THE WORKS OF HENRY A. KISSINGER

*List of Works Reviewed**

A World Restored: The Politics of Conservatism in a Revolutionary Age. New York: Grosset and Dunlap, Universal Library Edition, 1964.

Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957.

Problems of National Strategy: A Book of Readings. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965. (Edited by H. A. Kissinger.)

The Necessity for Choice: Prospects of American Foreign Policy. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday Sc Co., Inc., Anchor Books Edition, 1962.

The Troubled Partnership: A Reappraisal of the Atlantic Alliance. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday Sc Co., Inc., Anchor Books Edition, 1966.

American Foreign Policy: Three Essays. New York: W. W. Norton ℭ Co., Inc., 1969.

Rarely has a statesman so captured the attention and imagination of the American nation and, indeed, of the world, as has Henry Alfred Kissinger. While the pinnacle of Dr. Kissinger's popularity has apparently passed, his admirers remain numerous, and he continues to dominate the foreign policy of the Ford Administration just as he did that of Nixon's. History will record that under his stewardship U.S. foreign policy underwent a radical transformation, shaking off most of the vestiges of the cold-war strategy of containment and adopting in its stead a determined pursuit of detente and arms control with the Soviet Union.

The post-1969 metamorphosis of American foreign policy was a source of surprise to many scholarly observers and others. Dr. Kissinger had long been regarded as an enthusiastic cold warrior, a reputation which stemmed from viewpoints expressed in many of his academic publications. His appointment to a White House position in 1968 was greeted with virtually unanimous enthusiasm on

* The **authors have** also consulted all of the articles which, to their **knowledge,** Mr. Kissinger has written. These number over forty; a nearly complete list may be found in the published hearings of the U. S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations on *Nomination of Henry A. Kissinger,* September, 1973, Part I, pp. 2-3.

the American Right. Now, however, some of these erstwhile supporters are among his most bitter detractors. Critics of this school have argued that, far from embodying "conservative" or even "realistic" political principles, Dr. Kissinger's policies have bordered on utopianism and may ultimately endanger U.S. security. The military analyst Colin Gray has declared:

> It is my contention that the Nixon Administration, in the name and often the language of classic *Realpolitik,* has adopted a foreign-policy posture that includes many of the most heinous sins of a Wilsonian idealism.[1]

Another school of critics has attacked Mr. Kissinger from precisely the opposite perspective. Its members have hailed primarily from the American Left, and they have argued that Kissinger's "Metternichean" *realpolitik,* exemplified in heartless "balance of power" policies, has effectively fashioned an amoral or immoral U.S. foreign policy;[2] many have been particularly agitated over the prolonged U.S. presence in Southeast Asia and the alleged overconcern with great-power relations to the detriment of relations with the Third World.

On the other hand, Dr. Kissinger's supporters, who doubtless continue to outnumber the critics, applaud his diplomatic brilliance and allegedly nonpartisan expertise.[3] Although the enthusiastic adu-

[1] "Defense and Negotiation," *Air Force Magazine,* (January, 1974), p. 32. The conservative critics have focused upon the concessions made in search of an illustory detente, citing in particular the hard bargain driven by the Soviets during the SALT negotiations and Soviet behavior during the 1973 Middle East war as examples of the need for a basic reevaluation of the policy. They were, at least originally, led by Senator Henry Jackson. Conservative Senator Jesse Helms, for instance, called this spring for Mr. Kissinger's resignation. For an extreme version of this critique, see Phyllis Schlafly and Chester Ward, *Kissinger on the Couch* (New Rochelle, N.Y.: Arlington House, 1975).

[2] See the critical questions submitted by Senators Kennedy, Hughes, and Abourezk for reply by Mr. Kissinger during his confirmation hearings [United States Senate, Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Relations, *Nomination of Henry A. Kissinger to be Secretary of State,* Part I, pp. 234-45 (hereafter referred to as Nomination Hearings)]. See also Part II, pp. 341-43. Former Secretary of Defense Clark Clifford and Senator Frank Church have both suggested that Mr. Kissinger resign.

[3] At one time an overwhelming *85%* of Americans rated Mr. Kissinger's performance as good to excellent, a record high in the history of the Harris survey. Mr. Kissinger seemed to have built his remarkable following around an image of unbiased, non-partisan expertise. Hence journalist Tom Braden, erstwhile supporter of Senator George McGovern's presidential candidacy, has described the Secre-

lation of "Super K" has been somewhat mitigated by the uncertain outcome of his extensive diplomacy in the Middle East, the collapse of the Vietnam accords, the Cyprus fiasco, and allegations that Kissinger was involved in domestic wiretapping and in CIA efforts to bring down the Allende regime in Chile, he continues to be respected by many for his unflagging efforts to control the arms race and end the cold war.

Which, then, is the correct interpretation? Is Mr. Kissinger the ideal blend of foresighted progressivism *and realpolitik* postulated by his supporters, the amoral Machiavellian denounced by some on the Left, or the visionary Wilsonian increasingly criticized by a disillusioned Right? The confusion is especially intriguing in view of the fact that over a fifteen-year period before he assumed office, Dr. Kissinger set forth his philosophy of international relations and his policy recommendations in a proliferation of five books and over forty articles. Were Mr. Kissinger's works misread? Has his philosophy been consistent in its articulation and was the overall design of his preferred foreign policy always identifiable? Did his opinions evolve over time and, in particular, has his tenure in office modified them? Dr. Kissinger's academic treatises provide us with a rare opportunity not only to answer these questions but also to deepen our understanding of the foundations and future direction of policies which continue to have profound implications for America's world role.

The authors will attempt to explain Dr. Kissinger's overall "conceptualization," as he likes to put it, of international relations. The development of his views on subjects which earned him his academic reputation-the relationship of nuclear weapons to foreign policy and the problems of NATO-will also be traced in detail. Having come to terms with these issues, it will then be possible to explore the philosophical outlook conditioning his perception of international relations.

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tary of State as "a pragmatist" yet "a progressive," "neither a left- nor a right-winger." That assessment would appear to be verified by Harris's discovery that by a margin of 70 to 11 per cent, American people felt that "no matter who is President, he should stay on as Secretary of State." See Louis Harris, *Chicago Tribune,* May 30, 1974, and Tom Braden, "Henry Kissinger: An American Hero," *Washington Post,* May 25, 1974.

I.

The Theory of International Relations Equilibrium and Statesmanship

It was in his earliest book, *A World Restored,*[4] which analyzed the policies of Metternich and Castlereagh during the period following the Napoleonic Wars, that Kissinger set forth his own "conceptualization" of foreign policy, a framework to which he would attempt to give substance when in office. While there has been some understandable skepticism regarding the claim that Kissinger was already developing a blueprint for the reorientation of U.S. foreign policy in his doctoral thesis, it must be remembered that when he completed his dissertation Kissinger was no youth, but a man thirty-one years of age. Moreover, his is no ordinary thesis. Its style is one of self-confident and authoritative commentary marked by sweeping generalizations concerning the most complex of historical problems, which alone is sufficient to set it apart from the ordinary thesis.° Kissinger concluded the book with a defense of the utility of historical analogies, pointing out in particular the relevance of his theory concerning the behavior of revolutionary powers for the contemporary period. In addition, the concepts introduced in *A World Restored* would be repeated frequently in his later writings.°

4*A World Restored: The Politics of Conservatism in a Revolutionary Age* (*N.Y.:* Grosset and Dunlap, Universal Library Edition, 1964) (hereafter referred to as W.R.). This was the first book he wrote, although *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy* [New York: Harper & Bros., 1957] was published before it.

s Indeed, as Kissinger's friend Stephen Graubard has acknowledged, such a thesis was possible only because "Harvard's self-confidence permitted its professors to savor the delicious experience of believing that scholarly canons were precisely what they expected them to be." See Graubard's *Kissinger: Portrait of a Mind* (*N.Y.:* W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1973), p. 17. Graubard agrees that "the evidence is irrefutable" that "the foreign policy strategies and statements of the Nixon administration replicate or approximate procedures and policies recommended by Kissinger in all his published writings. . .. " *Ibid.,* p. 273.

6 Whole passages were excerpted and inserted into all his major works. Kissinger published three articles solely devoted to the same period and themes. As late as 1968 he wrote an article applying to Bismarck's diplomacy the analysis he had developed by 1954. See "The Conservative Dilemma: Reflections on the Political Thought of Metternich," *American Political Science Review,* 48 (December, 1954), pp. 1017-30; "The Congress of Vienna: A Reappraisal," *World Politics,* VIII (January, 1956), pp. 264-80; "The Congress of Vienna," *Power and Order: 6 Cases in World Politics,* ed. by John G. Stoessinger and Alan P. Westin (N.Y.: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1964), pp. 1-32 (references to "Congress of Vienna" will be from this article); "The White Revolutionary: Reflections on Bismarck," *Daedalus, 97,* No. 3 (Summer, 1968), pp. 888-924.

Although, for reasons that will be discussed later, he ultimately judged Metternich to have fallen short of greatness due to a failure in "conception," Kissinger's entire theory of equilibrium, with its associated themes such as the true nature of peace, the differentiation of "revolutionary" and "legitimate" world orders, and the distinction between insular and Continental powers, was developed through his favorable commentary on Metternich's diplomacy in comparison with that of Castlereagh and other contemporaries. Metternich conceptualized foreign policy as primarily an effort to achieve "stability" rather than "peace" conceived as tranquility or absence of war. The stable or "legitimate" international order might experience minor wars, but it will avoid major upheavals because its "structure is accepted by all major powers," whereas an unstable or "revolutionary" order is one "containing a power which considers its structure oppressive" and which is therefore susceptible to major cataclysms.[7] Such stability is to be obtained by fashioning an "equilibrium" or a "balance of forces," terms which are to be distinguished from the "balance of power." For while the balance of power is an essential element of equilibrium, it is not the sole or even the primary element. Crucial to Kissinger's interpretation of Metternich's successful policy is the distinction between what Dr. Kissinger has termed the "general" and the "particular" equilibrium.

The "general equilibrium," or the balance of power, is insufficient to maintain stability in the international system for a variety of reasons. The achievement of an exact balance is impossible. Moreover, the accuracy of calculations designed to establish or maintain a balance cannot be verified because of the difficulties over the short- and long-term in measuring power and in identifying potential aggressors. A system based purely upon power will turn every decision into a contest of strength, whereas the essence of stability is the "recognition of limits" by major national actors.[8] A state knowing itself to be stronger than its rivals and neighbors, and basing its foreign policy primarily upon the internationally-accepted principle that "might makes right," would not hesitate to obliterate other major nations or subject the system to a series of wars designed to impose its own hegemony; even were this empire to survive for a time, it could not be maintained indefinitely by means of force alone. Nor will a victorious nation refrain from imposing a punitive

7 W.R., p. 145.
8 See *ibid.*, pp. 146 and 173, and "Congress of Vienna," p. 28.

peace, thereby eventually creating a generation of revolutionary or dissatisfied leaders within the conquered nation, if it bases its policy calculations solely on its superior power. A concept of international relations constructed only upon a "general equilibrium" will fail to achieve stability because "no state will submit to a settlement, however well-balanced and however secure, which seems totally to deny its vision of itself."[9] Even should a wise leader escape all these pitfalls and find "self-limitation" within a pure power policy, as did Bismarck, his successors most likely will not possess the same wisdom.

The "general equilibrium" must therefore be buttressed by the "particular" or `"historical" equilibrium, also called the "historical balance" as opposed to the "balance of power":

> There exist two kinds of equilibrium then: a general equilibrium which makes it risky for one power or group of powers to attempt to impose their will on the remainder; and a particular equilibrium which .defines the historical relation of certain powers among each other. The former is the deterrent against a general war; the latter the condition of smooth co-operation. An international order is therefore rarely born out of the consciousness of harmony. For even when there is an agreement about legitimacy, conceptions of the requirements of security will differ with the geographical position and the history of the contending powers.[10]

Realizing this, Metternich attempted to create "a combination of powers united by a consensus of historical claims"; "the problem at the Congress of] Vienna was how to relate the general interest of preventing aggression to the particular interests of each country."[11] Kissinger seems to conceive of the particular equilibrium as a means of maintaining a local balance of claims and of power within the wider general balance. For it is in this connection that he criticizes the mentality of the "insular" power, which,

> .. , will tend to identify the threats to the equilibrium with threats to its immediate security. It will make the cause of war depend on an overt act which "demonstrates" the danger. But the danger to the equilibrium is never demonstrated until it is already overturned, because an aggressor can always justify every step except the crucial last one as the manifestation of limited claims and thus can exact acquiescence as the price of continued moderation.[12]

9 W.R., p. 146 or "Congress of Vienna," p. 3.
10 W.R., pp. 146-147.
11 "Congress of Vienna," pp. 10, 3.
12 *Ibid.*, p. 21. For a discussion of England's and Castlereagh's particular failings in *this* regard, see pp. 21, 3-4.

The insular power, secure in its isolation, never realizes that the balance of power has been overturned until its own safety is threatened.

