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UNILATERALISM OR THE SHADOW OF CONFUSION

by

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Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord  
that take counsel, but not of me;  
and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit,  
that they may add sin to sin ...

Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame  
and the trust in the shadow of Egypt  
your confusion.

(Isaiah 30,1;3.)



At the end of January of this year Mr. Vadim Zagladin, first deputy secretary of the Soviet Communist Party's foreign affairs department, told a group of visiting West German Young Socialists that the Soviet Union has stopped deploying SS-20 missiles targeted on Western Europe. This is the same Mr. Zagladin who a few days earlier went on Hungarian radio to say :

"Those in the West who think we will show compliance on the issue of Euromissiles or any other question, because we have to support Poland, make a great mistake. The Soviet Union has never showed compliance over principal issues and will not do so now"

(The Times, Jan. 25 1982)

So this deployment stop is a pure gesture of good will. Except, of course, that about 280 of these rockets with three nuclear warheads each, are already in place. To these one may add about the same number of the older and less sophisticated SS-4s as well as about 25 SS-5s. According to Western estimates this represents about 85% of the entire projected programme. Perhaps not a bad time to stop, especially since the other side hasn't even started its own deployment of "Euromissiles". Mr. Zagladin would not say for how long the Soviet Union would hold out this olive branch. It would depend on what NATO would do.

At the beginning of February Leonid Brezhnev himself pointed out the importance of keeping things apart, human rights (not his term) on the one hand and armaments on the other, and called for "denouements" rather than "linkages".

In this realistic vein he made a number of proposals, none of them new. He proposed a complete elimination



of nuclear arms from European soil. A most attractive proposition, it would seem. Except upon second thought it isn't much of a concession. Eastern European countries, other than the Soviet Union itself, have no nuclear weapons, nor will they be allowed to have any. A nuclear-free zone in Europe involves therefore no sacrifices by Russia's allies and whereas Western Europe would remain without nuclear cover, the Soviet Union would just have to remove its missiles somewhat further inland. The missiles are perfectly capable of reaching targets in Western Europe if fired from behind the Urals. Seeing that the West is not yet quite prepared for a radical solution of this sort Brezhnev proposed a mutual reduction of medium range weapons down to 1/3 of their present strength by 1990. The diminution of the stockpile of nuclear arms is doubtlessly desirable. But, as the arithmetic clearly suggests, the Brezhnev proposal leaves the present imbalance of nuclear armament intact. In terms of Western medium range missiles, one third of nothing is still nothing. Brezhnev can pretend he is suggesting a balanced reduction by counting American aeroplanes against Soviet missiles and leaving Soviet planes out of the account. He also proposed a Moratorium which once again would freeze the status quo. The Secretary General of the Soviet Communist Party was speaking at a reception in the Kremlin for the Consultative Council of Disarmament of the Socialist International, or rather to what there was of it, because the British, French, West German and Dutch representatives had refused to go to Moscow in view of the situation in Poland. Mr. Brezhnev spoke of the folly, presumably of others, "to build a policy



with an eye to nuclear war" (I.H.T. 4.2.82) and emphasized that the Soviet Union placed peace ahead of all other objectives.

The same disarmament council of the Socialist International was told very similar things about the pacific goals of Soviet policy or its previous visit to Moscow in October 1979. It was told in particular that it was ludicrous even to suggest the possibility of Soviet military intervention in a foreign country. That was three months before the invasion of Afghanistan.

A day after the Brezhnev announcement President Reagan repeated his earlier offer to cancel the plans for the production and deployment of Western "Euromissiles" if the Soviet Union would stop putting up theirs and scrap the ones that are already in place. The "zero option" was once again rejected out of hand by the Soviet Union as a mere figleaf to cover ominous military plans.

To most people one nuclear weapon is much like another. They are all terrible instruments of intimidation and destruction. There are however different levels of nuclear weapons. It is important to keep such distinctions in mind if one wants to understand the moves and counter-moves of the Superpowers, and in order to form a reasoned opinion of what is involved in doing without this or that weapons system or what it means to have as much or more than the other side.



