Chapter VI

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The most important goal of the members of North Atlantic Treaty Alliance after its formation in 1949 was "to maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack." That aim required the member countries to bring their military establishments up to the requisite standard nationally and also bring them "into line with requirements" of the Alliance. Through an "annual review" NATO sought to appraise the contribution of each member towards the twofold objectives. One feature of this "annual review," later renamed "defence review," that was seen to emerge was that each country presented its own military contribution in the most favourable terms. Each country sought ingeniously to demonstrate that its contribution to the collective defence effort was indeed as high as would be warranted by its financial situation.

Although bound together by a military alliance that they regarded as of vital importance, member countries of NATO were sovereign entities whose leaders had their own priorities in the allocation of the financial resources of their respective countries, and who had to be mindful of domestic political and economic implications of different courses of action. The question of financial resources that a government could allocate for its military establishment would be a national political decision--a decision which, by and large, could not be

exclusively based on an estimate of the military resources that an Alliance's high command regarded as necessary to carry out the Alliance's strategy. Under such circumstances, controversy becomes virtually unavoidable on whether a member country was or was not assuming a "fair share" of "the burden" of supporting the Alliance. The absence of clearly accepted definitions of what exactly constituted "defence expenditure" was bound to encourage member countries to include questionable items. Was one country's practice of including "river and ocean pilotage" acceptable? Was it proper to include the expenditure on state police forces? Was it appropriate for a member to show the expenditure on scientific research in its defence budget?

One of the issues raised in the United States after the early honeymoon years of the Alliance was the assertion that its defence "burden", compared with that of its Allies, was "too heavy." A growing number in Congress contended that American defence effort appeared disproportionately high. Representatives of the Executive branch were noticeably more circumspect than Congress. While not frontally challenging Congressional critics, and while expressing some agreement with the latter, the Administration sought to give the impression that it was actively engaging itself in "prodding" the Allies to do their best for the common defence.

The Issue of Burden-Sharing Dormant in the Early Years of NATO Build-Up

In 1951 while the debate on sending US troops to Europe was in progress the view was expressed in Congress, as mentioned
earlier, that while the United States was ready to do its best for West European defence, the countries of Western Europe must also respond by assuming their "fair share" of the responsibility. In April, the United States Senate passed Resolution 99 expressing "the belief of the Senate that the threat to the security of the United States and our North Atlantic Treaty partners make it necessary for the United States to station abroad such units of our Armed Forces as may be necessary and appropriate to contribute our fair share of the forces needed for the joint defense of the North Atlantic area." In paragraph 4 of that resolution, the Senate had indicated its expectation that the other members of NATO should maintain and improve their defence efforts. In paragraph 5, the Senate expressed the view that it "approve the understanding" that the major contribution to NATO's ground forces in Western Europe should be made by the European members themselves.

In subsequent years, the United States had continued to reiterate the hope that the Allies would make their full contribution to NATO defence so that the burdens and responsibilities of the NATO partnership would be shared equitably. But in 1951, as subsequently, the problem persisted in determining what exactly a "fair share" of a mutual defence burden meant. It could not be quantified exactly either in 1951 or in 1968.

In the first phase of NATO, during the Truman Administration, the United States assumed heavy financial responsibilities not only for NATO but for the economic reconstruction of Western Europe under the Marshall Plan. During those heady days, while
the expectation was that, in time, West European nations would assume an increasing share of the NATO burden, no significant criticism was raised in Congress against the quantum of US expenditure. The Executive received strong bipartisan support from Congress for its NATO policy. By and large even up to 1958 there was no significant element in Congress or among important interest groups asserting that the US was carrying an unduly large share of the NATO defence burden. Indeed, up to that time no important figure in Congress had chosen to describe the American commitment to NATO as a burden.

During the first decade of NATO, the war-ravaged economies of the Allies were recovering with massive American aid, and there was no inclination on the part of Congress to apply prematurely pressure on the Allies to increase their contribution to the common defence efforts. The Executive branch sought to retain the high level of Congressional support for NATO by stressing the importance of West European recovery to America's own security, by emphasizing the growing contribution made to the common defence by the Allies despite their economic difficulties, and by asserting that the way to enhance the Allied contribution would be through improvement of quality than increased quantity. In April 1953, for instance, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles developed such a theme before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. He said that the NATO Council was not interested in setting unrealistic paper targets for member countries. The aim was to put defence planning on a practical
and realistic basis. Dulles asserted that an increase in the over-all combat effectiveness of NATO troops could be achieved through improvement in quality than by increasing quantity.

The Secretary’s statement was a reflection of the Eisenhower Administration’s political commitment to reduce America’s own defence budget without adversely affecting US security objectives. Reference has already been made to the Administration’s "New Look" in the US defence posture, and its adherence to the concept of massive retaliation. It argued that it was possible to reduce US Armed Forces’ strength to achieve reduction in defence spending and develop new weapons, including nuclear weapons of retaliation, so as to gain more striking power for less money. This was the rationale behind Dulles’ stress on improving the quality rather than quantity, not only of the US Armed Forces but of the NATO forces.

The objective of improving the quality of NATO's defence called for continuing high level of US support to the Alliance. The United States alone could provide modern weapons that would improve the quality of the European defence effort. Through military assistance and aid to Europe the United States sought to improve the quality of European Allies’ contribution to NATO defence. It is appropriate to mention in this connection that it was on the question of "foreign aid" that critical comments began to surface in the Congress as well as even within the Administration in the late 1950’s. However, in the early 1950’s

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2 New York Times, 29 April 1953; and Ibid., 30 April 1953.
the Congress went along with a well-nigh united Administration on the question of military assistance and aid to Europe. Some Senators during the earlier period even voiced concern over whether the US effort was adequate. For instance, Senator Guy Gillette (Democrat, Iowa), a member of Foreign Relations Committee, asserted that the foreign aid funds provided for Europe would hardly be enough to undertake the vital job that the United States had set before itself in Europe.