But the survival of a Continental power is uncertain, because it is surrounded by potentially hostile neighbors; it realizes, since it will be the first to suffer the consequences, that the balance of power can easily be overturned by the accretion of local upsets. Moreover, the Continental power is cognizant of the need for what Kissinger has called "continuing relationships." Because it must remain in close contact with neighboring powers, it is as much concerned with the mode of a settlement as with its substance, and with the aftermath of a settlement as with its achievement. The historical balance is a product of mutual agreement rather than of force, and is "maintained through confidential intercourse among the members."[13] Metternich's policy was typified by a conciliatory moderation, for he sought to avoid antagonizing other powers. In his abhorrence of "unbridgeable schisms," he searched for a settlement which would appear as "a gesture of volition, not of surrender."[14]

Nor was such a settlement to be considered rigid and unchanging. It is the error of the insular power, as personified by Castlereagh, to believe that a final settlement can be reached; the insular power then retreats to the safety of its isolated position, assuming that the equilibrium will be "maintained by the recognition of the self-evident advantages of peace."[15] But Metternich realized that these advantages were not self-evident. More immediate and short-sighted demands would come to take precedence and these would require adjustment. The Continental statesman realizes that peace is not a condition of harmony nor the experience of tranquillity, but rather it signals the onset of petty manipulation for historical claims. A "healthy" legitimate order must allow for the possibility of change and reform, for the adjustment to historical trends, and for shifts in the security needs, aspirations, and relative power of its members:

> The issue at Vienna, then, was not reform against reaction-this is the interpretation of posterity. Instead the problem was to create an order in which. change should be brought about through a sense of obligation, instead of through an assertion of power. For the difference between a revolutionary order and *a healthy* legitimate one

13 *Ibid.,* p. *28.*
14 W.R., p. 306.
15 ***Ibid.,* p. 316.**

> is not the possibility of change, but the mode of its accomplishment. A "legitimate" order, as long as it is not stagnant, achieves its transformations through acceptance, and this presupposes a consensus on the nature of a just arrangement. ... [16]

As in the case of any fundamental settlement, subsequent adjustments must be achieved "through acceptance" by the major powers, an acceptance deriving from a continuing "consensus on the nature of a just arrangement."

The core of Kissinger's analysis is his insistence that a stable or "legitimate" order must include an agreement by all the major powers on a "moral" principle. Through its obligatory force, this principle will bind them to the preservation of the order more strongly than would the balance of power, and will supply the basis for judging what constitutes an allowable or just transformation of the order.

> The stability of any international system depends on at least two factors: the degree to which its components feel secure and the extent to which they agree on the "justice" or "fairness" of existing arrangements. Security presupposes a balance of power that makes it difficult for any state or group of states to impose its will on the remainder. . . . Considerations of power are not enough, however, since they turn every disagreement into a test of strength. Equilibrium is needed for stability; moral consensus is essential for spontaneity. In the absence of agreement as to what constitutes a "just" or "reasonable" claim, no basis for negotiation exists.... Peaceful change is possible only if the members of the international order value it beyond any dispute which may arise. [17]

This "legitimizing principle" supplies a rationale for the limitation of historical claims sufficient to maintain their compatibility with a local or particular equilibrium, and thus ultimately with the general equilibrium. In achieving such a combination, the statesman's instrument is "diplomacy, the art of relating states to each other by agreement rather than by the exercise of force, by the representation of a ground of action which reconciles particular aspirations with a general consensus." [18]

The search for a legitimizing principle is thus "the quest of the Continental statesman for a moral symbol, "[10] a principle designed

1a *Ibid.,* **p. 172** *(his* emphasis); see also "Congress *of* Vienna," p. *27.*
17 "The White Revolutionary," *op. cit.,* pp. *899-900.*
18 "Congress *of* Vienna," p. *30.*
19 W.R., p. *223.*

to establish the "justice" of competing claims, upon which all major states can agree and the implementation of which will not overturn the balance of power but rather will reinforce it. Although the establishment of such a moral principle will tax the diplomatic skills of the most astute statesman because a consensus based upon it must be elicited rather than imposed, once it has been established it will become more durable and spontaneous with the passage of time.

Metternich strove to stem the tides of nationalist revolution and insure Austria's survival by seeking adherence to "the sanctity of treaties and the legitimacy of sovereigns" as a legitimizing principle.[20] His prodigious efforts bore fruit; for by the time of Castlereagh's death and England's subsequent retreat into isolation, his legitimizing principle had been sufficiently established, and an illusion of unity created among the great powers of Europe. Thus Metternich's international order survived even though the absence of England increased the system's rigidity. Metternich achieved the *tour de force* of binding the two expansionist powers whom he had most feared-Russia and Prussia-into a "Holy Alliance" dedicated to a principle specifically designed to restrain their expansionism and appeal to their moral inhibitions: He succeeded in creating an order devoid of revolutionary powers because it was founded on both power and morality, "a balance of forces which, because it conferred a relative security, came to be generally accepted, and whose relationships grew increasingly spontaneous as its legitimacy came to be taken for granted."[21] The result, as Kissinger judged it, was a peace which lasted for 100 years.

The success of the Concert system was due in large part to the diplomatic brilliance of its founders. In commenting upon their achievements, Kissinger seizes the opportunity to protest "a scholarship of social determinism" which "has reduced the statesman to a lever on a machine called `history,' to the agent of a fate which he may dimly discern but which he accomplishes regardless of his will."[22] The correct policy is obvious only in retrospect, and it is not

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 82. Kissinger more often refers to Metternich's selected principle as simply "legitimacy," a use of the word which is not to be confused with the more generic references to the legitimacy of an order (a legitimate as opposed to a revolutionary order) or a legitimizing principle in general. For a chronicle of Metternich's efforts to evoke and solidify a consensus, see *ibid., pp.* 214-311.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 318.

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 324.

foreordained; to the statesmen of the time neither the nature of the equilibrium nor the measures to obtain it were immediately apparent, and their accomplishments should be recognized.

Throughout his career, Dr. Kissinger has insisted that the quality of statesmanship is crucial to the success of policy; for "we find that luck, in politics as in other activities, is but the residue of design." [23] The greatness of a statesman may be measured by two standards, the creativity of his conceptions and the tactical skill of his diplomacy.[24] He will be judged by the prescience and creativity of his vision of the future, according to which an adequate legitimizing principle is selected; also essential is the diplomatic skill necessary to gain acceptance of the international order he envisions. His success will be measured by the length of time in which stability, or "peace" conceived as the absence of major war, endures.

Interestingly, Mr. Kissinger has never judged any statesman, past or present, to have achieved final greatness. A failure in "conception" as well as a lack of appreciation for subtlety, nuance, and timing, he asserts, has characterized American statesmen in the postwar period. Policy was based solely upon a reactive and defensive anti-communism and lacked positive goals and vision.[26] Similarly, he found each of the prominent nineteenth century statesmen wanting in some way, although his study of their diplomacy had a profound impact upon his conceptualization of international affairs. Those who claim he has molded himself in their image have misapprehended his interpretation of their policies, confused by his admiration for their manipulative skills and mistaking his theory of equilibrium for an obsession with a mechanistic balance of power. As has been previously observed, the entire thrust of Kissinger's philosophy is the rejection of reliance upon power alone, a fault which he so frequently attributed to Castlereagh. And while Kissinger obviously admires the manipulative ability and tactical skill of a Metternich or a Bismarck, he has explicitly stated that profi-

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 173.

[24] See "Congress of Vienna," pp. 29, 30.

[25] Kissinger has at times expressed admiration for the grandeur of De Gaulle's historic vision and aspirations, but argues that De Gaulle attempted to make France a major power when she hadn't the resources, his military strategy was wrong-headed, and his abrasive style succeeded in alienating others rather than converting them. See *The Troubled Partnership: A Re-appraisal of the Atlantic Alliance* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., Inc., Anchor Book Edition, 1966), pp. 31-65 (hereafter referred to as T.P.) or "The Illusionist: Why We Misunderstand de Gaulle," *Harper's Magazine*, 230 (March, 1965), pp. 69-77.

ciency of this sort alone will not suffice for greatness. He judged that Metternich, the statesman with whom he is most frequently compared, fell short of final greatness primarily because he was deficient in "conception," despite his unsurpassed tactical dexterity:

> Metternich's marvellous diplomatic skill enabled Austria to avoid the hard choice between domestic reform and revolutionary struggle. . . . So agile was Metternich's performance that it was forgotten that its basis was diplomatic skill, that it left the fundamental problems unsolved, that it was manipulation and not creation.[26]

Although he foresaw the monarchal legitimacy would in the end succumb to nationalism, Metternich chose to stave off that eventuality, and thereby to preserve the Austrian Empire as long as possible, by establishing royal authority as the very basis of his new international order. In Kissinger's eyes, he had not the creativity to envision a different solution. Perhaps the statesman Kissinger considered most successful was Bismarck:

> The flexibility of Bismarck's tactics was the result of a well-developed conceptual framework. It grew out of the conviction that the "Metternich system" stifled Prussia's natural role; it was animated by a clear picture of the new international order that Bismarck wanted to bring about. Bismarck sought his opportunities in the present; he drew his inspiration from a vision of the future.[21]

But while Bismarck was an eminently successful statesman in his own time, his "nemesis" was that the system he created required his "sure touch and almost artistic sensitivity" for its maintenance. In the hands of his successors, who lacked his vision and his recognition of the limits of power, the status and strength he had acquired for Prussia precipitated two world wars. "A system which requires a great man in each generation sets itself an almost insurmountable challenge."[28] Bismarck failed to recognize that the national interest was not self-evident, and that policy must be institutionalized through a legitimizing principle.

It is important that the statesman act according to his vision of the future. But because such a vision can never be proved correct except in retrospect, a creative foreign policy involves risks. This is

26 **W.R.**, p. *322.* Numerous other passages with a similar theme could be cited. See also, for instance, *ibid., pp.* 173-74.

27 The White Revolutionary," *op. cit., p.* 910.

28 *Ibid.,* p. *921.*

the problem of "conjecture," upon which Dr. Kissinger has frequently commented:

> The most difficult, indeed tragic, aspect of foreign policy is how to deal with the problem of conjecture. When scope for action is greatest, knowledge on which to base such action is small or ambiguous. When knowledge becomes available, the ability to affect events is usually at a minimum.[29]

A creative policy will therefore be controversial, particularly in policy-making systems. For with the collapse of the essentially aristocratic conception of foreign policy of the nineteenth century, the flexibility of foreign policy has decreased considerably. Although foreign policy-making in the aristocratic tradition often relied too much on intuition, the twentieth-century diplomat is excessively circumscribed by domestic public opinion and by the huge bureaucracies characteristic of the modern state. Kissinger has analyzed the three leadership types most common in the contemporary period, and has found all of them lacking in qualities congenial to great statesmanship. "Contemporary domestic structures . . . present an unprecedented challenge to the emergence of a stable international order," not only because the predominant styles of leadership tend to be incompatible with each other, but also because all must place a premium "on short-term goals and the domestic need to succeed at all times."[30]

This, in turn, is particularly true because the foreign policy structures of the two superpowers are dominated by the bureaucrat. "For the spirit of policy and that of bureaucracy are diametrically opposed." Effective diplomacy must contain a strong element of "conjecture" and strive for "perpetual creation," whereas "the attempt to conduct policy bureaucratically leads to a quest for calculability that tends to become a prisoner of events." The bureaucracy lacks "conception," for it prefers the reduction of problems to soluble, isolated, technical issues. A premium is placed upon "the avoidance of catastrophes" rather than "the discovery of opportunities."[31] Dr. Kissinger repeatedly indicated both his low opinion of

29 "Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy," in Kissinger, *American Foreign Policy: Three Essays (N.Y.:* W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1969), p. 14.

30 *Ibid.*, p. 43. For a discussion of all three types of leadership, see pp. 28-43.

31 "Congress of Vienna," pp. 30-31. For typical statements of Kissinger's views on the bureaucracy see "The Policymaker and the Intellectual," *The Reporter* (March 5, 1959), pp. 30-35, and "Bureaucracy and Policy Making: The Effect of

the State Department's decision-making capabilities and a disdain for the parochialism of the military.

If the influence of the bureaucracy on foreign policy is pernicious, it would appear that a similar judgment must be rendered about domestic public opinion. Modern plebiscitary democracy has inherent within it the "temptations of demagoguery" which find expression in "an almost compulsive desire to avoid even a temporary setback," reducing the statesman's freedom to make concessions and compromise.[32] Each nation develops its own particular .consens'us on the nature of justice, an interpretation which often conflicts with that of other powerful nations, and tends to insist that it must be applied to international policies as well as to domestic relations. But the essence of a stable order is that it must be founded upon a legitimizing principle which is a compromise, for its primary criterion is its acceptability by all the major powers; the great statesman, therefore, may find it difficult to build a domestic consensus behind his policy-witness the fate of Castlereagh.