Strategic nuclear arms are the "traditional" powerful weapons that can be carried over long distances by long range missiles or bombers. Their capacity for destruction is so great, that their use would cause a universal conflagration. They are therefore limited as instruments of policy to balancing each other out in the expectation that one threat cancels out the other. It is these weapons that are the object of the SALT negotiations and of the partial limitations agreements that were reached at these talks. Different from these are tactical nuclear weapons, of much more limited destructive power which can be thought of as extensions of conventional military equipment and, so the theory goes, could conceivably be used in a limited "battlefield" role without necessarily unleashing a massive response with strategic weapons. Finally, there are intermediate nuclear weapons, of medium range, such as the Soviet SS 20 missiles and the American Pershing and Cruise missiles of a wider scope than "battlefield" arms; they are nevertheless limited to a relatively restricted potential "theatre" of war, such as Europe. It is difficult to discuss nuclear arms dispassionately. Their use would lead to such nightmarish results that it would be simply inhuman not to be filled with great fear and horror of what they can do to our world whichever "side" may ultimately be thought to be at fault assuming that "we" and "they" can be kept apart in the case of nuclear conflict. It is all the more important, therefore, to keep a cool head, which is very different from having a cold heart. One possible response to the threat of nuclear catastrophe is to refuse for one's own part, to contribute towards or even to tolerate the deployment of nuclear weapons. This position reflects a morality which cannot be rejected out of hand.



It does however raise new moral problems for leaving the field free for villains means delivering not only oneself, to which one perhaps has the right, but also one's fellow men into the villains' hands. Once the technology is there, someone will be tempted to use it if he thinks he can get away with it. Short of general nuclear disarmament the only plausible way of deterring an adversary from throwing the Bomb at you is to have one of your own he knows you can throw back at him. It may be a sad reflexion on human nature, but it is a bold man who would say that the absence of war in Europe for now close to forty years is unrelated to the "Balance of Terror".

It is a different matter that anyone in his senses would like to see a negotiated, properly monitored and enforced limitation of horrible and costly arms. Achieving such an agreement is something else again. Wanting it alone will not do. Also, by definition, agreements cannot be unilateral. Apart from all other difficulties, it is not easy to determine what exactly constitutes a balance of asymmetric weapons systems, so that reasonable people, even when extremely well informed and technically competent may well disagree on particulars. The concept of deterrence also involves psychological considerations that are difficult to evaluate. It is hardly wise policy to take the logically easy way out of the complexities of strategic



balance or imbalance by simply rushing ahead to make sure one has "more" than the other side. It is true that one cannot afford to be weak, but one must beware of oversimplifications in wanting to argue "from strength". Such a policy is no better if catering to a populist desire to be "number one". In democracies, effective policies need popular support. It is the task of leadership to clarify, but not to falsify the meaning of policies in order to persuade rather than mislead public opinion. A large section of American public opinion was misled by successive administrations who presented the valuable, but limited achievements of détente as leading to a "stable structure for peace". It was not, and could not be anything of the kind. Having fallen out of that cloud with a bump, Americans feel they have been duped and they demand a policy of "thoughtness". The sentiment is understandable, but it is once again up to the administration to lead, and not to allow its policy to become prisoner to jingoism and illusions of endless resources and impregnable American primacy in all fields.

No matter what the difficulties - conceptual, emotional, political and economic - of formulating and implementing sensible policies regarding nuclear arms, it is necessary to have and be known to have the capacity for nuclear deterrence. It is not a matter of choice.

Once made, ~~the~~ invention of nuclear weapons cannot be unmade. Even the dismantling



of all existing nuclear arms would not put us back in a state of nuclear innocence. Even so, universal nuclear disarmament would undoubtedly be a blessing. Such disarmament would of course have to be accompanied by appropriate and effective controls. The agreements limiting strategic nuclear arms that have been concluded so far are certainly valuable, but strictly circumscribed. There seems to be little hope of global nuclear disarmament. It is partly a matter of perceptions. The Soviet Union, for instance, does not differentiate between conventional and nuclear forces in its military planning as presented in its own publications. Under such circumstances the high-minded morality of refusing to have anything to do with nuclear weapons under any circumstances must be weighed against the heard-headed and, I believe in effect more humane morality that seeks ways to prevent everyone from using such weapons.

What will not do, is the kind of lopsided special pleading which has lately become so common in Western Europe and particularly in Western Germany. West Germany's geographic position, its split national identity, the sectarian tradition of some of its churches, the long term "antimilitarizing" effects of a "reeducation" programme designed to correct past excesses are no doubt among the factors affecting the increasingly prevalent one-eyed

view of nuclear armament. What is true of Western Germany is true a fortiori of West Berlin.

A group of prominent West Berliners, headed by the former Governing-Mayor Heinrich Albertz and including authors, academics, actors, physicians and clergymen issued in September of 1981 an "Appeal from Berlin to the People of the USA".

This text is well worth discussing in some detail because of the intellectual distinction of those who sign it and because it is an excellent summary of the "unilateralist" arguments being advanced in Germany today. It is, needless to say no less significant for what it passes over in silence than for what it spells out:

"We, a group of West Berlin citizens, want to express our deepening sense of apprehension and alarm at the military policy of the Reagan administration."