As the economic recovery of the European nations became increasingly apparent in the late 1950's, American public opinion and Congress began to question the continuation of military aid to European countries. The Congressional attitude stiffened when France withdrew some of its troops from Germany for service in Algeria and the British announced some troop withdrawals from NATO. In 1956 Secretary Dulles, Secretary of Defense Charles E. Wilson, and Chairman of the JCS Admiral Arthur W. Radford, had appealed fervently to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Senate Committee on Appropriations and Committee on Foreign Relations, to approve the President's full military aid request. But the Committees eventually reduced the amount of military aid. Since even military grant aid became one of the hotly debated issues in Congress year after

On 20 February 1958, the Chairman of the House Committee on Government Operations, William L. Dawson (Democrat, Illinois), submitted to the 85th Congress a report entitled: "United States Military Aid and Supply Programs in Western Europe." The Committee's report was based on a study made by its Military Operations Subcommittee. The Subcommittee visited Western Europe for three weeks in September-October 1957 for the purpose of examining certain aspects of US military assistance programmes in major countries of Western Europe. The Committee believed that such an appraisal was "necessary and timely" because "too often the executive agencies, principally the Department of State and Defense and the International Cooperation Administration, have offered justification of these programs before the legislative and appropriation committees of the Congress in general terms without discussion and analysis of specific accomplishments."

In the section dealing with justifications for military assistance, the Committee examined the fourfold arguments presented by Department of Defence officials, in testimony before


Congressional Committees in 1957. The basic propositions advanced were: acquiring base rights; promoting security pacts; obtaining essential materials; and building allied strength. "These justifications, impressive, as they seem, have become stereotyped. They are parts of a collective and generalized argument for continued military aid restated from year to year. Analyzed separately, they raise serious questions...," the report declared.

The Committee contended that DoD did not clearly identify what portion of military aid would be granted in exchange for bases. Only when that was done it would be possible to evaluate the military programme in terms of the purposes which it hopes to achieve. A clear "recognition of the essential difference between military aid to increase force effectiveness and military aid in exchange for base rights should result in reducing military aid to a minimum in favour of economic assistance," the report declared.

The Subcommittee contended that military aid was not a necessary part of the price of obtaining scarce materials essential for both the civilian economy and defence efforts. "In any event, the NATO area, with which this report is mainly concerned, has small potential as a source of strategic materials for the United States," the report stated.

6 Ibid., pp. 6-7.
7 Ibid., p. 7.
8 Ibid.
The Subcommittee was not prepared to accept the contention that the military assistance programmes had resulted in the development of truly effective fighting forces to counter the Soviet threat. It noted that the NATO forces were Second World War armies, equipped largely with Second World War weapons. Logistical plans were not revised to keep step with strategic concepts, and "strategic concepts in turn lag behind war technology." The NATO forces must be reequipped and reorganized. "Military assistance programs which continue to furnish material promised on outdated concepts contribute little to the building of allied strength," the report declared.

Some of the conclusions of the Committee on Government Operations were revealing. It charged that under the existing military aid operations it was not possible to know what was being accomplished through military aid. There was no comprehensive plan against which "yearly progress" could be measured. The separate dealing with the armies, navies and air forces of a dozen or more NATO countries, and the lack of weapons standardization, and of interchangeability of parts and supplies, had "eaten up dollars" without building allied strength. Continued outpouring of military supplies and equipment, without careful regard to a country's capabilities to use them effectively, created "a generous illusion of security." Moreover, whatever progress that was made in "building allied strength is threatened by Soviet advances," the Committee report declared.

9 Ibid., p. 8.
10 Ibid., p. 3.
The Committee also made some recommendations. The most important was to the effect that American military aid effort must be redirected to helping the NATO nations to achieve self-sufficiency in conventional weapons and spare parts, and in developing new weapons adapted to NATO strategic requirements. Other suggestions included: a reconsideration of the military aid programme designed to meet artificial force goals or non-military objectives, or supply elements that cannot be effectively mobilized within a reasonable time; discontinuing the deliveries of obsolete weapons under military aid programme; and American leadership should be exerted in NATO to develop a NATO-wide logistic organization and an effective standardization programme.

The Executive branch was thus placed on notice that all elements of its NATO policy would have to run the gauntlet of stricter Congressional scrutiny. The growing Congressional opposition to military aid to Europe led the Administration to evolve new ways to keep military aid spending in Europe from climbing. It sought to tie the gift of new weapons to a demand that the Europeans should take over from the US more of the cost of maintenance of their conventional arms. To facilitate smoother passage of military aid bills, the Administration sought to make out a case that the programme involved certain important economic benefits for the United States. Major US corporations in the weapons field were clearly none too anxious

Ibid., pp. 3-4.
for a sharp cut-down in US military procurement for NATO Allies. They were thus vocal expounders of the importance of NATO to American security, and of the dividends that the US itself derived from its expenditure on NATO. It is noteworthy that Douglas Dillon, Deputy Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, presented the argument in the General Electric Defense Quarterly in April 1958. While acknowledging that in the "past eight years the US investment in NATO was well over $14 billion," Dillon emphasized that between 80 and 85 cents of every dollar was spent in the United States. "The American economy is a leading beneficiary of our national defence effort under NATO." The "effect of these NATO dollars" was felt by almost every segment of American industry, Dillon declared.

Dillon pointed out that most NATO countries relied upon the United States for "a diminishing amount of conventional equipment," and for virtually all the complex and highly expensive new weapons required to maintain NATO's front line strength. American assistance placed continuing emphasis on the necessity of providing modern weapons such as guided missiles, electronic equipment and advanced type of aircraft while looking to the European countries to assume an increased share of the cost of maintaining conventional armaments. Nowhere in the article was there even an indication that American military aid and American military commitment to NATO was a "burden"

or that the US was constrained to carry more than its fair share. "The contribution of our NATO allies greatly lessens the strain on our own economy. If the U.S. had to supply a disproportionate share of the total defense forces in Europe the drain on our manpower resources would affect both our productive capacity and standard of living," Dillon wrote.