As an extremely homogeneous society, the United States tends to insist tenaciously upon the truth of its particular version of morality. U.S. foreign policy has also frequently exhibited the isolationist tendencies characteristic of the "insular mentality," and its technical and pragmatic approach to problems has established America as the true home of bureaucratic-pragmatic leadership; this problem-solving mentality has been rooted in a successful national experience, which has also deprived the U.S. of the sense of tragedy and historical insight bequeathed to the Europeans. Kissinger was apparently even less impressed with the quality of public opinion exhibited during the Vietnam War protests, which he judged to be emotional **and** uninformed.[33]

Insiders and Outsiders on the Policy Process," *Bureaucracy, Politics and Strategy*, Security Studies Paper No. 17, University of California, Los Angeles, 1968.

32 "Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy," *op. cit.*, p. 28.

33 He commented to reporters, in a statement quite similar to passages he had already written, that "history teaches us that people do not forgive their leaders for producing disasters, even if what they do seems to reflect their immediate wishes. Even this, however, is a problematical statement because we are not sure that it does actually reflect their wishes. " *Background Briefing (United States Foreign Policy)*, San Clemente, California, June 26, 1970 (mimeo), p. 13; see also pp. 18-19. For an example of his views on the American character and the U.S. style of conducting foreign policy, see, in addition to "Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy," op. *cit.*, "Reflections on American **Diplomacy,** " ***Foreign*** *Affairs*, 35 (October, 1956), pp. **37-56.** Quite similar views are expressed in his interview with Pierre

Dr. Kissinger's academic commentary on the forces shaping policy largely ignored the role of Congress. Asked during the confirmation hearings on his appointment as Secretary of State whether participation by Congress and the public in the conduct of foreign policy is more a hindrance or nuisance than a strength, he replied diplomatically:

> . . while the process of achieving decisions in a democracy is much more complex and much slower than it is in other forms of government, once a policy is achieved through a national consensus it is then much more reliable and can be carried through on a much more effective basis. So I believe that over a historical period, over decades, a democracy, a democratic way of making decisions, is far to be preferred, even if one sacrifices some flexibility of action in the process.[34]

The influence of the Congress **and** the public may be helpful once the statesman has rallied their support behind his vision of the international order, for the force and inertia of widely-held beliefs will contribute to its permanence; but this is true only "over a historical period, over decades." Mr. Kissinger's relations with Congress were for a long time quite good, during the period when both he and his policies enjoyed great popularity. But when the House and Senate actively intervened in matters such as the extension of most-favored nation status to the Soviets, and aid to Vietnam and Turkey, he protested frequently and bitterly that Congress should not try to legislate day-to-day policy, declaring that America must speak with one voice and that a paralysis in U.S. leadership might result which would deprive foreign policy of "consistency, direction, strength and flexibility."[35]

He unmistakably concludes, therefore, that the bureaucracy, the Congress, and public opinion can only constitute stumbling blocks during the initial years of policy formation. They are hurdles that the statesman must overcome in following his personal vision. For there is no doubt whatsoever that Dr. Kissinger believes the statesman must accept the risks implied by the element of "conjecture" and accede to the dictates of his intuition; but to do so successfully

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Salinger, April 12, 1975, Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, p. 6 (hereafter referred to as Salinger interview).

34 *Nomination Hearings,* Part I, p. 41.

35 From a speech by Mr. Kissinger delivered before the St. Louis World Affairs Council, St. Louis, Mo., May 12, 1975, Dept. of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, p. 7.

he must form a domestic as well as an international consensus behind his policy. He must be an "educator":

> The statesman is therefore like one of the heroes in a classical drama who has had a vision of the future but who cannot transmit it directly to his fellow-men and who cannot validate its "truth." Nations learn only by experience; they "know" only when it is too late to act. But statesmen must act as *if* their intuition were experience. . . The statesman must therefore be an educator; he must bridge the gap between a people's experience and his vision, between a nation's tradition and its future. In this task the possibilities are limited. A statesman who too far outruns the experience of his people will fail in achieving a domestic consensus, however wise his policies; witness Castlereagh. A statesman who limits his policy to the experiences of his people will doom himself to sterility; witness Metternich.[39]

For "leadership is the refusal to confine action to average performance; it is the willingness to define purposes perhaps only vaguely apprehended by the multitude," and the realization that "great achievement does not result from the quest for safety."[37]

II.

Soviet-American Relations: The Foundations of Detente

"In the quest for creative leadership, the opportunities are not infinite," Dr. Kissinger has acknowledged. "But sometimes a happy combination of insight and circumstance produces an extraordinary result."[38] And on numerous occasions since 1968 he has declared that circumstances today present such an opportunity: "We are at a crucial point of transition in the international order, with major changes in the global structure promising a more peaceful world." "Our era is marked by both the anxieties of a transitional period and the opportunities of fresh creation."[38] "We cannot let irretriev-

36 W.R., p. 329. Variations on this passage have often appeared in his writings. See, e.g., "Congress of Vienna," p. 32; N.W., *p.* 431; "Reflections on American Diplomacy," *op. cit.*, p. 53.

37 *N.W.*, pp. 431, **436.**

38 "Congress of Vienna," p. 32.

39 *Nomination Hearings*, Part I, p. 7. For similar expressions of this point see: *Background Briefing, op. cit., pp.* 7-8; "Central Issues *of* American Foreign Policy," *American Foreign Policy: Three Essays, op. cit.*, p. 52; and "Constancy and Change in American Foreign Policy," a speech delivered by Mr. Kissinger in Atlanta, Georgia on June 23, 1975, p. 2.

able opportunities slip from our grasp,"[40] he is convinced, and he has made his principal goal the establishment of a "new international order." To better understand his thinking on this subject, however, it is necessary to trace his assessment over the years of the possibilities for such an order.

It will be recalled that a stable world order, according to Dr. Kissinger, requires the "consensus of the major powers" upon the nature of a just settlement and their continuing close cooperation in its maintenance. Given his repeated statements that since World War II there have existed only two major powers, the U.S. and the Soviet Union, their cooperative pursuit of stability-i.e., detente -is essential. Such cooperation has not always been forthcoming from the Soviet Union, however, and a summary of the evolution of Kissinger's views on the nature of a revolutionary power and how best to deal with it is necessary for an appreciation of the "structure of peace" he has attempted to construct while serving as the chief diplomatist of the Nixon-Ford Administration.

Dr. Kissinger has distinguished a "legitimate" order from a "revolutionary" order, the latter being identified by the presence of one or more major "revolutionary powers." The stability of a legitimate order, he declares, "reflects, not the absence of unsatisfied claims but the absence of a grievance of such magnitude that redress will be sought in overturning the settlement rather than through an adjustment within its framework."[41] Kissinger identifies two different types of revolutionary powers: the Conqueror and the Prophet, symbolized by Napoleon and Tsar Alexander, the one seeking conquest for the sake of universal dominion, the other on behalf of a moral vision.[42] He acknowledges that the revolutionary power may indeed be sincerely motivated by defensive purposes, and may actually feel that its security is threatened.

> But the distinguishing feature of a revolutionary power is not that it feels threatened-such feeling is inherent in the nature of international relations based on sovereign states-but *that nothing can*

[40] *Nomination Hearings,* Part I, p. 8.

[41] W.R., p. 145. See also p. 2: "Whenever there exists a power which considers the international order or the manner of legitimizing it oppressive, relations between it and other powers will be revolutionary. In such cases, it is not the adjustment of differences within a given system which will be at issue. but the system itself."

[42] *Ibid.,* p. *316.* For additional discussion of the "prophet" mentality, see "Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy," *op. cit.,* pp. 47 ff.

> *reassure it.* Only absolute security-the neutralization of the opponent-is considered a sufficient guarantee, and thus the desire of one power for absolute security means absolute insecurity for all the others.[43]

In further distinguishing between revolutionary and legitimate orders, he tells us that "there are two ways of constructing an international order: by will or by consensus, that is, by conquest or by legitimacy." "A `legitimate' order limits the possible by the just; a revolutionary order identifies the just with the physically possible."[44] "Napoleon and Alexander were revolutionaries because both strove to identify the organization of Europe with their will."[45]

Dr. Kissinger thus appears to declare that, *by definition,* once an order contains a power which, be it for reasons of glory or ideology, is determined upon expansion, a legitimate order based upon consensus cannot be established; and if a settlement already existed before the power became revolutionary (as in the case of Bismarck's Germany), the order will inevitably be eroded. Precisely because the revolutionary power's demands are virtually limitless, it would appear that no minimal compromise can be achieved in which the other powers enjoy reasonable security.

Since the revolutionary does not possess a commitment to the basic *status quo* or to principles designed to maintain and regulate that condition, and in fact desires to overthrow the system, it is constrained from conquest only when it does not possess superior power. One infers, therefore, that the maintenance of the system under such circumstances must depend solely upon the continuing operation of a balance of power; and a system exclusively based upon the balance of power, for a variety of reasons previously explored, is inherently unstable, even in the absence of revolutionary powers. During a revolutionary period the difficulties of maintaining a pure power balance are further exacerbated because the *status quo* powers "find it nearly impossible to take at face value the assertion of the revolutionary power that it means to smash the existing framework," and they therefore attempt to win it over by a policy of appeasement. They will fail, however, because "it is the essence of a revolutionary power that it possesses the courage of its convictions, that it is willing, indeed eager, to push its principles to

43 W.R., p. 2.
44 "Congress of Vienna," p. 27.
45 W.R., p. 316.

their ultimate conclusion."[46] Far from maintaining the rigid balance of power which would appear to be the only hope for achieving stability in the absence of "legitimacy," the *status quo* powers often tend to undermine that balance through excessive concessions.

But although a system based upon the balance of power alone is difficult to maintain, Kissinger reaffirms elsewhere that a "legitimate" order is unattainable when there exists a revolutionary power. "The quest for absolute security," he declares at one point, "leads to permanent revolution."[47] Moreover, diplomacy, the essential instrument for the establishment of a legitimate order, is totally ineffectual in a revolutionary situation:

> And because in revolutionary situations the contending systems are less concerned with the adjustment of differences than with the subversion of loyalties, diplomacy is replaced either by war or by an armaments race.[48]

Dr. Kissinger warns in the concluding paragraph of *A World Restored* that "a people may be aware of the probable consequences of a revolutionary situation. But its knowledge will be empty if it cannot *recognize* the revolutionary situation." In *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy*, written after *A World Restored* but published before the latter, Dr. Kissinger explicitly identifies the Soviet Union and China as "avowedly revolutionary powers," and his description of the Soviets fits exactly into the definition he had earlier formulated:

> To be sure, the United States should utilize all opportunities to bring about a more moderate course within the Soviet bloc. But, while we should always leave open avenues for a basic change in Soviet leadership, we should have few illusions about the degree to which these can be promoted by a conciliatory American policy. For, when we have been most conciliatory, as after the Geneva summitconference, the Soviet leaders have been most insistent about feeling threatened. And they are probably sincere in these assertions. Their revolutionary quality derives, however, not from the fact that they feel threatened-a measure of threat is inherent in the relation of sovereign states-but that nothing can reassure them.

[46] *Ibid.*, p.3.

[47] *Ibid.*, p. 181. The statement is made here in the context of a discussion of the imposition of a punitive peace. See also N.W., p. 318: "The quest for absolute security inevitably produces a revolutionary situation."

[48] W.R., p. 3. For an extensive explanation of his reasoning on this point, see p. 2.

