

Europe Stakes Its Claim For Full Partnership

EDMOND TAYLOR

UP TO THE opening day of the NATO Council session here last month, evidences of European dissatisfaction with American policy and leadership in NATO were all too plentiful, but there were few signs of any European consensus on constructive alternatives. It was one of the most extreme and intransigent leaders of the European rebellion against NATO weapons-first orthodoxy, Premier Einar Gerhardsen of Norway, who in his opening speech to the council opened the way to unanimous agreement.

The lanky, stiff-necked, bullet-headed, sixty-year-old Socialist and workman's son, whose sunken cheeks are still marked by the pallor of four years in a Nazi concentration camp, shook his colleagues at the conference round table by reading his speech in a harsh, passionate voice, very different from the bland diplomatic delivery customary at such meetings, that gave added weight to his blunt message. "We have no plans in Norway," said Mr. Gerhardsen, "to let atomic stockpiles be established on Norwegian territory or to construct launching sites for intermediate-range ballistic missiles. May I, in this connection, remind you of an idea which has lately been subject to public debate in many countries: the idea of an area in Europe where there would be a thinning out of military force so as to reduce tension in our part of the world."

The Norwegian premier, speaking in his own language, went on to urge postponement of any decision on intermediate-range ballistic missiles and to use the time to explore the possibilities for renewing disarmament negotiations with the Soviets.

For reasons that in retrospect already seem scarcely comprehensible, this simple statement, as rough-hewn

as Gerhardsen's personality, produced a dramatic effect on his colleagues. "Somehow the Gerhardsen speech seemed to crystallize something that had been hanging in the air," my eyewitness informant explained. "He put into words what millions of plain people are thinking all over Europe and made the heads of government feel the breath of public opinion."

Responding to this bracing current, Prime Minister Harold Macmillan abandoned his prepared text and made an impromptu speech giving guarded support to the idea of relaunching diplomatic negotiations with the U.S.S.R. Chancellor Adenauer had already dropped a firm hint to the same effect, as had France's youthful Premier Gaillard. (Adenauer had chagrined Dulles the day before by warning him that German public opinion made acceptance of missile bases on the soil of the Federal Republic out of the question at this time.) Belgium's Achille van Acker lined up with them. The Canadian and Dutch prime ministers, who had concerted in advance with Gerhardsen, gave him even stronger, more explicit backing, though various members of their delegations privately expressed consternation because, as they saw it, he had "gone too far" in the direction of neutralism.

The Pessimists and the Facts

To the U.S. delegation, surprised by the nearly unanimous European reluctance to accept American strategic missiles and by the seemingly unappeasable European hunger for negotiation with the Soviets, it seemed for a while that a neutralist stampede was under way.

"The fabric of the alliance, already well worn, has been tried still further by the negative attitude assumed by Norway and Denmark

toward United States proposals for augmenting the military strength of the organization," reported Drew Middleton of the *New York Times*. "Political sources in the United States and British delegations foresaw the encouragement of strong neutralist forces in both nations as a consequence of the attitude taken by their delegations here."

The *Herald Tribune's* European expert, Anthony Nutting, former British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, covering the conference from New York, had an even gloomier impression. "The overtones of neutralism and negotiation at any price" which he detected in the Norwegian and Danish speeches led Nutting to the somber conclusion that the Bulganin notes and Kennan's "neutralization doctrine" had had "considerable impact on European thinking." Consequently, he felt a "note of grave warning" was not only timely but "imperative."

EVENTS demonstrated that the Norwegian and Danish speeches on the opening day of the conference marked a turning point in Europe's evolution away from neutralism. Possibly if the President had listened to the advisers in his delegation, who had been feeding correspondents scare propaganda about a neutralist tidal wave, catastrophe might have ensued. But the President fortunately disarmed antagonism by the patience with which he tried to understand the European viewpoint and by his evident willingness to modify his own views in order to meet it halfway. Thereby he confirmed the judgment of political observers who have long felt that much so-called neutralism is a disguised European reaction to American arrogance.

President Eisenhower's sympathetic attitude made it evident that experimenting with new approaches to

the problem of reducing world tensions was not necessarily treason to NATO. Thus encouraged, leading Continental delegations—especially the Franco-German duumvirate, which is more and more emerging as the central core of European leadership—launched a two-front offensive against the remaining bastions of Anglo-American diplomatic orthodoxy and against the bona fide neutralists in the European camp. Each victory for flexibility and audacity in the collective NATO search for peace naturally helped responsible European leaders beat back the forces of go-it-alone neutralism. After Dulles had finally agreed to French Foreign Minister Christian Pineau's proposal for a foreign ministers' conference with the Soviets, Gerhardsen yielded to pressure from the Danes and members of his own delegation. He agreed to give a mass interview to clear up some "misunderstandings" about his speech. "I am not neutralist," he explained to the press, simultaneously serving warning on the Soviets that if they failed to respond to NATO's peace overtures by the time American intermediate missiles were ready, Norway might reconsider its refusal to accept them. At the same time, he withdrew his original opposition to the paragraph in the final communiqué endorsing nuclear warheads and intermediate missiles for NATO forces in general.