The Burden-Sharing Issue Surfaces
Within Congress and Administration

The Administration realized that with the passage of a decade since NATO was established, with no indication of a Soviet intent to launch an aggressive onslaught, and with increasingly evident economic prosperity of Western Europe, the small circle of doubters in Congress was bound to increase. It did not call for a prophet for an appraisal to be made that an increase in domestic economic problems would inevitably trigger critical attention in Congress towards spending programmes abroad. While expenditure on NATO might not encounter as strong a criticism as in the case of so-called "give away" programmes to "doubtful" countries like India, Indonesia and Ghana, it was clearly in the cards that sooner or later a growing number in Congress was likely to cite the domestic economic needs, and inadequately funded programmes in their own constituencies, while comparing American expenditure on NATO with that of the growingly prosperous Western Allies.

In 1958, after the Senate had completed action on mutual

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13 Dillon, n. 12, pp. 30-31.
security appropriations providing among other things military assistance to Allies, a number of Democratic Senators—including Senators John F. Kennedy and Hubert Humphrey—wrote to Eisenhower criticizing the Administration's military aid programme, and calling for a de-emphasis of the military component of the aid programme. Their criticisms were general in nature. More specifically, during the course of hearings held by the Senate Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, on the mutual security bill for the fiscal year (FY) 1960, Democratic Senator Allen J. Ellender of Louisiana, asked Secretary of Defence Neil McElroy whether it was not true that many European countries that were receiving military assistance from the US were economically better off and were not sharing the defence burden equitably. In his reply McElroy agreed that the US carried too much of the load, and that it should be shared by the people of Western Europe, who were well able to assist the United States. It was an instant response to a stray question, and probably did not reflect any calculated effort by the Administration to highlight the issue of equitable sharing of the burden. But the exchange indicated that the issue might develop ramifications in time. The Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, when reporting on the Mutual Security Act of 1959, stated "that all

the members of NATO should increase substantially their efforts to strengthen the alliance."

A special Committee headed by William H. Draper, former Under Secretary of the Army, appointed by the President, to study the Foreign Military Assistance programme recommended in its preliminary report submitted in March 1959, that the programme should be continued. Emphasizing that important national objectives were served by military aid to friendly foreign nations, the Committee urged that military aid funds must be at least $2 billion a year. More specifically it urged that increased aid of about $400 million should be earmarked to furnish modern weapons to NATO Allies.

Within the Administration, the Draper Committee's recommendations were reportedly strongly endorsed by the State and Defence Departments. However, according to the New York Times, the Budget Bureau and the Treasury Department showed some reluctance to including a $2 billion military aid request in the FY 1961 budget then under preparation. According to State Department officials, the Treasury and the Budget Bureau recommended a lower figure. They argued for a change in policy under which Allies would increase their contribution to NATO's

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16 Hovey, n. 3, pp. 261-2; and New York Times, 30 November 1959.
defence, and the United States would contribute correspondingly less.

The differences within the Executive branch necessitated Presidential consideration of the issue. It was reported that the President was inclined to accept the recommendation of the State and Defence Departments. On 29 November 1959, State Department officials disclosed that the President would request about $2 billion military aid in the budget that he would send to Congress in January 1960. This figure was higher than the $1.3 billion the Congress had appropriated for FY 1960, and was also more than $1.6 billion the President had requested for FY 1960.

Eisenhower's FY 1961 budget message to Congress included a military aid request of $2 billion. The message showed increased provision of military assistance to NATO:

Increasing number of advance aircraft are being supplied primarily to NATO forces.

Second, an increasing number and variety of guided ballistic missiles are being supplied primarily to NATO forces in keeping with the technological capabilities of our allies.

Third, the 1961 program continues the modernization of military communications system in less developed countries and also provides ground control equipment in conjunction with guided missiles and modern aircraft primarily in Europe. (19)

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18 Ibid.

During hearings before a Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, Senator Ellender questioned the rationale for the increase of $700 million over the previous year's appropriations, and the emphasis on increased aid to Western Europe. The Senator alleged that many of the European Allies were not carrying out their commitments to NATO. General de Gaulle had taken most of his soldiers from Western Europe and sent them to Algeria. The British had also withdrawn quite a few soldiers. Ellender asked Secretary of Defence Thomas Gates to concede that the people of Western Europe were capable of contributing more to the NATO defence. Gates' reply was non-committal. He said: "Certain of them are better off than they have been. They have improved their economic positions. Not all of them." Ellender then asked Gates to name the countries that had not improved economically. Gates mentioned Turkey and Greece. Ellender retorted that those two countries were "not located in Western Europe."

Critical reaction to the bill in Congress reflected not so much the kind of reservations concerning European allies as were expressed by Ellender but a growing reluctance to support aid programmes in general. It was no easy matter for the legislators to exhibit great enthusiasm for allocating the US taxpayer's dollars to various countries as economic aid, especially in the context of the recession at home and cutbacks on domestic programmes. Military aid too could no longer command

20 Ibid., p. 22.
the kind of support that it could muster in earlier years as
the threat of Soviet aggression appeared to be a somewhat un-
likely prospect to a growing number in Congress.

The military aid bill, after passing through various
stages in Congress, was eventually recommended to the Senate
and House with a reduction of $260 million by the House-Senate
Conference Committee. Immediately the President wrote a letter
to the Senate Majority Leader, Lyndon B. Johnson, and the
Senate Minority Leader, Everett M. Dirksen, indicating that he
was "deeply disturbed" by the action of the Conference Committee.
"A cut of this size will jeopardize the security of the country,"
wrote Eisenhower. The response of Congress to the President's
assessment was not entirely positive. The amount finally sanc-
tioned by the Congress was $1.8 billion, almost half of which
21 was to go to NATO countries.