> Because their doctrine *requires* them to fear us, they strive for absolute security: the neutralization of the United States and the elimination of all our influence from Europe and Asia. And because absolute security for the U.S.S.R. means absolute insecurity for us, the only safe United States policy is one which is built on the assumption of a continued revolutionary struggle, even though the methods may vary with the requirements of the changing situation.[49]

It is the ideology of the Soviet Union which inspires its implacable determination to pursue the class struggle until capitalism is exterminated. Through its axiom that capitalist nations are unremittingly hostile to the Communist system and will invariably seek to exploit any weakness contributing to an overthrow of Communist regimes, Soviet ideology also feeds a paranoid drive for absolute security. Likewise the Marxist-Leninist theory of "objective factors" convinces the revolutionary powers that they alone can interpret correctly the course of history, for they know the capitalists better than the capitalists know themselves. This ideological tenet is particularly devastating in its effect upon the operation of diplomacy, and when coupled with the flexibility of Leninist tactics allowing "two steps backward, one step forward" so long as the ultimate goal is that of total victory, it effectively precludes meaningful negotiation or settlements with the Soviet Union.[50] Their doctrine guarantees the Communist states ultimate victory. Therefore, integration of the Soviet state into a legitimate international system is "the contingency above all others which Bolshevik doctrine explicitly rejects."[51] "What is permanent in Soviet theory is the insistence upon the continuing struggle, not the form it takes at any given moment. Conflict between opposing social systems is inevitable. . . ."[52] Dr. Kissinger rejects outright the notion that the Soviets are interested in "a basic and lasting accommodation" or a "genuine settlement":

> This would be tantamount to asserting that the Soviet leaders have ceased being Bolsheviks. The notion of an accommodation assumes an indefinite prolongation of the *status quo.* But the notion of a static condition is explicitly rejected by Communist doctrine. More-

49 N.W., pp. *358-59.* For a recapitulation of the entire theory of "revolutionary powers," see pp. 316-21.

50 For a discussion of the impact of ideology upon the behavior of the Communist states, see *ibid., pp.* 316-61, especially pp. *324-25.*

51 *Ibid., p. 323.*

52 *Ibid., p. 350.*

> over . . . it is difficult to find a reason for their giving up a theory which thus far has served them so well. . . . Nor is there any evidence that they have any intention of modifying the basic Soviet doctrine.[53]

He observes disapprovingly that "many of our pronouncements have given rise to the notion that an over-all diplomatic settlement is at least conceivable," a contingency "explicitly rejected by Communist doctrine," and goes on to warn that we increase our vulnerability "by taking at face value every tactical move by the Soviets."[54] For "history demonstrates that revolutionary powers have never been brought to a halt until their opponents stopped pretending that the revolutionaries were really misunderstood legitimists."[55] The balance of power is the sole hope for stability: "our only possibility for affecting their actions resides in the possession of superiorforce."[68]

Thus, Dr. Kissinger flatly stipulates in 1957 that a "legitimate" order or a true detente is impossible until the Soviet Union first undergoes a fundamental behavioral and ideological transformation. It is important to stress that according to Mr. Kissinger's analysis at this time, the Soviet Union was at core a revolutionary power *because of its ideology*. Hence, while Soviet behavior might moderate due to tactical considerations, and while Dr. Kissinger does not rule out the possibility that even after an ideological transformation Russia might remain a dissatisfied power for reasons such as feelings of insecurity rooted in its history or a desire for prestige and glory, the decline of Marxism-Leninism as an important influence on Russian foreign policy is the *sine qua non* for even a possibility of true accommodation or settlement.

It was statements such as those quoted which earned Kissinger his reputation for being a conservative cold warrior. It is notable that this reputation lingered on, in part, because *Nuclear Weapons* has been by far his most widely read and influential book.

In fact, however, his views soon underwent a fundamental

[53] *Ibid.*, p. *353.*

[54] *Ibid., pp. 359-60.*

[55] *Ibid.*, p. *360.*

[56] *Ibid., p. 6.* See also p. 220, in which he refers to "the real security problem of our period: the growing Soviet power coupled with a refusal to yield to anything except superior force," and pp. 360-61, in which he argues for a patient, protracted policy of firmness, because the Soviets have shown a willingness to retreat and accommodate "when confronted with an unfavorable relation of forces."

change. In his succeeding book, *The Necessity for Choice,* which was written in 1960 and published in early 1961, Dr. Kissinger disavows the apparent lessons on how to deal with "revolutionary powers" which he so painstakingly laid down in *A World Restored* and applied to the Soviet Union in *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy*. He mentions that there has been some minor moderation in Soviet ideology, but devotes several sections of the book to a rebuttal of the notion that Western policy can, by promoting relaxation of tensions and through other means, hope to effect a significant evolution in the nature and policies of the Soviet state: "There may be a degree of liberalization-indeed there has been-but it will be a liberalization of a Communist regime, not an evolution toward a democratic one."[67] Nevertheless, he rejects at length the apparent theme of *Nuclear Weapons* that "a settlement presupposes either a change of heart by Soviet leaders or a basic transformation of Soviet society, or both."[58] While not discarding the containment theory *in toto*,. he argues that it had been "too one-sided" and repudiates its assumption that "a substantial effort to rebuild Western strength had to *precede* any serious negotiation with the Soviet Union."[69] He worries that Communist propaganda portraying the West as refusing to negotiate has demoralized the allies and alienated world opinion. Moreover, "we overlooked the fact that our relative position would never be better than it was at the very beginning of the containment policy ... we underestimated the bargaining power inherent in our industrial potential and our nuclear superiority."[60] He quotes approvingly a speech by Churchill calling for a diplomatic confrontation in the 1948-49 period, in which the latter urged that we attempt to negotiate a "final" and "lasting" settlement, and charged that after the death of Stalin, "when the possibility was greatest that the new Soviet leadership might break with its past," we once again missed our opportunity.[61] His position on negotiation is summed up as follows:

> It is not necessary to settle the question of the *real* intentions of the Communist leaders in the abstract. For we should be prepared

57 *The Necessity for Choice: Prospects of American Foreign Policy* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., Inc.,, Anchor Books Edition, 1966), p. 317 (hereafter referred to as N.C.).

56 *Ibid.,* p. 198.

59 *Ibid.,* pp. 186, 183.

69 *Ibid.,* p. 184.

61 *Ibid.,* p. 185.

> to negotiate no matter what Communist motivations may be. Our responsibility is essentially the same whatever assessment we make of Communist purposes or trends... .
>
> A responsible approach to negotiations must be quite different. We should make no unjustified concessions to a Soviet leader simply because we consider him to be liberal. We should not refuse to make concessions, which are otherwise desirable, simply because we consider a Soviet leader Stalinist. The ultimate test in either case is whether a given measure enhances stability or detracts from it. Above all, our measures should not be so dependent on either the Kremlin's smiles or its frowns. Negotiations with the Soviet Union must be justified by our purposes, not theirs. If the Soviet Union really wants a settlement, negotiations will reveal this. If Soviet overtures to end the Cold War are a tactical maneuver, a purposeful diplomacy should be able to make Soviet bad faith evident.[82]

By now Dr. Kissinger is hoping that "as the free world gains in purpose, cohesion and safety, the Communist approach to negotiations may alter," and that they may seriously cooperate to check the arms race. "Then coexistence may become something other than a slogan."[63]

Thus he has, without explicitly acknowledging it, reversed his earlier conviction that it is impossible to reach a final settlement with a revolutionary power such as the Soviet Union and that our policy must totally rely upon the balance of power, preferably on the possession of "superior force." Containment was still necessary to demonstrate U.S. firmness, but it should not be looked upon as an indefinite solution to our problems with the Communist powers, and it could not be expected over time to result in meaningful moderation of Soviet policy.[64] Nor does Kissinger mention any develop-

[62] *Ibid.*, p. 210.

[63] *Ibid.*, p. 7.

[64] Dr. Kissinger's early assessment of the uncompromising aggressiveness instilled by Soviet ideology was accompanied by recommendations for an extensive worldwide containment policy, He had felt, for instance, that the Korean War might have been won by a change in strategy and the addition of as few as four more divisions, and that the U.S. should have intervened in Vietnam in *1954* and in Laos and Cambodia in *1955*. His "little war thesis" was premised on the conviction that the U.S. should not fear wars of attrition, for it could win them. He seemed to feel that virtually every country on the Eurasian periphery was important to the maintenance of a balance of power between the U.S. as a sea power and the Soviet land power. At one point he even urged that the U.S. try "reducing the Soviet sphere" (N.W., p. 147). For his early views see N.W.; "American Policy and Preventive War," *Yale Review*, XLIV (March, 1955) pp. 321-39; and especially "Military Policy and Defense of the 'Grey Areas,'" *Foreign Affairs, 33* (April, 1955), pp. 416-28.

ments in the international environment or within the Soviet state between 1957 and 1961 which might have led him to such different conclusions on the best tactics for dealing with the Soviet Union. *The Necessity for Choice* was published not at a time of detente but rather during the tension-filled years prior to the post-Cuban crisis thaw in superpower relations; in fact, he makes no pretense that the Soviet Union's policy has significantly altered in the preceding four years.

By 1965, however, in *The Troubled Partnership,* his views on this matter have changed as well, not only signalling a complete repudiation of his *Nuclear Weapons* statements but even reversing his judgment on the possibility of an evolution in the Soviet system which he presented only three years earlier in *The Necessity for Choice.* In the meantime, relations between the superpowers had relaxed subsequent to the Cuban missile crisis. While continuing to declare that a Soviet "change of heart" is not essential to a meaningful settlement, Mr. Kissinger nevertheless has come to emphasize that the Soviets have indeed moderated substantially since 1961 and, contrary to his statements in *The Necessity for Choice,* he now argues that the West should consciously attempt to encourage such an evolution. Those factors in the Soviet system that produce belligerence and those that encourage accommodation "are delicately balanced," he declares. "It should be the goal of Western policy to give a maximum spur to peaceful trends."[65] He acknowledges that both the domestic experience of Soviet leaders during their rise to power and ideology are factors "encouraging intransigence." The basic ideological categories still "shape the Communist sense of reality," guarantee ultimate victory, and establish discipline within international Communism; "in the *immediate* future ideology continues to be one of the prime obstacles to a basic accommodation."[66]

In marked contrast with these early writings, Kissinger does not thereafter dwell upon any specific need to apply the containment doctrine vigorously, excepting, of course, the implicit message in his writings on the defense of Europe. Statements on containment more or less disappear until 1968, when, again without acknowledging that he is reversing himself, he ridicules the strategy of attrition, advocates a phased withdrawal from Vietnam, and proposes a new policy strikingly similar to what soon became known as the Nixon Doctrine. His later views may be found in a statement Mr. Kissinger wrote for Nelson Rockefeller, released on June 12, 1968 (mimeo) (herafter referred to as Rockefeller statement of June 12, 1968), and in his article "The Vietnam Negotiations," *American Foreign Policy: Three Essays, op. cit.,* pp. 101-36.

65 *T. P.,* p. 191.

66 *Ibid.,* p. 194 (our emphasis).

But these factors must be balanced against numerous "restraints that, over a period of time, may become dominant."[67] The fearful power of modern weapons may dampen Communist militance and lead the Soviets to cooperate in some form of arms negotiations; the instability of the domestic leadership group, as revealed once more by the demise of Khrushchev, and the abuses of power revealed in the de-Stalinization campaign, expose the government's weakness, likely creating "cynicism and demoralization" in the "younger generation," and raising serious questions about the Communist system among "the Russian people," or at least the "Communist cadres"; finally, internal Soviet difficulties have been matched by the quarrels and disarray in the international Communist movement, particularly by the "insoluble" and "irremediable" Sino-Soviet schism. These schisms "must, in time, erode confidence in the universality of Communist ideology as well as the discipline of the world Communist movement," decreasing "tactical flexibility." National leaders will be careful to avoid tying themselves too closely to current Moscow strongmen because of the Soviet Union's domestic instability. "Personal ambition thus reinforces the dominant trends in East European countries," which have increasingly achieved "popular acceptance only where . . . leaders emphasize national and not Communist concerns"; "technicians see in the Sino-Soviet split an opportunity for striking the maximum bargain for their country," and "a particularly virulent form of nationalism results."

Dr. Kissinger warns that there are dangers as well as opportunities in many of these developments and cautions once more against the temptation "to treat a more conciliatory Communist tone as a permanent conversion to a peaceful course and to gear everything to personal diplomacy." Nevertheless, he feels that we should "use the opportunity to press for the settlement of issues" which have produced international tension, repeating the theme of *Necessity for Choice* that to achieve a lasting detente "it is essential that negotiations be concrete and specific. Above all, the West must conduct its policy without illusions." He adds that bilateral negotiations with the Communists would be "suicidal" and should be avoided in favor of a unified allied stance.[68]

In a 1966 article Kissinger indicates that Soviet ideology "is more

[67] For the following quotations regarding these "restraints," see *ibid.*, pp. 197-202.

[68] *Ibid.*, pp. 201-202.

than ritual" and that "however attenuated, Communist ideology is, in part, responsible for international tensions." [89] But he distinguishes its "institutionalized" ideology from the "early revolutionary fervor" of Communist China. There are, he says, signs that the "personal convictions" of "the second or third generation of leaders" in the Soviet Union are beginning to outgrow the dogmatism of an earlier age, giving rise to a "special form of pragmatism"; but these leaders' flexibility in conducting foreign policy is hampered, because they have become the prisoners of a Soviet bureaucracy which has by now generated its own momentum and "institutionalized" the earlier ideology. [70] Dr. Kissinger clearly now believes that even if it is the case that the Soviet Union continues to be a "revolutionary" power, it is not so dangerous an adversary as it used to be. He contrasts their mode of operation with the "revolutionary" aims of the Chinese: "the ideological societies are split between an essentially bureaucratic approach . . . and a group using ideology mainly for revolutionary ends." [71] In comparing the "political" and the "revolutionary" approaches, or the cleavage between the statesman and the prophet, he states that Russia occupies an "intermediary position." [72]

These new themes, first developed in the 1961-66 period, recur throughout Dr. Kissinger's later publications and in statements made after he became the foreign policy spokesman of the Nixon and Ford Administrations. He continued to postulate the existence of what he came to call "contradictory tendencies" within the Communist nations and the desirability of influencing their evolution in the direction of greater pragmatism. Although his writings and statements were still occasionally spiced with his old-time admonitions concerning past Soviet unreliability, [73] these became ever few-

69 "Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy," *op. cit.,* pp. 38, 35.

70 See *ibid.,* pp. 24-25, 35, 38, 43, 50.

71 *Ibid.,* p. 42.