This is an ably constructed sentence, which without doing violence to the language, personalizes the source of apprehension and appeals over the head of the "nasty man" and his associates to the "American People". It would never have done to speak of "U.S. defense policy". That would have rung all the wrong bells : it would take away the aggressive edge of the word "military" and suggest that the President is, for better or for worse, the properly elected representative



of the United States. So far we have no more than quite admissible rhetorical emphasis.

"The construction of a new generation of American nuclear weapons is raising political and social tensions throughout the world and promises to drastically increase the risk of nuclear war".

This states the thesis advanced in the Appeal. It has to be seen in the light of what follows in its support. It does however already raise some important questions : why would the construction of new nuclear weapons increase the danger of war ? Weapons are not as such the causes of war any more than money is the cause of greed. On the other hand, if a new weapon being introduced is seen to unsettle a balance in armaments thought to be crucial in discouraging hostilities, then indeed, the new weapon has a destabilizing effect. The only weapon that could really do this, would be one capable of such a swift, precise and extensive preemptive strike as to make retaliation impossible. But this is not what the fuss is about. In fact the so-called strategic nuclear weapons, the "Big-Bombs" are not referred to anywhere in the Berlin Appeal.

"The proposed stationing of Pershing II and Cruise missiles in Western Europe has catalyzed an unprecedented opposition movement. In the Federal Republic alone over 1 1/2 million people have signed petitions against the stationing of Pershing II and Cruise missiles on European soil. In Hamburg more than 100.000 Protestant Christians recently demonstrated against these new weapons.



This Fall hundreds of demonstrations and teach-ins will take place in the Federal Republic to protest the present United States military build-up."

The big fuss is about medium-range nuclear missiles.

It is certainly true that, whatever its historical and ideological origins, the large wave of pacifist/unilateralist protest got rolling in response to the NATO decision in December of 1979 to deploy Pershing II and Ground Launched Cruise Missiles on Western European soil. A large and vociferous protest movement presumably indicates that there is a prima facie reason for concern. It does not of course tell us much about the merits of the case. The number of people marching or attending rallies is a poor indicator of the worth of their cause. In evaluating the protest it would be useful to know for instance what proportion of the petitions were signed in the spirit of "down with nukes" rather than "down with new American nukes only". It is, no doubt, psychologically easier and perhaps politically more effective to protest about things not yet introduced than about things that are already there. It is again a neat rhetorical device to underscore the fact that one of the most important demonstrations against the installation of Western medium range missiles was staged by "Protestant Christians".

The appeal is addressed to the American people, which is imbued with Protestant values. A large number of Americans are bound to view the protest with different eyes than if it had been staged



by "atheist fellow-travellers". On the other hand the large majority of the American public is not likely to be aware of some of the more disturbing aspects of German Protestantism. There is a virulent millenarist-sectarian strand among the German Protestant churches. Neutralist sentiment in the interest of German unity is no novelty. It has always played an important role in Protestant "Kirchentage" or great national church meets. It has also been remarkable that many protestant clergymen who have been protagonists in the condemnation of nuclear energy -for peaceful as well as for military purposes- never seem to extend their -possibly perfectly justified- censure beyond the Elbe.<sup>1</sup> So much, as it were, ad hominem.

But what of the substance of the argument ?

"We are told that the Pershing II and Cruise missiles will deter the Soviet Union from attacking Western Europe by providing the United States and NATO with means to "win" an atomic war."

This is both inaccurate and wrong-headed. Medium range nuclear missiles do not constitute an American or Western technological breakthrough which might be thought capable of "outsmarting" the Soviet weapons systems thus making "victory" in a nuclear conflict possible. They are rather meant to counterbalance a Soviet breakthrough on comparable terms in order to make even "limited" nuclearwar unthinkable. Unlike NATO's medium range weapons that have yet to be deployed, the Soviet Union

1. See the forceful article by François-Georges Dreyfus, "Pacifisme et neutralisme en Allemagne Fédérale aujourd'hui", in: Défense nationale, 38ème Année - Janvier 1982, pp. 7-21.



already has close to 300 of them in place, targeted on Western Europe, and their number is apparently still increasing, despite the statements of Mr. Zagladin (Times, Feb.6,1982). This presumably strikes the signatories of the "Appeal" as a perfectly pacific pursuit.