McNamara and Rusk Urge
Greater Contribution by Allies

Initially, the Kennedy Administration sought an increase
in Allied contribution to NATO defence by highlighting the need
for strengthening the conventional force of NATO and soft-
pedalling the burden-sharing issue. The Allied response was
lukewarm at the outset. However, when the Berlin crisis

21 Congressional Record, vol. 106, Part 13, pp. 17768-
17774, 17830; and Address by General W.B. Palmer,
Director of Military Assistance, Office of the Secre-
tary of Defence, at the Eleventh Federal Personnel
Management Conference, San Francisco, California,
27 April 1961, Department of Defence, Office of Public
Affairs, News Release no 378-61, pp. 4, 5.
developed, the European response quickened and the Allies increased their force contribution to NATO. Thus an atmosphere of "crisis" and sharpened consciousness of the "threat" evoked swifter response than the Administration's expositions on the need to strengthen the conventional forces of NATO or the earlier call for an equitable sharing of the NATO defence burden.

After the passing of the Berlin and Cuban Missile crises, the Administration had once again to deal with the problem. The Administration was certainly interested in inducing the Allies progressively to increase their contribution. But it also was aware that a reduced American contribution to NATO would mean gradual reduction in US influence over the Allies, and it had to weigh the implications of such an evolution. Further, the Administration was conscious of the fact that a growing barrage of criticism in Congress and the media would evoke adverse reactions in the Allied countries, and that an atmosphere of mutual recrimination might lead to undesirable consequences. The task before the Administration was twofold--given the realization that a steadily growing Congressional demand for more equitable burden-sharing was inevitable.

Firstly, Congress and the public needed to be reassured that the Administration was fully alive to the issue of inducing the Allies to assume a fair share of the NATO burden, and that its representatives could be fully depended upon to talk "tough" to the Allies on the issue at NATO meetings and in bilateral discussions. This was sought to be achieved by means
of news reports from time to time on the "tough" line being adopted by the Administration. Similar appraisals, in more restrained language, were given in testimony by Administration spokesmen before Congressional Committees.

Secondly, while striving to keep Congressional criticism to manageable dimensions, the Administration sought to use the very existence of such criticism, and the prospect of its growth as a device to persuade the Allies to come up with concrete measures of co-operation in respect of burden-sharing. It is unlikely that representatives of the Administration talked as "tough" to the Allies as the US newspapers tended to suggest. It is more likely that while reassuring the Allies on the continued US commitment to NATO, US officials stressed the need for quick and constructive action on the part of the Allies to ease the burden of the Administration in meeting public and Congressional criticism on the burden-sharing issue.

In using the media, in testimony before Congress, and in public pronouncements within the United States or in Allied countries, US spokesmen continued to lay stress on the presence of the Soviet threat, the value of NATO, and the imperative necessity of maintaining unity and strengthening NATO's military capability.

Such broadly were the lines of action followed by the Kennedy Administration and continued subsequently by the Johnson Administration, as can be inferred by an examination of developments during the period.

In November 1962, it was reported that McKamara was
preparing for the forthcoming NATO Council meeting a "blunt speech" explaining why the United States believed its European Allies could do more for defence in both men and arms. At the Council meeting in December 1962 both Rusk and McNamara were reported to have urged a greater commitment from the Allies to strengthen the conventional forces of NATO. The Baltimore Sun stated that McNamara bluntly told the Allied ministers that the United States was bearing too heavy a share of NATO defence. He cited reportedly the improved economic position of the Allies, and drew attention to the fact that the United States was spending on defence three times that of European nations. In addition, the United States was also making substantial higher manpower contribution than its Allies, McNamara asserted, according to the Washington Post.

The Sun quoted Rusk as having told the Allies firmly that the job of political leaders was to exert exactly the kind of leadership that bolstered their contribution to NATO. American officials pointed out, according to the report, that the US also had its own political problem in drafting men who would rather stay home and in levying higher taxes on people who would rather keep their money. They warned that Congress was likely to raise question about the disproportionate burden


being carried by the United States, the newspaper stated.

The communique that was issued at the end of Council meeting did include a reference to "an equitable sharing of the common defense burden" though no concrete action towards that end was spelled out.

Congress Seeks Reappraisal of US Role in Europe

The burden-sharing issue was raised more forcefully than previously in a special report of a four-man Senate group released in January 1963. The group led by Senator Mike Mansfield had undertaken a fact-finding mission to Western Europe at the request of President Kennedy. The report urged that the United States should be prepared to alter its basic policies if Western Europe failed to be more cooperative in the Atlantic Alliance. It was understandable that the United States should have borne the greatest costs and taken the greatest risks in the defense of Berlin while Europe was rebuilding. But with European prosperity and the reversal of the gold flow, continuance of such a position was "anachronistic." It was "indeed ironic" that the defense of Berlin and Western Europe should appear "at this late date" to be of more concern to the United States than to its NATO partners, the report asserted. The United States was carrying "inequitable burdens" which could

24 Baltimore Sun, 16 December 1962.

lead to serious financial difficulties and a possible retreat to isolation. If prospering European countries continued to fail in meeting their troop commitments to NATO, the United States too could reduce its forces in Europe, the report declared.

The Senators stated that the US was maintaining 400,000 troops in Europe at a cost of $3 billion a year while other NATO countries had failed to provide in full the six additional divisions they had promised. This "lopsided burden" had hit the American taxpayers, hurt the US balance of payment position, and affected the American price structure in the international market. Urging the United States to insist on a greater European contribution, the Senators declared: "If the Europeans believe that peace can be sustained without the addition of the promised European divisions--as they apparently do--there is no reason to reject the possibility that it can be maintained with fewer American divisions in Europe."