72 *Ibid.,* pp. 48, 49.

73 Many of the most ringing passages of 1957 were lifted virtually intact and ensconced prominently in later works. In 1965, for instance, he chronicled the repeated collapse of detente in the past, drawing from such failures the lesson that, because of their ideology, whenever Soviet leaders "have had to make a choice between Western goodwill and a territorial or political gain, they have unhesitatingly chosen the latter" (T.P., *p.* 195). Even in 1968, the year before he joined the Nixon Administration and simultaneous with his advocacy during the Rockefeller campaign of renewed U.S. efforts to achieve a "new international order" in partnership with the Soviet Union, Kissinger warned of Soviet perfidy and cautioned

er. By 1968 he was chafing for the opportunity to establish a "new international order."

There can be no doubt that Secretary of State Kissinger's "structure of peace" is designed to achieve "stability" by erecting a "legitimate" order upon the foundations of a "general" and a "particular" equilibrium. Although it cannot be demonstrated here in detail, [74] the evidence is overwhelming that in his official capacity Kissinger has consciously attempted to restructure international relations according to the all-encompassing framework he first conceptualized more than twenty years ago. A brief commentary on the soundness of his theory may be in order, however.

Kissinger is doubtless one of the few secretaries of state who have assumed the office possessing a definite theory of international politics, including a vision of a desirable world future and the role to be played by the U.S. within that future. The comprehensiveness and even grandeur of this sweeping design can hardly be denied, whatever one's evaluation of its specifics or the manner in which it is operationalized. Many of his ideas, such as those concerning the wisdom of striving for "stability" rather than "peace" and the insistence that stability requires not just a balance of power but also a felt obligation to a "legitimate" system, are obviously insightful.

Detente between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. is to be the linchpin of the structure of peace Kissinger envisions; the success of his policies, therefore, may well hinge upon the cogency with which he has analyzed the nature of Soviet foreign policy, and the incisiveness of his .strategy for altering Soviet behavior. Unfortunately, his theory of international relations is inadequate in this most fundamental area, due to ambiguities in his analysis of revolutionary powers.

Kissinger appears finally to have decided that the influence of ideology upon Soviet behavior has significantly declined and that there is every prospect this decline will continue in the future. But, in contrast to his earlier careful analysis of the historical conduct of the U.S.S.R. and the extent to which ideological statements have constituted signposts pointing to actual behavior, thus assisting Western analysts in anticipating Soviet actions, he documents no

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that expectations of "final change in Soviet purposes" had always proven false in the past ("Central Issues of American Foreign Policy," op. *cit.*, p. 88).

[74] The authors are presently preparing for publication another article which will fully develop the relationship between Kissinger's philosophy of foreign affairs and the policies he has initiated since 1969.

actual changes in their behavior or theory which would lead him to revise his original conclusions; rather one merely finds assertions that Soviet ideological drives "must" decline in fervor because "demoralization" is inevitable, that because of the likely need for consumer goods or the poor performance of its economy the Communist system "must inevitably change," that the obvious dangers of nuclear holocaust will surely lead the Soviets to realize the necessity of arms control and detente, etc. These assertions also contrast startlingly with extensive passages in his earlier works in which he clearly sets forth his assumptions concerning the roots of Soviet policy, and develops fully the basis for his conclusion that there is little hope for significant moderation in Soviet behavior. In his more recent writings he never refers to these arguments, even for purposes of refutation.

In fact, it is obvious that Kissinger has never clearly thought through his new position. His statements concerning precisely which internal factions and external opportunities or pressures may serve as the motor forces of change in Soviet behavior are vague and unsatisfactory. He shifts, with no reason given, from the assertion that firm resistance to Soviet designs abroad offers the best hope for discouraging adventurous elements to statements that speculation regarding methods for influencing the outcome of factional strife in the U.S.S.R. are a waste of time because "our ability to play politics in the Kremlin is extremely limited," and then to assurances that a determined pursuit of detente and establishment of a "web of interests" will discredit the warmongering Soviet military. These inconsistencies can sometimes be found within a single written work and were in fact present in his theory from the very outset; even in *A World Restored,* where the explicit message is that the presence of a revolutionary power by definition eliminates the possibility of establishing a legitimate order, the implicit message is that through cunning diplomacy Metternich in fact managed to establish such an order, in the process converting Russia and Prussia from revolutionary to essentially *status quo* powers.

One concludes, therefore, that Dr. Kissinger is in fact far less concerned about the consequences of the presence of an ideological power in the international system than many of his statements would appear to indicate. Since he acknowledges that ideology remains a significant force in shaping Soviet behavior yet continues to assert that the establishment of a legitimate order is possible, Dr. Kissin-

ger's basic position is ultimately that which first surfaced in *The Necessity for Choice-that* ideology is far less important in the motivation and manipulation of states than more traditional and tangible factors such as the desires for security, glory, or the possession of certain territories. In the final analysis, he is to be placed among the "national interest" school of analysts, with the provisos that national interests in his view must be defined liberally to include the historical ambitions of states as well as their "security" needs, and that policies based on national interest may not triumph over those motivated by ideology unless there is astute diplomacy on our part. Thus, he maintains, if negotiations are based upon concrete issues rather than atmospherics, if the U.S. conducts itself "without illusions," and if it is careful to formulate and adhere to the minimum requirements compatible with its security, progress in the development of a constructive relationship may well be possible.

There is, in fact, much merit in this position. The U. S. should be ready to negotiate with its adversaries on issues of controversy between them. A purposeful stand would at the least make Soviet bad faith evident, as he pointed out in 1961, and while we would have little to lose we might possibly contribute to the easing of tensions and benefit from any moderation within the Soviet Union.

As Mr. Kissinger has himself observed in the past, however, there are inherent difficulties with a theory which assumes that in the last analysis all states may be made to behave alike. Leaving aside that basic objection, moreover, several questions must be asked about the application of the national interest theory of behavior to contemporary Soviet policy. What advantages, in his view, will lead the Soviets to negotiate and honor a basic settlement with the West? How will a lasting agreement benefit their national interest?

Dr. Kissinger's answers, from 1961 to the present, have almost exclusively centered upon the assertion that it is the horrors of nuclear war which will convert the Soviets from ideology to pragmatism. He indicated in 1961 that "the practical requirements of coexistence in the nuclear age" seem to be "sufficient justification" for a Soviet move to negotiate even if they do not undergo a "change of heart." Given a united and purposeful Western negotiating stance, "the Communist leaders may address themselves seriously to the problem of how to reduce the tensions inherent in an unchecked arms race. Then coexistence may become something other than a

slogan."[75] In 1965 he declared that "the power of modern weapons" might serve as a major restraint upon the Soviet Union:

> Ideological hostility comes up against the stark risks of nuclear warfare. Soviet leaders must be acutely aware that, if they press intransigence beyond a certain point, they run the risk of hazarding what they have built up at so much sacrifice over four decades. Whatever the strategic theory of the West-even if it is not an ideal one-Soviet planners will not be easily convinced that the danger of escalation in any direct confrontation is not enormous . . . if the West conducts itself with reasonable prudence, the traditional methods of military pressure can be made increasingly unattractive. Then agreements may be possible to implement one interest which the two great nuclear powers must have in common: to prevent a nuclear holocaust. It is significant that one of the principal arguments advanced by Soviet leaders on behalf of peaceful co-existence is that nuclear war is too dangerous. It is in the West's interest to see to it that it remain so.[76]

Mr. Kissinger became ever more insistent on this point, and today his statements on the "holocaust theory of detente" have become common fare.

Never, however, has he been very coherent about the reasons why the Soviets might, 25 or 30 years after the onset of the nuclear age, suddenly become convinced that the nuclear facts of life both enable and necessitate a true detente. In 1961 when he first raised this argument he repudiated it on a different page of the same book, where he observed that "rather than facilitating settlement, the increasing horror of war has made the process of negotiation more difficult," since

> ... most major historical changes have been brought about to a greater or lesser degree by the threat or use of force. Our age faces the paradoxical problem that because the violence of war has grown out of all proportion to the objectives to be achieved, no issue has been resolved.[77]

Moreover, although he now asserts that the onset of nuclear parity offers "a unique opportunity" to agree upon an arms freeze with the Soviet Union since an agreement was "unrealistic" when the

75 *N.C.*, pp. 201, 7.
76 T.P., pp. 197-98.
77 N.C., p. 176.

U.S.S.R. was strategically inferior,[78] it will be recalled that in 1961 he was espousing a completely opposite view, arguing that the best chance to reach a settlement would be to negotiate while our preponderance of strength still remained.

Indeed, it can be demonstrated that Mr. Kissinger's own strategic theory, as articulated since 1954, is inconsistent with his expressed belief that the increasingly destructive power of nuclear weapons will compel the superpowers to cooperate in order to avoid holocaust. An examination of that theory also yields important insights regarding his analysis of the role of power in international relations.

III. *Kissinger the Strategist*

Whatever the merits of Kissinger's writings on nineteenth century European diplomatic history or on Soviet-American relations, both his public and his scholarly reputations rest primarily upon his contribution to the field of contemporary military strategy, and especially on his analysis of the impact of nuclear weapons upon the international politics of our time. *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy* may well have been the most widely read book in its field, and to this day it remains his most well-known work. His writings on strategic issues continue to draw praise: in a recent evaluation which aptly sums up the common view, the normally perceptive British commentator Alastair Buchan observed that Kissinger's "essential contribution was to bridge the gap between strategy and diplomacy, to try to tease out the political implications of strategic choice rather than laying down a series of political-military diktats in NATO as McNamara and his academic supporters were only too prone to do."[78a]

When judged in terms of its central theme and especially when measured against similar writings of its time, *Nuclear Weapons is* in some ways a useful if by no means a brilliant or original work. It presented at length the case on behalf of a balanced deterrence policy for the United States during a period when that case needed an articulate defender, in the process laying bare the inadequacies

78a *U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970's: Building for Peace, A* Report to the Congress by Richard Nixon, President of the United States, February 25, 1971 (hereafter referred to as *1971 Annual Report),* p. *36.*

78 Buchan, "The Irony of Kissinger," *International Affairs, L (July,* 1974), p. 371. In fairness to Buchan, it must be pointed out that this article is in general quite critical of Kissinger.

of the more extreme formulations of the strategy of massive retaliation and offering in its place-in certain particulars less adequately and more controversially-a strategy of limited war. To be sure, others were at work at the same task, but the vigor of Kissinger's manner of presentation, particularly when coupled with the publicity campaign mounted on behalf of the book by the prestigious Council on Foreign Relations, guaranteed that his point of view would receive no less than a fair hearing.

With the controversy over massive retaliation long since settled, it is more possible than it once was to take a balanced look at Kissinger's contribution to contemporary military thinking, and it now seems clear that his reputation as a strategist is in considerable measure undeserved. It is not merely, as Buchan has observed, that for all the praise heaped upon *Nuclear Weapons* and later upon *The Necessity for Choice,* Kissinger "played little part in the intellectual evolution of American policy." True enough, men like Brodie, Schelling, Kahn, and Wohlstetter contributed far more to our understanding of the intricacies of deterrence theory and to our grasp of the implications of technology for military policy than did Kissinger, and this is surely in part, as Buchan notes, "because he had no flair for the implications of technological change."[79] But Buchan is in fact too kind. Careful reading reveals that *Nuclear Weapons* and *Necessity for Choice* are at core muddled and confused books, inadequate and often misleading in their analyses both of deterrence and of limited war, and marred as well by a serious failure to inquire adequately into the relationship between military power and foreign policy-supposedly their principal claim to our attention.[80] But the strategic analysis contained in his writings deserves our

[79] *Ibid.*

[80] Interestingly, Buchan calls attention to the fact that *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy* led both the NATO nations and the U.S.S.R. to false conclusions concerning the willingness of the U.S. to utilize tactical nuclear weapons at an early stage in a European war. Buchan asserts, however, that Kissinger had been "induced" to argue for such a strategy by the "senior officials and soldiers" on the Council on Foreign Relations whose "rapporteur" he allegedly was in writing *Nuclear Weapons.* Buchan seems unaware that, after somewhat modifying his position in *Necessity for Choice,* Kissinger. took an identical position on this question nearly a decade later in *The Troubled Partnership,* and has not publicly repudiated it since. Kissinger's advocacy of a strategy of limited nuclear war, of course, was controversial from the beginning; see, for example, William Kaufmann's trenchant but sometimes unfair review of *Nuclear Weapons,* "The Crisis in Military Affairs," *World Politics, X* (July, 1958), pp. *579-603,* and Bernard Brodie, "More About Limited War," *ibid.* (October, *1957), pp.* 112-22.

careful attention nonetheless, not only for its valid insights but because it goes far toward explaining American policy in the ongoing nuclear arms limitation talks with the U.S.S.R., directed and often personally conducted by Mr. Kissinger for the past five years.