The point about these weapons is that their range and their accuracy, which permits them, for instance, to concentrate on strictly military targets, could conceivably allow them to be used within the confines of one "theater" of war, say in Western Europe, without automatically provoking the massive retaliation with "strategic" weapons by the Superpower allied to the attacked countries. The protective Superpower might well be reluctant to use its strategic arms, for fear of a strategic counterretaliation. Following this logic, the European allies get nervous about "decoupling", and about the American atomic umbrella folding over their heads. They recognize that the days when an American President could warm people's hearts and carry conviction by saying "Ich bin ein Berliner" are long gone. It is easy to imagine that America, post-Vietnam, self-concerned America, might well hesitate to bring down an atomic war upon its head just for the likes of us. President Reagan caused an uproar, by saying something very much like that. It is to reassure the Europeans, and under the persistent pressure of the West German Chancellor himself that the much disputed NATO decision to produce and deploy



Pershings and Cruise Missiles was taken. It certainly doesn't stem from the desire of the U.S. to start any European wars they might hope to "win". The deployment of NATO medium range missiles can only be conceived as a threat to peace, if it is assumed that the Soviet Union, not the U.S., might be willing to unleash a preemptive attack before the missiles are in place, in order to preserve its present enormous advantage. But if this is so, the "Appeal" is knocking on the wrong door.

The concept of "limited" nuclear war is certainly open to many questions. The Soviet SS20s and their Western counterparts are still very destructive things, despite their accuracy. The dynamic character of all wars suggests it may be very difficult to prevent escalations. The intermediate range missiles deployed by the Soviet Union and to be deployed by NATO are still under the direct control of the respective Superpowers. One wonders therefore, why the Soviet Union, for instance, would shoot back at the Western European launching pad rather than at the missile's mother country. This brings us back to global strategic deterrence, which means that producing and installing the new weaponry could be a waste. On the other hand these weapons may, for all I know, be worth every penny spent on them if, everything considered, they provide a "credible deterrent"; credible not primarily to you and me but to the strategists in the Kremlin.

The NATO plan to counterbalance the Soviet armoury at a certain level does not increase the risk of war. One may argue that it is superfluous, but not that it is damaging to a balance which it is in fact intended to reestablish. The other wrong impression conveyed by the tone of the "Appeal" is that the new weapons, by being technologically more advanced must also be even more inhuman than their cruder forerunners. It is hard to see why more accurate, and therefore less wantonly destructive weapons should be humanly more repulsive and morally more objectionable than technically less sophisticated arms which are only capable of indiscriminate destruction on a vast scale.

"The recent decision of the Reagan administration to build the neutron bomb has only unleashed additional revulsion and opposition".

The fact is undoubtedly true. The question to ask is whether the reaction was justified. What was said about the relative 'moral' merits of the technologically more advanced against the more indiscriminate weapons also applies to the neutron Bomb. It must be because people are accustomed to exponential growth in all fields that they automatically assume that a new Bomb must be even more horrible than an old Bomb. In fact the neutron Bomb is much more precise in its scope and much less destructive in its effects than the older devices. While capable of killing people by direct radiation, the heat and blast



it produces and the radioactive fallout it leaves behind is greatly reduced by comparison to nuclear warheads as we have had them so far. Used against a massive tank formation, for instance, it would stop the advance by killing the crews without ravaging and poisoning vast stretches of possibly densely populated country. This is surely less rather than more sinister than letting everything go up in one great mushroom. The revulsion would have been justified if the choice were not between one Bomb and another but between a Bomb and no Bomb. Neatly separated by four paragraphs from this first evocation of (largely misunderstood) nuclear horror, the "Appeal" takes a more sophisticated approach to the neutron Bomb.

"... the neutron bomb (is) a weapon which is supposed to make atomic war "thinkable"."

This is presumably just because it is less destructive. But what does "making atomic war 'thinkable'" mean? The implication seems to be that the introduction of the neutron Bomb is evidence of an intention to conduct a limited nuclear war, suddenly made possible by technology. This is not at all the same as the fact that a deterrent can only do its job, to deter and prevent a war, if the adversary knows that one is able and if driven to it willing to use it. The "Appeal" is unfair if it suggests, however indirectly, that those responsible for introducing the neutron Bomb are actually eager to use it. It does however raise the legitimate question : What is the neutron Bomb for ?