Senator Mansfield was to become increasingly more vocal in the years that followed, and the number of Senators supporting his appraisal was to grow, as was discussed in the earlier chapters relating to the issues of troop reductions and the balance of payments problem.

The members of the House Committee on Armed Services during hearings on military posture and FY 1964 authorization

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26 Baltimore Sun, 28 January 1963.
bill were also critical of the level of the European contribution to NATO. In response to a pointed question from New York's Democratic Congressman, Otis G. Pike, McNamara replied that the United States was already contributing "a fair share" to NATO, and that while there might be deficiencies in NATO strength, the solution to "correct the deficiency" was not to increase the United States' share. The solution was "to raise the share of the others." Pike asked: "If we are maintaining our commitment there and many people of Europe are not maintaining their own commitment there, isn't it time that perhaps we re-examine some of the premises on which these commitments were established?" While a Congressman could please his constituents by posing the issue in such terms, the Secretary of Defence was constrained to respond with circumspection. McNamara said that the United States was fulfilling its commitments in Europe to safeguard its own security interests. He could not share the view that the US should consider removing its troops from Europe because Western Europeans had not fulfilled their commitments to the extent deemed appropriate by Americans. "Rather, the remedy of the situation is to encourage and lead the Western Europeans to increase their own contribution," McNamara said.

The question of the European contribution also figured during hearings before a Subcommittee of the House Committee on Appropriations on the FY 1964 defense budget. Apart from the usual questions relating to the inequitable burden-sharing, Chairman George H. Mahon (Democrat, Texas) asked Secretary of the Army Cyrus R. Vance whether the United States could withdraw some forces if the defense efforts of Western Europe, especially Germany and France, were substantially increased. Vance replied that while some reduction might be possible under those circumstances, he did not think that there could be any major reduction in U.S. Army forces in Europe in the foreseeable future. Vance's reply indicated the desire of the Administration not to encourage the solidification of Congressional opinion in support of U.S. troop reduction as one possible means of making burden-sharing more equitable.

But the issue of burden-sharing would not go away. The Subcommittee of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs sent a staff team to Europe to review in detail the justification for continuing U.S. military aid to the allied countries. On the basis of the team's findings, the Subcommittee reported that while the financial resources of the countries of Western Europe had increased, most of them did not reach out "to take from the shoulders of the United States as rapidly as possible the burden of equipping their military forces." Although the military

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expenditure of all European countries had increased, such ex-
penditures had gone "chiefly to increase in pay for personnel,
the rising cost of feeding and clothing forces, and the mainte-
nance and replacement of equipment rather than to force moderni-
ization and improvement," the report declared.

The Subcommittee report stated that since the increas-
ingly prosperous members of NATO were giving military defence
a significantly "lower priority than does the United States,"
a change in NATO organization and policies was desirable. Al-
though, as a NATO member, the United States should contribute
to the common defence, it should phase out direct aid to the
West European countries under the military assistance programme.
There should be a more equitable formula of cost sharing. This
should take into account the services of the United States
Strategic Air Command and other American military efforts, as
well as assistance provided specifically to NATO nations, the
report stated.

NATO Secretariat, Defense
European Contribution

In the April-May issue of a NATO journal, NATO's Fifteen
Nations, there appeared a detailed article entitled: "Some
Economic and Financial Aspects of the NATO Alliance." The
author was F.D. Gregh, Deputy Secretary-General of NATO. The

30 U.S. House, Congress 88, session 1, Subcommittee of the
Committee on Foreign Affairs, Report, Military Aid to
Western Europe (Washington, D.C., 1963), pp. 5-6.

31 Ibid., pp. 3-4.
article sought to take issue, in measured and restrained language, with the growing volume of Congressional criticism on the issue of burden-sharing. While specific evidence is lacking, the present writer suggests that the article might well have been written on the basis of some prior consultation with--or a green signal from--the US Administration, particularly the Defence and State Departments. Gregh could say certain things in a manner that representatives of the Administration could not in responding to Congressional criticisms. Allied governments and their official representatives would also find it not very rewarding to get into a wordy duel with aroused members of Congress.

Gregh began by acknowledging that following the establishment of NATO, Western Europe had indeed made a "spectacular" economic recovery. In comparison, the rate of growth of the United States had indeed been slower. It would, however, be important to examine whether such depictions would be an oversimplification which concealed "very important discrepancies." To consider Western Europe as a single entity from the point of view of economic growth, or of the defence burden would be "arbitrary". There were substantial differences among the countries. Countries like the United Kingdom, or Belgium had developed their resources only at a fairly moderate rate compared to Germany, Italy or France. Recurring balance of payments difficulties hampered the economic progress of the United Kingdom, Norway and Denmark. Though industrial development of several countries had reached an advanced stage, Grecco and
Turkey still belonged to the category of "less-developed countries." Gregh argued that some slackening that had occurred in some member countries in the defence effort had been due to difficulties in maintaining internal financial stability or in balancing external payments. The United States also had its own problems but the US standard of living expressed in terms of GNP per head was nearly three times higher than the European average, twice the level of the most advanced European countries and ten times that of the "less-favoured" European countries. "If a European country with GNP per head of $1,200 per year devotes 7 per cent of her GNP to defence, is it equitable for the United States, with GNP per head of $2,700 to devote 11 per cent or should the United States devote less, or more?... Seen from this angle, the defence burden of the United States does not appear out of proportion with its resources, or with the defence burden of some European countries," Gregh argued.

Gregh suggested that while substantial margins of United States manpower and industrial capacity were not utilized, means of production in most of European countries were nearly fully employed and their economies were subject to over-heating. Therefore, without curbing either investment or consumption, it was easier for the United States to devote more resources to


33 Ibid., p. 84.
defence. The budget deficit resulting from such additional effort might serve to give "a fillip" to the US economy. "In Europe, on the contrary, an increase in defence expenditures at a higher rate than the growth of GNP would involve some slowing down in other uses of resources," Gregh declared.