It is somewhat startling to reread his publications of the mid-fifties and, measuring his later writings and his present policy against them, to realize how little Kissinger's views on strategy have changed in nearly twenty years. Since 1955 various tentative approaches have deepened into convictions, and for this and other reasons he has modified certain of his positions, but the theoretical continuity is nonetheless striking.

Consider, for example, his concept of strategic deterrence, first presented in *Nuclear Weapons* and further adumbrated in many of his writings thereafter. "Deterrence," he tells us, "is the attempt to keep an opponent from adopting a certain course of action by posing risks which will seem to him out of proportion to any gains to be achieved. The higher the stakes, the more absolute must be the threat of destruction which faces him."[81] What will deter a potential aggressor, Kissinger believes, is the threat of "absolute destruction," the "horror of our destructive capabilities," the "maximum destructiveness of all-out war."[82] On first reading the presentation appears analytical and detached, but Kissinger's language is that of the apocalypse: the goal of strategic policy is to instill such a pervasive fear of destruction in the mind of one's opponent that war becomes unthinkable. The nature and scope of the destruction which would result from nuclear war he describes at length in a vividly-written chapter of. *Nuclear Weapons* entitled "The Fires of Prometheus."

Kissinger's analysis of the horrors which would attend the use of strategic nuclear weapons, in turn, leads him to reflect on the relationship between military strategy and the traditional objectives of foreign policy in the nuclear age. Faced with the knowledge of the consequences of a thermonuclear war, he concludes, "policy-makers will be reluctant to engage in a strategy, the penalty for which will be social disintegration."[83] Indeed, in Kissinger's view it is unlikely in the extreme that a nation will utilize strategic nuclear weapons against an aggressor when its adversary is capable of mounting a

81 N.W., p. *96.*
82 *Ibid., pp.* 132, 129.
83 *Ibid.,* pp. *12-13.*

nuclear attack in retaliation, "except to the extent that it believes its survival to be directly threatened."[84] This inhibition will obtain, he argues, even if the aggrieved nation is militarily superior to the aggressor: except when the homeland is at risk, the destruction certain to attend all-out war will appear to outweigh any advantage to be achieved by offering resistance to aggression.

Thus it is that Kissinger argues that "the power of modern weapons deters not only aggression, but also resistance to it":

> An all-out strategy may, therefore, be highly effective in deterring all-out war. If it is the sole counter to enemy aggression, it may at the same time invite limited aggressions which by themselves do not seem "worth" a final showdown.[85]

This is the basis of his critique of the policy of "massive retaliation," which according to Kissinger was the essence of American national strategy during the Eisenhower years. It constitutes as well the foundation for his own advocacy of a balanced deterrence strategy for the United States based on a strong limited war capability. Our objective, he states, must be the creation of a wide range of military options for our policy-makers. In this way our response to aggression can be tailored to the provocation and harmony created between our military capability and the will to use it. Only in this way can the connection between military power and foreign policy be restored.[86]

To a considerable extent this analysis is valid enough; indeed, it has become part of the conventional wisdom on such matters, in no small measure because of the impact of *Nuclear Weapons* itself. It was clear by the mid-fifties, when Kissinger first addressed himself to the topic, that America's declaratory policy of massive retaliation had to a certain extent become a substitute for a sound national security policy. The United States did not possess a spread of military capabilities sufficient to deal with the variety of contingencies it might confront, and there did exist an urgent need to redefine the nation's strategic doctrine so as to relate military power to possible policy objectives and in the process restore the credibility of "the American threat."[87] As Kissinger repeatedly emphasized in *Nu-*

[84] *Ibid.*, p. *201.* See also pp. *129-30.*

[85] *Ibid.*, p. *96.*

[86] See, e.g., *ibid.*, pp. 200-201.

[87] See James L. Payne, *The American Threat: The Fear of War as an Instrument of Foreign Policy* (Chicago: Markham, 1970), on the political use of force.

clear Weapons, deterrence is least effective when a nation's willingness to run risks is low, no matter how powerful its military capability.

But Kissinger's inquiry into the phenomenon of deterrence does not stop there. His analysis of the nature of the threat which hopefully would avert all-out war leads him to consider the psychological dimension of deterrence. In the final analysis, he instructs us, deterrence is essentially a state of mind. Kissinger's interest in the psychological aspects of deterrence in fact grew over time until it virtually transcended all other features of the problem. In *Nuclear Weapons* he writes that "deterrence is brought about not only by a physical but also by a psychological relationship"; *in Necessity for Choice* he tells us that whether or not a threat of aggression can be successfully countered "ultimately depends on an intangible quality: the state of mind of the potential aggressor," and thus "in any given situation a country may be inferior militarily but superior psychologically": in his 1968 essay "Central Issues of American Foreign Policy" he states flatly that "deterrence depends above all on psychological criteria."[88]

From some perspectives such statements are obviously unexceptionable. Deterrence-now as when Thucydides wrote of it more than two millenia ago-obviously depends upon a potential aggressor's calculations concerning the benefits and costs of war, the military capability and will of his opponent, and the like; since these can never be known with certainty, perceptions can be as important, or more so, than realities. Moreover, it is clear that in the nuclear age the costs of misapprehending such factors may be infinitely greater than in the past, and it behooves statesmen to err on the side of prudence. That conceded, however, it is by no means self-evident that deterrence is a "state of mind" to a greater extent today than it was when the Greeks decided to stand and fight at Marathon, and Kissinger offers no convincing reason why it should be.[89]

There **is, moreover,** a significant twist to Kissinger's analysis of the psychological dimension of deterrence. He appears, particularly in *Nuclear Weapons,* to be as concerned with the likelihood that the *possessor* of a powerful nuclear force will be *self-deterred* from utilizing it as he is with its impact on a potential aggressor, particularly

88 N.W., p. 132; N.C., p. *12;* "Central Issues of American Foreign Policy," *op. cit., p.* 61.

89 See, for example, the discussion of deterrence in N.C., pp. *22-27.*

if the power attempting to forestall aggression is the United States. The American national tradition, the moral inhibitions which are part of our character as a people, and our fear of world public opinion all combine to reduce the likelihood that the United States will utilize strategic weapons short of the ultimate extremity, a final showdown with the U.S.S.R. in which the American homeland is threatened.[99] Thus in Kissinger's view there are particular constraints which prevent the United States from relying on its strategic forces to protect its vital foreign policy interests, constraints which may not equally inhibit other powers. "Extended deterrence" is therefore no longer possible: it is unlikely that we would utilize nuclear weapons even were Europe attacked-and, whatever our intentions, the threat to do so is no longer credible.[91]

Here Kissinger has moved onto dangerous ground, although it must be conceded that it is ground which during the past twenty years has been occupied by many others. To be sure, his judgment that the United States would find few provocations serious enough to warrant the threat or use of nuclear weapons against the U.S.S.R. was certainly correct, even during a period of demonstrable U.S. strategic superiority. But Kissinger nowhere makes any effort to explain precisely why he believes that (assuming a reasonable military equilibrium between the superpowers) a massive Soviet assault on an area so vital to American interests as West Europe would not provoke the most extreme United States reaction. Neither does he adequately explain why an American threat to respond to a Soviet attack on Europe with a retaliatory strike on the U.S.S.R. itself will be greeted with disbelief in Moscow. It is far from uncommon for nations to regard areas distant from their shores as extensions of the homeland itself; twice the United States has accepted considerable risks to prevent the destruction of Europe's traditional political order; every American President from Truman to Ford has affirmed the importance of Europe to United States security, and none more vigorously than the incumbent of 1957.

It is rather startling to observe that Kissinger offers no evidence -but only simple reiteration-to support his judgment that the American strategic threat will no longer serve to protect Europe from a Soviet attack. European analysts-and many Americans[92] —

90 N.W., pp. *7, 95-96, 373-74, 376-77.*

91 See, e.g., *ibid., pp.* 200-201, and N.C., pp. 104-107.

92 See, e.g., R. N, Rosecrance, *Defense of the Realm: British Strategy in the Nuclear Epoch* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), *pp. 126 if.*

have of course consistently rejected the Kissinger position. In the European view, fear of holocaust cuts both ways; even if there is only a small chance that a Soviet attack upon the Elbe would incur an American nuclear response, that will be a sufficient deterrent. This assessment constitutes the basis for the European position on NATO strategy and, in the case of the French and British, for their convictions concerning the utility of their own strategic nuclear forces.

The European analysis of deterrence, needless to say, is open to telling criticism, particularly at present, when-in sharp contrast to the late fifties-Soviet strategic striking power is in some ways superior to that of the United States. But the European argument at the very least deserves to be analyzed carefully.[93] Twenty-five years after the dawn of the nuclear age, the nature of deterrence remains elusive. It is by no means self-evident even today that an all-out Soviet attack on Europe would not quickly lead to a strategic nuclear exchange, and there is reason to believe that the Soviets know it (although it does not follow that the West should view the present state of the military balance in Europe with equanimity, or that any and every Soviet military initiative in Europe would trigger immeGliately an American nuclear response). In concluding that there was no longer any assurance that American strategic might could deter an attack on Europe, Kissinger almost exclusively relied on purely logical deductions about the effects that knowledge of the destructive power of nuclear weapons would have on European and American leaders. He made little or no attempt, however, to determine how these issues were *actually* viewed in Europe and the United States. Neither did he attempt to relate to his discussion of extended deterrence known Soviet perceptions of the existing balance of power and the consequent likelihood of an all-out assault on Europe. It was doubtless inevitable that the credibility of the American strategic threat would eventually be eroded by events beyond our control. But extended deterrence was undermined before its time by American defense intellectuals, whose writings raised serious doubts-in Europe and elsewhere-about the usefulness and reliability of the American nuclear guarantee, and in the process contributed significantly to the malaise in the NATO Alliance already evident by the late 1950's.

[93] It must be noted that Kissinger gave the European viewpoint on deterrence and defense a fair hearing in *Troubled Partnership;* see, e.g., pp. 106-107, and the discussion below, Part IV.

An additional illustration of the difficulties which Kissinger has had in coming to grips with the admittedly-elusive problem of deterrence is his treatment of what he calls the nuclear stalemate, a concept directly related to his belief in the possibility of a meaningful detente. As early as 1955 Kissinger was predicting a stalemate at the nuclear level between the two superpowers: "with both sides possessing ultimate weapons, the risk of their use becomes so indeterminate as to be almost prohibitive."[94] The topic is given a particularly lengthy, if contradictory, treatment in *Nuclear Weapons* two years later. He opens his analysis early in that volume by urging his readers to treat with caution claims that war is no longer a viable instrument of policy; this view, he says, is too easily accepted by Americans, who traditionally conceive of war and peace as two entirely dichotomous states, and believe that war is the "abnormal" and peace the "normal" condition of interstate relations. Here Kissinger even questions whether it would be altogether a good thing if "force is banished from history": if the option to resort to force were not available, there might exist no means of settling intractable international disputes, and even the most trivial disagreements might become perpetual sources of tension.[95] Shortly thereafter, however, he asserts that a nuclear stalemate between the superpowers has existed since 1945. The stalemate had initially been a psychological one, for although the U.S. could have destroyed the U.S.S.R. in a first strike, it was for a variety of reasons inhibited from doing so. "The growth of the Soviet atomic stockpile," Kissinger writes, "has merely brought the physical equation into line with the psychological one; it has increased our reluctance to engage in war even more."[96]

In his conclusion to Chapter 3, after insisting that the "psychological disarmament" of American policy-makers is most likely

94 "American Policy and Preventive War," op. *cit.*, p. 331.

95 N.W., pp. 3-4.

96 *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12. As will be evident from the quotations cited in this paper, *Nuclear Weapons* in particular contains numerous ambiguities and contradictions concerning exactly when a "physical" stalemate replaced the "psychological" one. Kissinger himself opposed the use of nuclear weapons in the form of preventive war at a time when the U.S. most likely would,have defeated the U.S.S.R. in such a venture. Perhaps not surprisingly in view of the unmistakable margin of strategic superiority which the U.S. enjoyed over the Soviets at the time, he offered no clear military reason for his position, and it apparently did not occur to him to raise moral objections; he simply rejected preventive war as "cataclysmic" and "self-defeating," and asserted that "it will not be an act of policy but of desperation." See "American Policy and Preventive War," op. *cit.*, p. 329.

permanent, he suggests that despite the growth of Soviet power we may find a way out of our dilemmas, since the horrors of nuclear war may "appear as stark to the other side as to us," and despite clashing interests "mutual terror" may provide the basis for a durable peace. He opens Chapter 4, however, by warning us that "*even if [our* emphasis] a nuclear stalemate does exist, it would not make for stability in the present volatile state of technology, much less for a sense of harmony. The specter of a technological breakthrough by the other side would always loom large."[97]

Within a few pages, after examining the effects of technological factors on the military balance at some length, he once more puts our fears to rest. Warfare in modern times has almost invariably been aimed at the overthrow of the opposing governments, and thus requires that the victor "assume responsibility for the civil administration of the defeated." But in the nuclear age even the side which inflicts the greater devastation on its opponent will most likely not retain sufficient physical and psychological resources to impose its will in this manner. In addition, before launching a nuclear attack on the U.S., the U.S.S.R. must calculate that it possesses "a sufficient margin of certainty to make a surprise attack on the United States seem a worthwhile risk." "The degree of certainty," he tells us, "moreover must be almost foolproof": even a substantial probability of victory-and the reader must keep in mind the exacting definition of victory which he has just laid down-will not be sufficient, for the attacker's national survival is at stake.[98] He then reminds us that there are a variety of ways in which the United States might enhance the survivability of its retaliatory forces: indeed, he is extraordinarily sanguine about the capabilities of American air defenses, the likely efficacy of his suggested Strategic Air Command base-dispersal program, and other proposed measures. Although U.S. policy-makers are cautioned that "there is no room for complacency," since "even today there exist vulnerabilities which in time could cause serious changes in the strategic equation," he appears here quite convinced that there is little risk that the nuclear stalemate can be overturned.[99] Even a technological breakthrough

[97] *N.W.*, pp. 84-86. For an earlier warning concerning the possibly unsettling effects of technological change on international equilibrium, see p. 16.