The problem is posed by the great imbalance of conventional forces in Europe. Warsaw Pact Divisions outnumber NATO Divisions in Northern and Central Europe by more than 2 to 1 and the Warsaw Pact has almost three times as many tanks in this area as the Western Alliance. This strength is enhanced by geography -the lack of depth of Western Europe, poor communication lines, etc.<sup>1</sup> The Soviet Union has consistently maintained and increased the strength of its (nuclear and conventional) forces since World War II, through cold war, détente and after. One wonders why. It is true that these armies came in handy when people who didn't know their own good started trouble in places like Budapest, or Prague. But surely a military apparatus of such magnitude, maintained at enormous expense, can hardly be justified by police duties alone. The moment American monopoly and then even American superiority in nuclear arms was gone, the moment that is that the Soviet Union was capable of retaliatory strikes against the United States itself, the strategic nuclear deterrent was seen to offer insufficient protection against the conventional military strength of the Soviet Union. This has led to attempts since the 1950's to develop "tactical" or "battlefield" nuclear weapons able to make up for the relative weakness of NATO's conventional forces. The neutron Bomb is the first such device which can be plausibly expected not to have such disastrous side effects

1. See The Military Balance 1980-1981, The International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, 1980



on the countryside and the civilian population as to make it usable at all. In this sense, the authors of the "Appeal" are right when they say that the neutron Bomb is "supposed to make nuclear war thinkable". The asymmetry of the means, "nuclear" versus "conventional" power, makes it hard to determine the real worth of "tactical" nuclear weapons. Nuclear is nuclear, however qualified.

"If the neutron bomb were ever to be used in Europe or anywhere else in the world, it could open up an age of unlimited atomic wars. Pershing II's, Cruise missiles and neutron bombs on European soil could not only unleash an atomic war here. We believe that such a conflict would quickly escalate and turn the entire northern hemisphere into a nuclear wasteland."

Well, it could. The question is, do these arms provide a plausible enough disincentive to discourage actions which might necessitate their use. What are the alternatives? The alternative to "tactical" nuclear arms is an extensive European conventional rearmament, despite the heavy economic and political burden it would place on the countries of Western Europe or a major reduction of Soviet conventional forces, which does not look very likely.

In any case, neither possibility is envisaged in the "Appeal".

"As West Berliners living in the West but surrounded by the East we have had the privilege of experiencing first hand the benefits of détente. We believe from the results of this experience that only a policy of deepening East-West





dialogue and understanding -not  
weapons superiority- can provide  
a working framework for peace"

This is one of the strangest paragraphs in the whole document. No doubt West Berlin was particularly sensitive to whatever advantages détente had to offer, in terms of economic, cultural and human exchanges. Trade is a good thing and if both sides profit it doesn't necessarily matter who gets the better deal. The possibility of visiting tante Hannah in what used to be called Chemnitz might even in itself be worth the vast transfers of technology and credit from West to East. But having established links of this nature, who has the greatest interest in maintaining them, who can least afford to pick a fight, the lender or the borrower ? Who was it then who killed détente ? Again we find our "Appeal" knocking on the wrong door.

Was it the American people who made a spittoon out of the third basket (human rights, rather than guns or butter) of the Helsinki Accord ? Was it the American government that subjected to psychiatric treatment people who checked whether the stipulations of this crowning Act of détente were observed ? Every face has only two cheeks to offer to the bully, no more. Never mind the Horn of Africa, Angola, etc., which may plausibly be put down as "power struggles", indirect confrontations between Superpowers, where the lines of demarcation were not hard and fast. It is nevertheless worth noting that

in the period of détente any advance of American influence, such as the turning around of Egypt, was obtained by peaceful means, whereas the gains of Soviet interest were obtained by military violence. But what possible overarching conflict can be cited as an explanation for the invasion of Afghanistan ?

"West Berliners living in the West but surrounded by the East"

also seem to have short memories. Who was it who blocaded them, and who by contrast set up airbridges to keep them alive and in the West ? Unless they do not care to be in the West, but that is not what they say.

A recipe for détente : first build a wall, than open a tiny opening, provide it with a pay gate, make a point of making the gate work capriciously and call it progress. If someone bangs his fist in frustration, call him a bloodthirsty fascist. Yes, indeed let us deepen East-West dialogue and understanding. But the authors of the "Appeal" seem to have taken as a model the later dialogues of Plato in which one of the interlocutors says nothing other than "Yes, Socrates", "Quite so, Socrates", "It would be hard to quarel with what you say, Socrates".

Of course discussion is invaluable to peace.

It is undoubtedly a necessary condition. But hardly a sufficient one. Or do we have a case of "tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner" ?.



The next paragraph is indeed one of deep though selective empathy.

"The people of the Soviet Union have never forgotten the invasion of their country by Germany during the Second World War. More than 20 million Russians died as a result of the war. Like all of us in the West the Soviet people are deeply afraid of a coming nuclear war. And now intermediate range missiles, able to reach Moscow in less than five minutes, are to be deployed in the Federal Republic!"

