represented a fundamental change in traditional American foreign policy. The Truman Administration had to confront the historic fact that never before had the United States maintained a vast standing army in peace time. Never before had the Congress and the American public supported the concept of stationing substantial US armed forces overseas in peace time. So significant a departure from tradition could not have been feasible had there been sizeable opposition to the course in Congress, and if such opposition was a reflection of disaffection and disquiet among large or influential segments of the American public.

The decision to despatch troops to Europe was an executive decision. It sparked a "great debate" in Congress headed by a stalwart Republican, Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio.
Taft raised serious questions concerning the scope and limits of executive powers, the rights of Congress, and the implications of membership in a military alliance and stationing of US troops overseas in peace time. The constitutional issues were to assume profound importance several years later but the opposition of Taft and his associates was in vain as the Truman Administration with strong bi-partisan support in Congress, overwhelming endorsement from the media and interest groups, and broad support from the public carried the day. The broad course laid out by the Truman Administration in regard to NATO in general and maintenance of six divisions of US troops in Western Europe have been continued by the subsequent Administrations till 1968, the end of the period under review, and even subsequent down to the present day. Understandably the overwhelming support in Congress in the early years could not be sustained indefinitely especially when the United States faced economic difficulties of its own and when, following reconstruction largely with US aid many of the West European countries became economically strong and prosperous. The manner in which the executive and legislative branches responded to such developments, and the factors that influenced Congress and the various Administrations is sought to be discussed in the present work, with the central focus kept on the issue of troop levels.

The present work is divided in seven chapters. In the first chapter, after a brief summary of the demobilization of US forces in the European sector, a review of the US commitments to NATO, including a brief history of their development is
attempted. In subsequent sections of the same chapter, the decision to send US troops to Europe and Congressional debate that it evoked have been dealt with. Chapter II gives an account of the relatively stable US troop levels maintained over the years under review. The third chapter focuses attention on the tussle between the military and civilian components of the Department of Defence on the question of some withdrawals from Western Europe to mitigate Congressional criticism. Chapter IV discusses the efforts made by Congressional critics to bring to a head the issue of troop reductions by successive legislative proposals. The response of the Executive and the strategy that it adopted both towards the problem in Congress and to reaction among West European Allies are also examined. Succeeding two chapters are devoted to detail review of specific aspects of Congressional criticism and executive action having a bearing on the troop levels issue. Chapter V gives an account of the balance of payments problem associated with the stationing of US troops in Europe. Chapter VI discusses several variations on the basic theme of a very large segment in Congress that the United States was bearing unduly heavy share of the "burden" of West European defence, and that the Allies should be made to "do more" for the common cause. The last chapter will be devoted to some concluding observations on the significant aspects of the problem.

The subject involving national security policy-making in the US is one with which students in our country are only beginning to get acquainted. The present writer is quite
conscious of his own limitations and can offer in justification for having embarked on the task only the facts that he tried to work to the best of his ability and received encouragement from his Supervisor. Basic source materials needed for a comprehensive study available in India are quite inadequate. The writer was able to spend only an all-too-brief period of six months in the United States, thanks to a field research grant from the Jawaharlal Nehru University. Brief visits were also made to NATO headquarters in Brussels, and some American military installations in Frankfurt, Federal Republic of Germany.

The originator and the guiding spirit behind this dissertation is my Supervisor, Professor V.S. Venkataramani, Chairman, Centre for American and West European Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University. His perception of modern American foreign policy and personal commitment to scholarship immensely inspired my efforts. I recognize an abiding debt to him for prodding my thought, encouraging my attempt at interpretation, and leading me to consider questions that I have not formulated for myself.

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I carried on my research in several libraries in India.
the United Kingdom, and the United States. In Delhi I worked in the libraries of the Indian Council of World Affairs, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, Jawaharlal Nehru, and the Parliament of India as well as the American Library. In London I worked in the International Institute for Strategic Library and Royal Institute for International Affairs Library. In the United States I worked in the Council of Foreign Relations Library, Library of Congress, George Washington University Library, the Department of Defence Library, the Department of State Library, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, John F. Kennedy Library, and Lyndon B. Johnson Library. I am extremely grateful to the staff of these libraries for providing me invaluable assistance.

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