Re-emergence of Europe

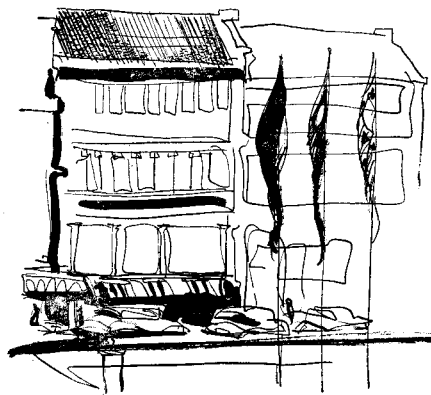
The wording of the communiqué reminded the logical French of the meaningless compromise resolutions that traditionally close congresses of their Radical Socialist Party. But the feeling that Europe was no longer helpless, that it was once more capable both of developing a constructive will and imposing it on a powerful ally, was so exhilarating that there is little tendency to carp here, and this seems pretty generally true throughout the Continent.

"For the first time since the founding of NATO," wrote Charles Ronsac, one of the leading French political commentators, in the *Paris Journal*, "we have witnessed a new and comforting phenomenon—the emergence of Europe as a nascent community within a broader alliance. In particular France, Germany, and Italy have succeeded in working

together as a team, often exerting a strong pull on England to return to Europe."

Even more explicitly than most European commentators, Ronsac attributes the relative success of the summit meeting and the subsequent revitalization of NATO to the ultimate U.S. acceptance of Europe as an equal Atlantic partner with a mind and a will of its own.

The European coalition around the Paris-Bonn axis, however, is more than a diplomatic front set up to counterbalance one-sided U.S. military leadership in NATO. Neither is the coalition designed to focus attention on the European desire for more talks with the Soviets be-



fore the nuclear armaments race is pushed closer to the brink by the establishment of missile bases in western Europe. Above all, the essentials are here for the real power grouping. One of the most important—and illuminating—developments of the conference became evident only after its adjournment. This was the agreement reportedly reached between Gaillard and Adenauer to abandon the negotiations West German Defense Minister Strauss had initiated with the British, for the production of German nuclear weapons with British assistance, in favor of German participation in a European atomic armaments pool. The French are said to have enough plutonium on hand to make at least six experimental A-bombs in the tactical range and are planning test explosions for the latter half of 1958.

By relying on purely national production, France could hope to become only a token atomic power. But with the might of German in-

dustry thrown into the effort—and especially if the Dutch with their highly advanced electronic technology come into the pool—there would be the possibility that a new military superpower would emerge in western Europe. The proposed European armaments pool will produce other modern weapons besides nuclear warheads—eventually perhaps ballistic missiles of strategic range.

According to some optimistic sources here, within a short time after European experts—who are already reported to have held some preliminary talks—work out the details of the project, Europe will be able to produce its own warheads for American missiles, which by then will be available. This result will be achieved more quickly and economically if, as some French political circles believe, Dulles has really agreed to make some relevant U.S. industrial secrets available to Europeans as soon as the McMahon Act can be amended. But the project is not dependent on American cooperation.

A Power to Serve

There is no official confirmation that the Franco-German talks about the proposed weapons pool have resulted in a definite agreement, as has been reported. Even if Paris and Bonn are completely in accord on the scheme, various domestic and international pressures may compromise its realization. The difficulty the six Common Market powers have encountered in agreeing on an administrative capital for Little Europe suggests some snags that may lie in the path of the projected new technological "edc."

But the very fact that western Europe has the theoretical capability of becoming a modern weapons community within two or three years lends a substance to the Third Force idea that it never had in the past. It also helps explain why at the summit meeting the chief European leaders were able to impose liberalization in the NATO doctrine on negotiation with the Soviets while resisting strong popular pressures for passive neutralism.