Here is the contrast to "the Reagan Administration" : "the people of the Soviet Union". People good, Government bad. The list of peoples who have never forgotten the invasion of their country by Germany would be long indeed. Most of them, unlike the Soviet Union never even dreamt of signing a pact with Hitler in order to gobble up their smaller neighbours undisturbed.<sup>1</sup> If, indeed, one can find fault with these countries, it is that they let the bully get away with bloody murder, literally, in order to secure "peace in their time". We know how well they succeeded. The memory of German occupation has not prevented these other countries from creating close bonds of cooperation and friendship with post-war Germany. What is it that puts the Soviet People in a class apart ? Apparently the size of their sufferings. No one denies the enormous sacrifices made by the Soviet Union in the War. But what is this

1. The Hitler-Stalin pact was concluded on Aug. 23, 1939. Poland was partitioned in September of that year. The present Eastern border of Poland is little different from the Molotov-von Ribentropp line resulting from that piece of European Cooperation. Letonia Estonia and Lithuania lost the last vestiges of independence in 1940. Finland, because of its valorous resistance had to surrender only parts of its territory to the Soviet Union, in the same year. It was also the year of the Soviet annexation of Bessarabia and the Bukovina at the expense of Romania.



gruesome body count ? Above a certain number of war victims a people cannot but be mistrustful of the Germans, below that level it is likely to be its friend and ally ? It is of course nothing but the adoption of the propagandistic Soviet view of World War II as of the "Great Patriotic War". It involves no disrespect to the great Soviet contribution to that World War to say that it is grossly insensitive for German intellectuals to adopt that view in an Appeal to a people that has lost thousands of good men fighting for the liberation of Europe from the Nazis. Furthermore, the breastbeating and concern about the presumed Soviet sensibility towards "l'éternelle Allemagne" might perhaps pass, if one were speaking of German defence alone. But it is Western European defense we are talking about. It is simply callous to associate other peoples with a historical burden which weighs on Germany alone. It is also useful to remember that whatever the Soviet people may remember or may not be allowed to forget about German aggression, the Soviet leadership did not hesitate for a moment to send in German troops, Saxon and Prussian goosestepping troops, to crush the Spring of Prague, thus redoubling the horror of the Czechoslovaks.

We are indeed all deeply afraid of a coming nuclear war. Which is why we want to make sure that all of us are sufficiently afraid not to start one. The medium range missiles to be deployed in Western



Europe will be able to reach Moscow in five minutes. The Soviet Union already has such missiles, capable of reaching London in about the same time, give or take a minute, and that might not go down too well with those who remember the Blitz, whether the rocket is fired in Mecklenburg or in Minsk, or for that matter in Kant's native city of Kaliningrad.

The implied concomittant of a presumed Soviet fear of medium range nuclear weapons based in Germany is that by the same token Germany would be primary target of Soviet nuclear attack. This may well be true, but it is a great illusion to think that only countries equipped with nuclear arms will be subject to nuclear attack. Witness the angry letter of a Swedish woman to Leonid Brezhnev, which was in the papers not long ago, in which she expresses the most bitter disillusionment, that despite all the statements to the contrary, the Soviet Union did train nuclear weapons on non-nuclear, neutral Sweden as evidenced in the cargo of the "whisky" class submarine that got stranded on the Swedish shore.

"Euroshima no!" is a slogan seen on the walls of many European cities and expresses an understandable fear, but it misses a central point of its own allusion : That the U.S. could only afford to drop the Bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki because the Japanese had nothing of the sort to throw back at them.

Germany's geographic position and its importance as an industrial power expose it to particular



dangers. If, as the authors of the "Appeal" suggest we also consider a "sale Boshe" view of Germans as prevailing in the Soviet Union, it is difficult to see that Germany would be spared in the case of armed conflict, whether American missiles are stationed on its soil or not.

"WHO CAN SERIOUSLY BELIEVE THE DEPLOYMENT OF PERSHING II AND CRUISE MISSILES IN EUROPE WILL STRENGTHEN THE PROSPECTS OF PEACE ?"

In view of what was said before, the answer to the rhetorical question is : a lot of thoughtful, informed and peaceloving people. Given the problematic nature of the concept of deterrence I am not myself certain that the production and deployment of these missiles is in fact necessary. I would much prefer to be certain in a matter involving enormous amounts of money and giving rise to great political risks. But I am not. What is certain is that the Western medium range missiles do not bring any additional threats to peace, if it isn't through the emotional and unreasoned reactions to them in the West.

"West Germany already has the highest density of atomic weapons per square mile of any country in the world. Within this powder-keg environment which is our home, the Reagan administration is taking steps to place the neutron bomb, ...

All this sounds very dramatic, as in many ways it is. Increasing the possibility of accidents is a matter for concern. But one can easily exaggerate. The wording of the "Appeal" suggests

the same kind of absurdity as the endless race for quantitative nuclear superiority. Here we have the bizzare case of "overkill" in reverse. Germans, like other people, can only die once.