"These rather sketchy considerations show how difficult is the task of the NATO International Secretariat in assessing the capability of member countries to bear the burden of defence with a view to arriving at an equitable sharing of this burden," Gregh wrote. He argued that the task was further complicated by the fact that defence involved not only money and equipment but also men. How was the principle of "equality of sacrifice" to be ensured in respect of men assigned by each country to NATO? While the proportion of population assigned to defence force was "slightly higher" in the United States than in European countries, Gregh discreetly posed the question whether that really represented greater burden. He wrote:

"...it is difficult to see how a country [the US] which has enough economic power to devote a larger share of her GNP to defence could at the same time avoid having relatively more men in her forces, unless...this country gives substantial assistance to her partners." The NATO official thus neatly tied the issue of reduction of US troops to that of "substantial assistance to partners," and thus indirectly, but gently, rebutted the argument that the United States was bearing a greater burden.

34 Ibid.
share of the burden.

Gregh cautioned that the "political will" on the part of members for the continuing effectiveness of the Alliance "can only exist if all NATO countries are able to work in a climate of mutual confidence, and are sure that their partners are reliable allies who are doing their utmost for the common purpose." Emphasizing that their contribution was a useful one, he hinted that the task lay with the United States to demonstrate more effectively than previously that the voices of the European Allies would count in vital decisions. "It is clear, however, that European nations will only develop the political will to step up their defence effort if they feel that their voice can be heard in the discussions leading to capital decisions."

Two reasons may be cited to indicate why the present writer tends to believe that the Administration might have had some prior knowledge of Gregh's article. Firstly, no criticism of the article emanated from the Executive branch. Secondly, in the very next issue of the same journal NATO's Fifteen Nations (June-July 1963), an article by Director of US Military Assistance Programme General Robert J. Wood, appeared in which the author referred at length to his efforts to refute arguments critical of the contribution of the NATO partners to the common defence. The General spoke warmly of the vitality and dynamism of NATO and expressed confidence that NATO "will emerge from

36 Ibid., p. 87.
its present phase of evolution stronger and more fit than ever before." He mentioned, but made no direct indication of approval, of the feeling in Congress and among public that the prosperous West European countries "should be doing more" in support of "free world defence." The General wrote:

I find, as I talk to audiences in many parts of the United States, that it becomes increasingly difficult to refute such arguments. Try as I may to convey my own faith in the good intentions of our NATO allies, my own pride in all that mutual effort has accomplished over the past twelve years, I cannot seem to dispel the general impression.... (37)

The General's presentation appears to have been intended to indicate to the European Allies that the Administration did not go along with the views of the Congressional critics. At the same time, the second object was also sought to be served, namely, to alert the Allies to the fact that Congressional and public opinion on the issue of burden-sharing was getting stronger, and that European members of NATO should examine ways and means by which they could increase their respective contributions, so that the trend of opinion in the US could be reversed.

McNamara's Dual Role in Burden-Sharing Issue

In the months that followed, McNamara continued his dual strategy. While giving testimony before Congressional Committees he tried to offset criticism of the Allies by

pointing to areas in which Allied contribution to the common
defence had increased. But before meetings of NATO organs, and
during such meetings themselves, the usual newspaper reports
continued to appear concerning his "blunt" and "tough" admoni-
tions to the Allies. In December 1963, McNamara told the Coun-
cil, according to the New York Times, that Congress and American
public opinion would grow restless unless European forces reached
the qualitative standards of the United States. The statement
was depicted as meaning that the Allies should raise the strength
of their forces, the level of their military stockpiles, and
the combat-readiness of their national military establishment
to something approaching the standards of the US Army and Air
Force in Europe. Such reports were at least in part intended
for domestic consumption.

The Washington Post quoted McNamara as having told the
NATO Council that his earlier speech in November, before the
Economic Club in New York, revising downward the estimates of
Soviet military strength, should not be misread as an indication
that NATO could relax its efforts. NATO forces were still defi-
cient in some respects which could and should be overcome.
Specifically, the Allies, should increase the strength of their
non-nuclear forces, McNamara said.

Subsequently the Defence Secretary tried to convince the
House Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations that he

38 New York Times, 18 December 1963; and Baltimore Sun,
18 December 1963.

was as zealous as any of them in making the Allies see reason. He said that at the last NATO Council meeting, he had cautioned the Allies that the "American people" would become increasingly restless with a situation in which the United States had to bear an unjustifiably large share of the burden of common defence. The Allies would be well advised to place before the American people "clear-cut" evidence that they were co-operating with the United States in carrying a "fair share of the load." As previously, however, he showed no disposition to go along with the criticisms concerning foot-dragging by the Allies. Defending Allied contribution, McNamara said that European NATO partners had made "significant increases in their defence efforts." Collectively their defence expenditures had risen by almost twenty-two per cent between 1961-1963, he told the Committee.

The Secretary's effort was directed to some extent at going along with the Congressmen and, at the same time, deflecting derogatory criticism of the Allies. When a critical question was directly posed, the Secretary deftly avoided antagonizing the questioner by a provocative contradiction, and reeled off details to indicate that the Allies were not being wholly unresponsive. The Republican Congressman from Michigan, Gerald R. Ford, asked McNamara why, in spite of their economic

recovery, the European Allies showed reluctance in making a greater contribution to the mutual defence. McNamara responded that Mr. Ford had asked a perfectly "fair question." The Allies had not been unresponsive or uncooperative. They had within last two or three years increased their contribution to the joint defence. The Danish defence budget had gone up 33 per cent in 2 years. The German defence budget went up 20 per cent in 2 years. And the Dutch budget had risen 30 per cent in 3 years. "These are very, very substantial increases in defence budgets for the West European nations," McNamara said.