Rather than fall into the morass of neutralism, the leaders of western Europe have elected to work together as a separate unit in NATO backed

by potentially independent military power, thus gaining the capacity to follow a policy of their own inside NATO, a policy from which NATO, the U.S. included, can only gain. Already their success in Paris has brought a new and dramatic element onto the diplomatic scene. As European freedom of maneuver increases—which it seems likely to do as long as the European leaders agree among themselves—they can if they desire effectively block any U.S. attempt to negotiate a world settlement directly with the Soviets that does not take into account their interests. With three military powers in the world, a settlement by two that left out the third wouldn't really settle anything.

The Europeans have been paying disproportionate attention to the danger of Soviet-American negotiations; in their new unity they can find relief from their fears. At the same time, as they demonstrated in Paris, they can put real pressure on the United States to accept or even initiate new negotiations. Whether they can exercise equal pressure on the Soviet Union remains to be seen, but by throwing all their weight on the NATO side of the scale—and particularly by their ability to lift it out again—they can undoubtedly give the Kremlin strategists something to think about.

MUCH OF NATO's activity in the coming months will undoubtedly be concerned with determining who does the negotiating with the Soviets and on what issues. If we attempt to negotiate behind the backs of our allies, the new spirit of understanding in the alliance developed last month will collapse and we shall find Europeans trying to negotiate a separate peace behind our back. On the other hand, if we use the need for consulting NATO as an excuse for stalling or evading real negotiations—as some Europeans accuse Dulles of having done during last summer's disarmament talks—the ultimate effects on the alliance will be just as disastrous. We must simultaneously arm and talk, consult and use our own initiative, encourage our allies to stand on their own feet and discourage them from going it alone. It looks as if we shall have to start relearning the lost art of diplomacy.

Press Briefings at the Summit

HOWARD FREEMAN

ANY INTERNATIONAL gathering at which there are 4.3 representatives of the press for every official delegate is bound to have difficulty explaining itself. But the NATO Summit Conference had more than its share. When seventeen hundred-odd reporters turned up in Paris there was bound to be more than a quantitative increase in the problem of press relations. They packed the huge auditorium in the Palais de Chaillot set aside for Secretary-General Paul-Henri Spaak's nightly briefing. They seethed through the lobby at the Hotel Crillon where White House Press Secretary Hagerty's sessions, purportedly to explain the U.S. position, had all the solemnity of a prayer meeting in a railroad station. Even hurriedly called "back-grounders," to which a select few among the press were invited, were jammed to overflowing.

But failures in communication went deeper than that. There was, for example, utter consternation among European reporters at the spectacle put on by Hagerty and a group of noisy camp followers known as White House correspondents. They came charging into Paris on Saturday, December 14, and took over the Crillon Hotel—bar, reception rooms, and all. By nightfall they had commenced the first of interminable press conferences that sounded to a bystander more like a brawl than a briefing.

Buchwald Was Right

The fascination of these sessions was not so much their style as their content. Like persistent if rowdy court attendants chronicling the day's activities of a visiting monarch, reporters scrutinized the minutiae of Eisenhower's schedule. The purposes of the conference itself were mainly brushed aside. At times the exchanges resembled slapstick:

Q. (ANDY TULLY, Scripps-Howard): Can I ask one question about the President's health? Did Dr. Snyder examine the President?

HAGERTY: I don't know what you mean by "examination."

Q. (TULLY): Did they give him a medical examination—look him over?

Q. (MERRIMAN SMITH, United Press, chiming in): Stethoscope or EKG . . .

HAGERTY (snarling): Look, Smitty, let's not be funny.

(SMITTY, defensively): I am asking.

Q. (TULLY, persisting): Really, what I am asking is, did he give him any examination?

HAGERTY: The Doctor talked to me, as I reported, and he said that the President was fine.

Q.: Let's break it up.

It was this situation which Art Buchwald epitomized in a column "A Late Late Briefing" about an imaginary press secretary named Jim. Appearing in the Paris edition of the *New York Herald Tribune* on the second day of the conference, it made everybody laugh, including President Eisenhower. Everybody, that is, except Hagerty, who was so outraged that he called a special press conference to deny that any of his own briefings remotely resembled Buchwald's "unadulterated rot."

THE PRESIDENT's press secretary seemed singularly unresponsive to subtle issues of international policy. When *New York Times* correspondent W. H. Lawrence tried to question him about the President's pledge to respond "at once and with all appropriate force" to armed attack on any NATO member, he thrashed about helplessly, finally retorting, "The President did not have to get the approval of Congress when Pearl Harbor happened." Then there was the following exchange with a dark-skinned reporter:

Q.: Could you tell us if the President, as reported in the newspapers—in French newspapers—will line up behind the British in a formula of French pre-eminence in North Africa, and have the independent North African countries been considered?

HAGERTY: A short answer to a long question is "No."