"WE ALONG WITH MILLIONS OF OTHER EUROPEAN CITIZENS, WILL NEVER ACCEPT ADDITIONAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN EUROPE."

Why just "additional" nuclear weapons ? Is it so important for the maintenance of peace that the enormous Soviet advantage be maintained ? This partisan view becomes cynical in the next paragraph.

"The present American arms build-up is creating fear. Fear leads to hate and not to respect. The United States will be respected, if it respects the integrity and independence of its Allies and it treats all peoples of the world as having equal rights. It will be respected, if it shows genuine willingness to negotiate."

The American build-up creates fear. The Soviet build-up, which it is meant to answer, relentlessly and coldbloodedly pursued all through détente presumably confers a feeling of security and repose. There is no need to treat the Macchiavellian point about whether a Prince should seek to be loved or to be feared. The important thing is to see that the authors of the "Appeal" invariably construe American strength as a menace, Soviet strength, by implication, as necessary for the defence of a much abused people whereas the only proper Western European posture for assuring peace is in their view that of the dog lying on its



back hoping that the canine nature of its adversary will then prevent him from tearing out its throat. But how bigotted does one have to be to lecture the American people on the respect of the integrity and independence of its Allies in the midst of the Polish crisis ? Certainly the American presence in Europe is not alien to American interests. But it does not seem to have occurred to the signatories of the "Appeal" that the American people and the U.S. Government would only be too glad if the Europeans themselves were able and willing to take up the slack of their own defence. Independence is all very well. But Sweden and France for instance or even Switzerland are armed to the teeth. The flagrant disrespect of the Soviet Union for the integrity and independence of its Allies, of which the direct interventions in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, etc. are but the most explicit manifestations, have not endangered peace in Europe. The Soviet Union has been able to get its way with impunity because of the pragmatic understanding which mistakenly goes under the name of Yalta. As a formula for the avoidance of war, though not for the advancement of justice or the respect for equal rights of the peoples in the world, the understanding has worked. But I do not think that this is the kind of East-West understanding the authors of the "Appeal" had in mind. Willingness to negotiate "must entail readiness to disarm". It will be remembered that the

December 1979 decision of NATO was a double decision : to ask the Soviet Union to dismantle medium range weapons, targeted on Europe or, in the case of refusal, to produce and deploy their counterparts. Again later, and now again President Reagan proposed what is known as the "zero option".

To say that the proposal was made as a propaganda gesture in the knowledge that the Soviet Union would reject it, is to beg the question of the Soviet readiness to disarm. The "Appeal" having been issued in September 1981 could not have considered the offers of the zero option. I doubt that it would have made much difference. We have to complete the sentence. In the view of the writers of the "Appeal" willingness to negotiate must entail readiness to disarm unilaterally.

Qui desiderat pacem praeparat bellum. It has become quite fashionable to play on this maxim of ancient prudence and to say instead that if you desire peace, prepare peace. It is a catchy phrase which has the sound of common sense.

But what does it mean ? Peace can be maintained when it exists and it can be established after a war. But how can it be prepared ? Peace, like liberty, is not a thing that can be obtained once and for all, a harbour that can be reached if only one steers in the right direction and