Congressman Ford would not be deterred from issuing a solemn warning to the Allies in the name of "American people". "The American people...have a right to expect them [the Allies] to do even more than the figure you quote, and are going to demand it in my opinion, or else there could be some swinging of public opinion." McNamara replied soothingly that the United States would continue to ask the European Allies to increase their defence budgets, expand their defence forces, and contribute a larger share to joint defence. "But I do not believe we should overlook, or fail to recognize, the very substantial increases that have occurred in their programs in the last 2 or 3 years."

The burden-sharing issue did not figure prominently in Congress during a period of several months covering most of

41 Ibid., p. 127.
42 Ibid.
1964 and early 1965. The issue of sharing control of nuclear weapons and the US scheme to create a multilateral nuclear force for NATO, had attracted public attention while the fall of Khrushchev, the Chinese explosion of a nuclear device, and expressions of US concern over the Communist "threat" in South Vietnam were other developments that led to a diminished concern over burden-sharing. In May and December 1964, during the NATO Council meetings, Rusk appealed for economic and technical assistance for South Vietnam. In December he also appealed to the Allies to supply "personnel and equipment to defend the stake of the entire free world in Southeast Asia."

When the United States became militarily involved in Vietnam with widespread support for the Johnson Administration's course in Congress and among the public, the NATO Allies needed to be reassured that US commitment to European security would remain unchanged. The attitude of Congress was no different. In December 1965, Rusk and McNamara stressed the theme at a meeting of the NATO Council. McNamara urged the Western Allies to take note of the threat posed by Peking's growing nuclear strength, and went on to pledge that the mounting US effort in Vietnam would not require the withdrawal of "major combat units" from American forces in Western Europe.


McNamara Given an Impression of Putting Into an Notice

The long-drawn out agony of the war in Vietnam, the ever-growing casualty figures, the mounting expenditure of carrying on a venture and the receding prospect of "victory", led to growing opposition in Congress to the Johnson Administration's course. As the number of critics increased and as public support for the war got eroded progressively, a weakened Administration came under growing pressure. Those who accused the administration of having misled Congress into supporting a disastrous interventionist course in Vietnam were in a mood to demand clear answers on US military "commitments" in other parts of the world, including the hitherto largely uncontroversial area of Western Europe. The development relating to the demand for troop reductions and the balance of payments controversy have already been discussed in previous chapters. The burden-sharing issue too came to be raised with greater force than ever before.

As has been pointed out in chapter IV, early in 1966, Republican Congressman Paul A. Fino initiated moves for a revision of US commitment in Europe to enable withdrawal of such troops as may be withdrawn to meet Vietnam requirement. His charge that the US was carrying an unjustifiably heavy burden was echoed by Senator Mansfield. As Congressional critics became increasingly vehement, Defence Secretary McNamara was constrained to demonstrate, more forcefully than he had done previously, that the Administration was not unmindful of the
problem.

In a major speech to the American Society of Newspaper Editors in Montreal, McNamara declared that the United States could no longer carry an unfair share of the burden of European defence. He pointed out that the US had been spending a greater part of its GNP on defence than any other "major free world nation." Western Europe had a population greater than that of the US, but the latter had as many men in uniform as all the nations of Western Europe combined. While the United States would not shirk its obligation in any part of the world, it "clearly cannot be expected to bear a disproportionate share of the common burden indefinitely," McNamara declared.

Subsequently in testimony before a Senate Subcommittee, McNamara criticised the European Allies for failing to fulfill their commitment to common defence. He pointed out that some of the European Allies, who had adequate capability, were reluctant to increase the percentage of their national income for defence. There were substantial imbalance in their respective contribution to defence, in forces weighed against the threats and plans, and in burden-sharing arrangements. All those imbalances needed to be rectified, McNamara affirmed.


Senator Abraham Ribicoff (Democrat, Connecticut) asked McNamara to give an estimate of how much each of the European Allies spent on its own defence in Europe. McNamara replied that because of differences in price levels and conversion rates it was difficult to make an exact comparison. He proceeded to give some figures from which the inference could be drawn that the US was spending, as a percentage of GNP, more than the European Allies, and had a higher percentage of men in uniform in proportion to population than the European nations.

Ribicoff also asked McNamara whether it was possible for the United States to spend less in Europe if the Europeans spent more for their defence. McNamara replied: "In the near term probably no.... In the far term I think that we might well consider adjustments in our force structure as the Europeans contribute more to their own force...." The Secretary did not choose to be specific on what he meant by the expressions "near term" and "far term". In effect what the Secretary conveyed parenthetically to Congress and more directly to the Allies was that there was no plan to reduce American spending on European defence in the reasonably foreseeable future.

Once again the old routine was repeated when the NATO Council meeting in July 1966, McNamara was quoted by American newspapers as having used strong language to the Allies for adopting a "double standard" towards the Alliance, and looking on while the United States was carrying too heavy a load in

47 Ibid., p. 199.
48 Ibid., pp. 199-200.
Europe and simultaneously fighting a war in Vietnam. The Chicago Tribune and the Los Angeles Times reported that McNamara had asserted that either the American effort was too big or efforts of some of the Allies were too small.