[98] *Ibid.*, pp. 90ff, pp. 96-97.

[99] *Ibid.*, p. 111. For his discussion of measures which the U.S. can take as insurance against the threats presented by the expected growth of Soviet strategic power, see pp. 112-18.

is unlikely to affect the stalemate, Kissinger assures us. The introduction of long-range strategic missiles into the arsenals of the superpowers will not alter matters; in startling contrast to his pronunciations four years later, Kissinger in 1957 even denies the possibility of a "missile gap" of strategically significant proportions, and argues in addition that when both sides possess large numbers of missiles it will be almost impossible "for either side to achieve total victory through all-out war."[100]

Within a few pages, however, he once again reverses gears. In his summary remarks at the conclusion of Chapter 4 he warns at length against the dangers of a technological breakthrough: "At the current rate of technological change the side which has conceded the first blow will always live on the verge of catastrophe, for *an adverse technological breakthrough is always possible. Thus the stalemate for all-out war is inherently precarious."*[101] This note of deep concern persists throughout much of Chapter 5: new weapons systems may be obsolescent under present circumstances when they have barely emerged from the blueprint stage; in a bipolar world any increase in the strength of one side is "tantamount to an absolute, perhaps fatal weakening of its opponent"; moreover, in the nuclear age "the best strategy can provide only a relative security, for the threat of all-out war will always loom in the background as a last resort for either side."[102] By the close of Chapter 6 his equanimity has again returned, however, and he repeats his earlier arguments deriding the possibility of a decisive technological breakthrough, concluding that "we should always be able to make all-out war seem an unattractive course."[103]

The Necessity for Choice is little more consistent than *Nuclear Weapons* on the nuclear stalemate issue. Kissinger appears to have momentarily panicked at the prospect of a "missile gap" favoring the Soviets, and temporarily abandoned his confidence in the permanence of the strategic equilibrium between the superpowers. In the first thirty pages of the book, his warnings of the dire consequences should the U.S. fail to react swiftly to the growing Soviet build-up reach crescendo level.[104] His earlier-expressed concerns about the

[100] *Ibid.,* pp. *119-20,* 123.

[101] *Ibid.,* p. 129 (our emphasis).

[102] *Ibid.,* pp. 143-173.

[103] *Ibid., p. 196.* See also pp. 199-200.

[104] "There is no doubt about the existence of the missile gap as such," he asserts; "it is generally admitted that from 1961 until at least the end of 1964 the

volatility of technology and the ephemeral nature of international equilibria are articulated with renewed intensity, and are followed somewhat less invariably than in *Nuclear Weapons* by soothing reassurances.

Nevertheless, in both books it is the reassurances and not the warnings which should be taken as Kissinger's final word on the nuclear stalemate issue. However many times he qualifies and contradicts his position, he never fails eventually to reiterate his belief either that a durable stalemate exists, or that such a stalemate will exist in the near future when both superpowers have acquired truly invulnerable second-strike forces. The structure of *Necessity for Choice* is revealing in this connection: by the middle of Chapter 2 he has essentially terminated his admonitions concerning the dangers of the missile gap, and although it is too much to ask that he adhere to his position with consistent rigor, the remainder of the volume is based upon a more sanguine analysis of the missile age:

> What, then, when two invulnerable retaliatory forces confront each other? Under conditions of mutual invulnerability a stalemate would come about regardless of which side struck first. . . . With no advantage to be gained by striking first and no disadvantage to be suffered by striking second, there will be no motive for either surprise or pre-emptive attack. *Mutual invulnerability means mutual deterrence. It is the most stable situation from thepoint of view of preventing all-out war.* [our emphasis][105]

"A condition of mutual invulnerability" he concludes, "is likely regardless of our preferences.[106]

Kissinger's views on the prospects for a nuclear stalemate constitute the foundations for his position on the continuing controversy over the proper strategic posture for the United States. A careful reading of *Nuclear Weapons* and *Necessity for Choice* reveals that at bottom-although by no means unambiguously-he is an advocate of what has become known as the "finite deterrence" position.[107]

Soviet Union will possess more missiles than the United States." Consequently, "we must not delude ourselves about the gravity of our position," for "our margin of survival has narrowed dangerously," and "the early 1960's will be a period of mortal danger." N.C., pp. 15-22, 34.

105 *Ibid.,* p. 34.

toe Ibid., p. 39, p. 34.

107 "Minimum" deterrence thinkers believe that the possession of a small number of nuclear weapons capable of being delivered against Soviet cities is sufficient to deter an attack by the U.S.S.R.; one has gone so far as to assert that "if the Rus-

He believes, moreover, in common with others of that school, that the strategic relationship between the superpowers will be most stable if each side possesses an invulnerable second-strike force capable of wreaking havoc on the population centers of the other in a retaliatory blow: under such circumstances, both sides will eschew the use of nuclear weapons, and war will be avoided.[108] This position is known as a condition of "mutual assured destruction," called MAD by its critics. Early in *Nuclear Weapons* he argues that it is the possession of a protected retaliatory force which is the key to deterrence; this position is reiterated with particular vigor in *Necessity for Choice.*[109] And he dismisses as irrelevant-at times with a disdain that astonishes-the sort of "traditional" military thinking which concerns itself with such matters as the *size* and even the *quality* of the defender's strategic forces. "With modern weapons," he writes, "even an inferior retaliatory capacity may deter." Not only is it true in the nuclear age that "deterrence can no longer be measured by absolute numbers of bombs or planes," but "the greater the power of individual weapons, the less the importance of numbers or even of quality." Thus, "nuclear stalemate should not be confused with nuclear parity"; stalemate occurs not because the deterrent forces of the superpowers are more or less equal in numbers of ca-

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sians had ten thousand warheads and a missile for each, and we had ten hydrogen bombs and ten obsolete bombers ... aggression would still be a folly that would appeal only to an insane adventurer." [Richard Rovere, quoted in Albert Wohlstetter, "The Delicate Balance of Terror," *Foreign Affairs,* XXXVII (January, 1959), p. 557.] "Finite" deterrence strategists are not convinced that it is quite so simple to maintain a second-strike force of sufficient invulnerability and credibility to deter an attack, but share with the minimum deterrence advocates the conviction that it is the mutual threat of city destruction that maintains peace in the nuclear age.

108 Kissinger's basic position on these matters emerges in his earliest articles. In 1955, for example, he first advocated a policy of "strategic sufficiency" for the United States and indicated in general his acceptance of the "overkill argument: " ... there must be a point beyond which development of them [strategic nuclear weapons] will yield diminishing returns. What will be the advantage of accumulating a greater store of fission weapons than would be necessary to destroy every Soviet manufacturing center? Or of improving them to the point where one bomb can destroy an average city twice over? Nor should we overlook the fact that certain technological advances-the atomic submarine, for example-will add much less to our effective strategic strength than to that of the Sino-Soviet bloc. Thus for the first time in military history there is the possibility of a stalemate despite an absolute superiority in numbers of weapons and in technology; and when this point has been reached the American strategic problem is transformed. " ("Military Policy and the Defense of the `Grey Areas,' " *op. cit.,* p. 418.)

109 See N.W., *pp.* 17-18, 96, 196, 201, and N.C., pp. 17-18.

pability, but because after a certain point, superiority in destructive power no longer pays strategic returns.[110] Despite his occasional denials that he believes the United States should accept a position of strategic inferiority to the Soviet Union,[111] Kissinger's real views are unmistakable: "What is the sense," he asks, "in developing a weapon that can destroy a city twice over?" "What does `being ahead' in the nuclear race mean if each side can already destroy the other's national substance? What is the strategic significance of adding to the destructiveness of the nuclear arsenal when the enormity of present weapons systems already tends to paralyze the will?"[112] His own answers are clear: beyond a certain level-which, perhaps prudently, he never defines-the numbers and characteristics of the nuclear weapons in a nation's arsenal are "strategically insignificant."

It is on this basis that Kissinger developed his analysis of the relationship between power and politics in the nuclear age. In *Nuclear Weapons* he argued that "a capability for all-out thermonuclear war can only avert disasters. It cannot be employed to achieve positive ends." In succeeding writings he carried that argument substantially further, ultimately questioning the very relationship between policy and power in all its traditional forms. In 1965 he insisted that "power has never been greater; it has also never been less useful." In his 1968 essay "Central Issues" he claimed to have discovered the "paradox" that "power no longer translates automatically into influence"; this, he informs us, has profound consequences for foreign policy as traditionally pursued and for the very structure of world politics as traditionally understood. Under present conditions, he suggests by way of example, an increase in a nation's territorial expanse is no longer of great significance.[113]

no N.W., pp. 56, 60, 92, 126, and 119.

111 He has claimed that his position "should not be construed as an argument for an inferior retaliatory capability," and has insisted that he does not believe we can afford to fall behind in the technological race with the U.S.S.R. (*Ibid.*, p. 56, n. 42, p. 18). Even when writing of the missile gap during his most hardline phase, however, he asserts that American inferiority in numbers of missiles is not "as worrisome as the vulnerability of the entire retaliatory force." (N.C., p. 20.)

112 *Ibid.*, pp. 60, 132-33.

113 N.W., p. 131; *Problems of National Strategy: A Book of Readings*, ed. by Kissinger (N.Y.: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965), p. 5; "Central Issues of American Foreign Policy," *op. cit., p.* 60. See also N.W., pp. 55-56, 92, and for perhaps his most complete statement of the point, his address at the *Pacena in Terris* Conference, October 8, 1973, Washington, D.C., Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, p. 8.

Thus, what one writer has termed the theory of the "marginal advantages" of power, which surfaced so clearly after Kissinger be gan his tenure as a public official, finds its roots even in his earliest works.[114] But Kissinger has actually done far more than simply reiterate the view-often articulated by others-that the advent of nuclear weapons has significantly altered the relationship between military power and foreign policy. The nuclear stalemate of which he first began to write in 1955 has been transformed, in his view, into a political stalemate as well, due to the declining political impact of power even in its more traditional forms. Whatever their ideological motivation or intentions, *nations-rational* nations-in his view have no alternative but to accept the existing international *status quo,* political as well as military. Although on occasion he has acknowledged the utility of physical power and advocated its use (even on a substantial scale) as a bargaining lever, particularly with small countries such as North Vietnam, he apparently no longer believes that superior military power can be directly and effectively utilized by the superpowers in their relations with each other,[115] and feels that even the Soviets will eventually realize this. His partially-valid 1957 insight into the effects of nuclear weapons on the behavior of nations thus has been converted into an all-embracing interpretation of contemporary world politics.

The link between Kissinger's early writings and his pursuit of arms control agreements with the U.S.S.R. thus becomes clear. It is in this context, as well, that his lack of sustained interest in military technology and in the possible effects of changing technology on the capabilities of the superpowers assumes a proper significance.[116] Despite the repeated insistence, in *Nuclear Weapons* and elsewhere, that the purpose of his proposed military strategy is to restore the connection between power and foreign policy, between force and diplomacy, what he has actually done-beginning even

114 Theodore Draper, "Detente," *Commentary,* June 1974, p. 40.

115 For examples of recent Kissinger statements on this theme, see his *Pacem in Terris* speech, *op, cit.,* p. 7; *Department of State Bulletin, July* 10, 1972, p. 40; *1971 Annual Report, pp.* 157-58; and *U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970's: Shaping a Durable Peace, A* Report to the Congress by Richard M. Nixon, President of the United States, May 3, 1973 (hereafter cited as the *1973 Annual Report),* p. 232.

116 William Kaufmann long ago called attention to Kissinger's failure to master the facts relevant to his positions on strategic questions; see *op. cit.,* pp. 581-85. *Cf.* Buchan, *op. cit.,* p. 371, and the recent observation by Joseph *Alsop* that "the effect of weaponry on the strategic balance has never been Dr. Kissinger's strong suit." "The Choice at the Summit," *Washington Post,* June 24, 1974.

before *Nuclear Weapons-is* to postulate an almost-complete separation of the two: power is now effectively neutralized, he tells us, and a new age of international politics has dawned in which diplomacy -and diplomats-reign supreme.