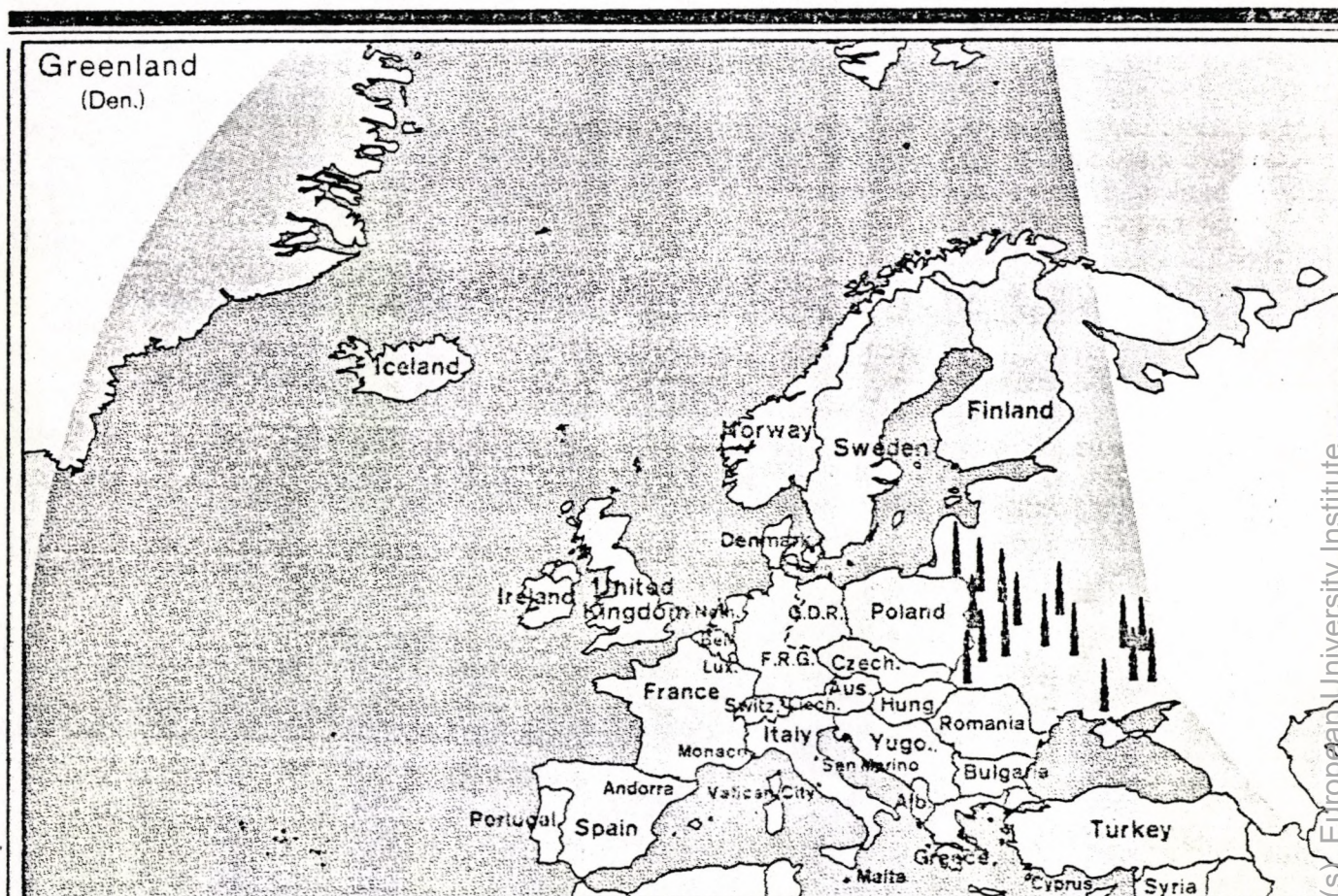
and overcomes the seamonsters. Maintaining peace is more like keeping the ship on an even keel under changing circumstances. It requires constant and repeated efforts, difficult adjustments, laborious and mostly tedious negotiations occasionally leavened by acts of imaginative statesmanship. But none of these is incompatible with being prepared for war. On the contrary. There is no system of international relations that can exclude the possibility of armed conflict. Isaiah is often quoted to the contrary, but the relevant passage is rarely quoted in full. It is not just that such things as beating swords into plowshares will come to pass "in the last days" and not before. Such things, shall only be possible because the Lord "shall judge the nations and shall rebuke many people". I doubt that Isaiah was prophesying the coming of Dr. Waldheim. Therefore, providing for the common defence remains a necessary task of government. Determining exactly what constitutes adequate provision for the common defence is a different matter. Obviously, decisions about armaments, troops, supplies etc. like all political decisions, are not taken in a disinterested vacuum, dans le silence des passions. What is often erroneously concluded from this fact is that such decisions are nothing but a reflection of particular interests. But firstly, though interests influence, they do not determine courses of action and secondly the interests of even very small groups of people are never so coherent as to point all in



the same direction. Furthermore any identifiable interest competes against other countervailing interests as it seeks to influence public policy. Finally, in some countries, though not in others, those who take the decisions are answerable to the public that put them in and which can vote them out.

Such considerations notwithstanding, conspiracy theories abound. Wars are not seen to result from irreconcilable differences between countries, from conflicting interests, widely differing views of the world and poor defences against the desires for domination and aggrandizement, but from the perfidious machinations of sinister men who can manipulate their people into "using their creative potential for war". Such theories channel frustration about the complexity of an imperfect world into a psychologically more manageable hatred of the alleged culprits. They also hold out the illusory but attractive prospect of a concomitant "if only" theory. The maintenance of peace need not be the sisyphian task it is, "if only" one got rid of whoever is always kicking the stone back down the hill. The "Appeal", in fairness, does not go that far. But it raises the question why the American people alone is admonished to wield the hammer while the Soviet Union is busily beating its sickle into a scythe of death.





A schematic representation of Soviet deployment of SS-20 medium-range missiles and their striking range in Europe and beyond.

—US Department of Defense.







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