Senate Resolutions Contend Burden-Sharing Is Inequitable

While McNamara sought to give the impression that he was prodding the Allies to increase their contribution to common defence, Mansfield and his colleagues were demanding withdrawal of some troops from Europe. They thought that McNamara was citing Congressional pressure only to secure greater contribution by Allies, whereas the Congressional critics were even more anxious to press their demand for reducing US troop levels in Europe. Since the Administration had shown no indication of taking any step in that direction, Mansfield and his colleagues reacted by introducing the Senate Resolution 300 on 31 August 1966, in which the burden-sharing issue too was highlighted in the preamble:

...the means and capacity of all members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to provide forces to resist aggression has significantly improved since the original United States deployment; and

...the commitment by all members of the North Atlantic Treaty is based upon the full cooperation of all treaty partners in contributing materials and men on a fair and equitable basis, but such contributions have not been forthcoming from all other members of the organization;... (50)

In the course of the debate Senator John G. Pastore

49 Chicago Tribune, 26 July 1966; and Los Angeles Times, 26 July 1966.

(Democrat, Rhode Island), cosponsor of the resolution, recalled that every time when the foreign aid bill was before the Senate Committee on Appropriations, Rusk and McNamara were asked specifically about inadequate European contribution to NATO. They had repeatedly reiterated that the Administration was taking steps to prod the Allies to increase their contribution. "This has been going on for 15 years—and time is running out in patience," Pastore said. Senators Young, Morse and Symington echoed Pastore's view.

An interesting point to note in the Senate debate is that many Senators who had opposed the Senate Resolution 300 on the question of "substantial" troop withdrawals, were nonetheless, willing to support the Mansfield group on the question of burden-sharing. Senators Jackson, Ruchel, and Javits strongly criticized the Allies for failing to fulfill their commitment and called for increasing their contribution to the common defence. No action was taken on the resolution. In January 1967, Mansfield introduced another Resolution, identical to Senate Resolution 300. Senator Dodd introduced an amendment. Incorporated in the Resolution, the amendment spoke of "the failure of some other members of the alliance to contribute men and materials on a fair and equitable basis...." Subsequently, Senator Javits introduced a Resolution whose preamble stated: "...the countries of Western Europe have built their economies, but have not yet

51 Ibid., pp. 21447, 21448, 21449, 21831.
52 Ibid., pp. 21576, 21579, 21833.
adequately translated this economic power into increased contribution to the collective defence efforts...."  

It is interesting to note that the Javits and Mansfield resolutions and Dodd amendment did not differ on the question of burden-sharing. There was unanimity. In the subsequent debate in the Senate, many Senators once again reiterated the contention that the Allies were not fulfilling their commitment, and that an inequitable burden-sharing persisted. No Senator expounded a different view on the issue.

Again on the question of burden-sharing one could hardly find anything new in the testimony of McNamara before the Special Combined Subcommittee of Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees on the subject of United States troops in Europe. There was a repetition of the old arguments: the US was spending more percentage of GNP on defence; the US was having more men under arms; US expenditure on defence was greater; and US defence expenditure per capita was higher. A qualitative difference in the testimony was that the arguments were substantiated with extensive statistics. The earlier assurance that the Administration was prodding the Allies to contribute more was repeated without any details.

Thus, while there were significant differences of opinion

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54 For details, see Testimony of Secretary of Defence McNamara, US Senate, Congress 90, session 1, Combined Subcommittee of Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committee, Hearings, United States Troops in Europe (Washington, D.C., 1967), pp. 19, 21-23, 27.
among Senators on the issue of troop reduction, there was virtual unanimity that the United States was bearing a heavier share of the burden of NATO defence, and that the Defence Department was yearly reiterating in different forms the supposed effort at prodding the Allies to increase their contribution. Senator Jackson, a doughty supporter of the Defence Department on most issues, demanded from McNamara answers to some specific questions including one on "How much more Allies should spend for their own defense?" The issue could no longer be dodged in the old fashion and McNamara had to reveal that the Department of Defence did not indeed believe in discussing the question of burden-sharing in terms of specific amounts of money. This revelation was wrapped with arguments that he presented with his customary skill:

We believe that equitable sharing of the NATO defense burden does call for a defense effort by the industrialized Western European NATO Allies which more nearly matches in relative terms the US effort. However, it is extremely difficult to estimate specific sums [deleted]. Each country's situation is distinct, each affected by an almost endless number of relevant—and often controversial—factors and considerations. Therefore, rather than debate the question of burden-sharing in terms of specific amounts of money—a question which could probably never be resolved—we have concentrated our efforts on identifying qualitative deficiencies or imbalance [deleted] and pressing hard for action [deleted] to eliminate or ameliorate those deficiencies. [deleted] However, political and psychological as well as economic questions are involved in all these issues. These impose real limitations on the feasibility of arriving at decisions purely on the basis of cost effectiveness.

In discussing these subjects with our Allies, our efforts will continue to be directed toward (1) increasing the amount of resources devoted to defense where this is clearly feasible and desirable and (2) urging the most effective allocation of the available resources in the over-all interest of NATO defense. (55)

55 "Answer to the Memorandum from Senator Jackson to the Department of Defense," Ibid., p. 21.
Rather than forging ahead with more complicated problem of following up the Congressional demand for a greater European contribution, McNamara sought to buy a respite by announcing the decision to redeploy 35,000 troops. In the months that followed, with the nation's attention focussed on the reverses in Vietnam and anti-war movements at home, the burden-sharing issue did not figure significantly in Congress.

As pointed out earlier, the tone of Congress itself changed following the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia. The Allies too, once again responding to "crisis" situation, announced plans to increase their contribution to the common defence.

The new initiatives were outlined at the NATO Council meeting in November 1968. The largest contribution was to be made by West Germany. It announced an increase in its planned defence budget of slightly more than $100 million, and agreed to bring up to strength 32 brigades of its 12-division army. British Defence Minister Denis Healey said that his country would place an aircraft carrier and an assault ship on almost continuous duty in the Mediterranean, station an additional 20 Harrier fighter bombers in Germany, and assign an additional infantry battalion to the Alliance. The Italians pledged a $140 million increase in their $2 billion defence budget—a rise of about 7 per cent. The smaller Allies also promised (or deferred proposed cuts) in their defence budgets and
pledged qualitative improvements in their forces.

The controversy over sharing the burden subsided—for the time being.

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