Kissinger's early writings exhibit a continuing interest in the place which arms control proposals ought to occupy in Western policy toward the Communist bloc, although during the 1950's he was principally concerned with reducing the possibility that the Soviets could launch a surprise attack against the U.S. of sufficient magnitude to degrade significantly our retaliatory capability. He consequently devoted much of his attention to identifying unilateral measures which the United States could take to reduce the vulnerability of its deterrent forces.[117] The reason can be found in his manner of conceptualizing the problem. Only occasionally in the earlier works did he argue that arms control was a problem in itself, capable of solution in isolation from the ideological and political problems which underlay the Cold War; on the contrary, the challenge to diplomacy posed by the arms race lay precisely in the fact that it arose out of the total political relationship involving East and West. If ways were to be found to mitigate the dangers of an unchecked arms race, the relevant agreements would in general have to follow, not precede, a broader political accommodation between the two camps; the prospects for such an accommodation in the short run did not seem bright, and in any case, a failure to reach agreement with the Soviets on arms limitations measures need not affect the total global nuclear stalemate.[118] Hence the U.S. should take such measures as were possible on its own.

Nevertheless, as early as 1957, Kissinger asserted that the "common fear" of all-out war constituted a "primary bridge" which could facilitate an accommodation between the superpowers.119 By 1961, moreover, he had substantially reversed his earlier views and decided that "arms are themselves a factor of tension"; in *Necessity* he stressed even more strongly than he had previously what he perceived as the common interest of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. in bringing the arms race under control, and now argued that unilateral measures would not suffice to accomplish that end.[120] These

117 See *N.W.* chap. 7, especially pp. 214-19, and N.C., pp. 221-27.
118 N.W., pp. 208-11, *Problems*, p. 319, and N.C., pp. 218-21.
118 N.W., p. 205.
120 N.C., pp. 218-20, 225.

themes were reiterated-somewhat more strongly-in *Problems of National Strategy* and in the statements which he prepared for the Rockefeller campaign.[121]

Since 1965 Kissinger has exhibited only occasional uneasiness over the threat to American security posed by the growth of Soviet strategic power. His writings and public pronouncements have stressed both what he sees as the increasingly favorable prospects for arms control, and the positive impact which he believes arms control agreements will have on detente. The agreements which he has negotiated in recent years with the U.S.S.R., which one of the present authors has analyzed at length elsewhere,[122] reflect this outlook, and are moreover the perfect embodiment of his view that "increments of military power" and "strategic superiority" no longer have operational significance.

Unfortunately, there is little reason to doubt that the leaders of the U.S.S.R. believe they know what strategic superiority is, and what they would like to do with it. Cautious though they may be in their efforts to translate their growing military might into political advantage-a caution which may be as much a product of the Soviet -Russian political character as of their fear of holocaust-their singleminded drive to achieve a military position second to none suggests that they believe the translation can be made. As even Kissinger himself once pointed out, the historical record indicates that the U.S.S.R. has aggressively attempted to exploit its military capability for political purposes even when substantially inferior to the United States in strategic striking power.[123] Should there be another equivalent of the Cuban missile crisis, this time with the Soviets possessing military superiority, it may therefore be questioned whether the Russians would behave so cautiously as did the U.S. in 1962.[124] In any case, if Soviet military strength continues to increase relative to that of the United States, it remains to be seen how other nations will react to the changing configuration of global power. It

121 *Problems, pp. 357-58,* Rockefeller statement of June 12, 1968, p. 4.

122 See James E. Dornan, Jr., review of John Newhouse's *Cold Dawn, The Alternative,* VII (June, 1974), pp. 17-20; *idem, Detente and the Pending Strategic Crisis* (Washington, D.C.: ACU Education and Research Foundation, 1974); and *idem,* "The Vladivostok Accord and the Future of Arms Control," in Royal United Services Institute and Brassey's *Defense Yearbook, 1975-76* (forthcoming).

123 See, e.g., N.W., pp. *39, 47-48, 376-77.*

124 See the discussion in Paul H. Nitze, "The Vladivostok Accord and SALT II," *Review of Politics,* XXXVII (April, 1975), p. 157.

is surely not inconceivable that allies and neutrals alike will reassess the wisdom of associating themselves too closely with the U.S. and of accommodating their interests to ours rather than to those of our adversaries; some in fact have already begun to do so in the wake of the collapse of the American position in Southeast Asia.[125]

It has yet to be demonstrated that the abstract calculations on which the MAD school relies to "prove" the existence of a strategic stalemate weigh more heavily in the scales of diplomacy than more tangible and obvious symbols of power such as numbers of delivery vehicles or nuclear warheads. One can hardly quarrel with Kissinger's broken-record assertion that "a vast capability for all-out war" no longer automatically confers the military advantage it once did: clearly it has become extraordinarily difficult under contemporary conditions to identify precise contingencies in which the use or the threatened use of nuclear weapons might advance a nation's military or political objectives.[126] To concede this point, however, is merely to reiterate a truism; it is here that analysis must *begin.* Surprisingly, Kissinger has never attempted to marshall extensive evidence to support his judgment that the connection between military power-especially the kind of military power represented by strategic forces-and foreign policy has largely been severed in the contemporary world. Many analysts have argued on the contrary that what Robert Osgood long ago called the "extra-military aspects of military strategy"[127] will assume a heightened role in the world politics of the present and future, and that the political and psychological exploitation of nuclear weapons will constitute a primary means for waging the ongoing struggle for power and prestige. Here as elsewhere Kissinger's analysis appears to be based exclusively on the American post-war experience: the United States, a confused and *status quo* power with an uncertain foreign policy tradition and subject to a variety of cultural, moral, and political inhibitions which have constrained its effectiveness in using force in

125 Kissinger himself has recently expressed his concern over the latter: "we now receive cables from places as far away as Latin America and Africa, which have no geographic interest in Southeast Asia, simply questioning what this means about American purpose." Interview of Mr. Kissinger by Barbara Walters, NBC-TV "Today" Show, May 5-8, 1975, Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, p. 4.

126 For an illuminating discussion of this point, see Robert Osgood, *NATO: The Entangling Alliance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), pp. 6-9.

127 *Ibid.*, p.7.

support of its foreign policy objectives, clearly has been unable to fashion a doctrine for harnessing military power to its international purposes. There is no reason to assume *a priori*, however, that other nations, with differing histories and traditions, varying "national characters," ideologies, and styles, and disparate political regimes, will behave similarly.

It must be conceded that both in *Nuclear Weapons* and in *Necessity for Choice* Kissinger frequently calls attention to significant differences which he has observed in the perceptions of nuclear phenomena held by the two superpowers. He wonders, for example, whether the Soviets adequately appreciate the awesome destructiveness of nuclear weapons, noting that the advent of nuclear power did not appear to have had any significant impact on Soviet military doctrine.[128] He observes that the United States may have to mount a bigger effort to deter a surprise attack than the U.S.S.R., because the Soviets' threshold of unacceptable damage may be higher than ours.[129] During the period of the alleged "missile gap," he was alarmed at the possibility that the Soviets might strike at the U.S. "out of the blue," an option he notes the U.S. has explicitly rejected.[130] The Soviets have always treated our own concern over the need to avoid holocaust with contempt, he argues, interpreting our apprehensions as a sign of weakness to be exploited through "missile diplomacy" and "nuclear blackmail."[131] In one trenchant passage he suggests that the differences between the two superpowers' international behavior in the nuclear age may have fundamental roots indeed:

> The Soviet leadership, therefore, presents to the West a challenge which may be moral even more than physical. It resolves itself ultimately into questions of how much the free world will risk to back up its assessment of a situation without being "certain" or whether the Soviet leaders can use the free world's quest for certainty to paralyze its ability to act. Many of the Soviet gains have been due in large part to a greater moral toughness, to a greater readiness to run risks, both physical and moral, than their opponents. And despite the moral bankruptcy of Soviet theory, which with every passing year is demonstrated anew, the Soviet power center has made gains which were not justified by the relation of forces but which

128 N.W., pp. *202,* 361.
129 N.C., p. 17.
130 *Ibid.,* pp. *96-96; N.C.* pp. 15ff.
131 N.W., *pp. 39,* 47-48, *376-77.*

> were largely due to the inward uncertainty of their declared victims.[132]

These observations should have led Kissinger to examine more carefully than he did the prospects for a superpower stalemate both at the military and the political levels. One might also have expected to find such insights fully integrated into his investigation of the nature of deterrence and his inquiry into the relationship between military power and foreign policy in the nuclear age.[133] His failure to do so is both symptom and cause of the inadequacy of his treatment of the problem of deterrence.

For Kissinger deterrence is coterminous with a countercity-targeted retaliatory force designed to inflict maximum destruction on an opponent; moreover, in his scholarly writings he either gives only limited and inadequate attention to the desirability of a capacity to strike effectively against enemy strategic and military targets, or in some cases openly opposes counterforce targeting modes designed either to strengthen deterrence or for actual use under certain contingencies should deterrence fail. Early in his career this was in part due to his ignorance of technological developments already under way which were certain to improve delivery-vehicle accuracy *in* the future. When discussing counterforce in *Nuclear Weapons* he conceded that the aggressor would naturally want to destroy an opponent's forces-in-being in the first wave of any attack, but insists-true to his general theory of deterrence-both that the potential victim can best deter such an assault by threatening to inflict maximum destruction on his opponent's society, and that if deterrence fails, the defender can best avoid defeat by exacting "the highest price" and "inflicting the greatest possible devastation" upon the aggressor in his retaliatory blow. As missiles replace bombers, the increased invulnerability of the former insure that even offensive strategies must shift "from an attempt to eliminate forces-in-being to a conscious attempt to disrupt society."[134]

132 *Ibid., p.335.*

133 It is worth noting that Kissinger's analysis of Soviet military doctrine in *Nuclear Weapons* appears only in Chapter 11, long after he has completed his discussion of strategy (Chap, 4), deterrence (Chap. 5), limited war (Chap. 6) and arms control (Chap. 7).

134 N.W., pp. 95-96, 124. It is connection with his fears concerning the impact of a Soviet attack on the fabric of American society that he advocates in N.W., a vastly improved civil defense posture for the United States-a subject which he has scarcely mentioned since.

In a more extensive discussion in *Necessity for Choice* he asserts that "the issue turns on the nature of the threat which produces deterrence": counterforce advocates believe that deterrence requires the prospect of military defeat. The prospect of defeating an enemy militarily in the nuclear age, in turn, requires a retaliatory force "so large and so well protected that it can guarantee the destruction of the opponent's offensive power." Not only are the costs of such a force "likely to become astronomical," but such a strategy, in his view, is also impossible to reconcile with the adoption of the strategic defensive. Should the enemy strike first, at least part of our retaliatory force would be destroyed and part of his expended, and we would have no retaliatory options except "a deliberate effort to destroy the aggressor's national substance."[135] These considerations especially obtain in the missile age. The real lesson of the missile gap was that we had lost permanently our capability to defeat the enemy in a first strike; because the Soviets will always be able to retaliate regardless of the scale of our blow, we can no longer win a war with the U.S.S.R. in any meaningful sense. To attempt now to acquire the capability to do so would only further stimulate the arms race and might even provoke a pre-emptive attack.[136]

Kissinger thus identifies counterforce strategies and targeting modes with what Herman Kahn once called a "splendid first strike" strategy, i.e., a strategy aimed at defeating the U.S.S.R. by means of a massive nuclear assault "out of the blue." In the course of his analysis he introduces virtually all of the arguments utilized by MADmen since the late 1950's in their opposition to counterforce strategies. His examination of the relevant issues, however, is less adequate than many of his peers. Like other MADmen, Kissinger simply asserts that a threat-supported by an adequate capability-to destroy an adversary's population centers will suffice to deter, and he fails to offer any compelling reasons why this should be so. It is at least plausible to argue that a counterforce rather than a counter-value threat might constitute a more effective deterrent: in moments of high crisis, the military leaders of a totalitarian society may be more effectively restrained by the prospect of a long war which they might well lose than by fear of severe population losses. In any event, it is surely clear that mutual assured destruction has no *prima facie* case to be made for it, and that other options deserve careful

135 N.C., *pp. 28-29.*
I36Ibid., *pp.* 34-40.

consideration. It is striking as well that nowhere in his voluminous writing does Kissinger discuss the moral implications of a strategy which rests on holding tens of millions of people on both sides as "hostages" against the outbreak of nuclear war-and which would result in their deaths should the strategy actually be implemented.

Perhaps even more fundamentally, total reliance on second-strike counter-city deterrence leaves a nation with no options but acquiescence or suicide should deterrence at the strategic level fail. It is another sign of Kissinger's divorce of foreign policy and strategic power that he fails to advocate a war-fighting capability at the strategic level to be used in the event that deterrence fails. The belief that major war between the superpowers is now impossible rests on assumptions concerning the rationality and benevolence of world leaders about which history provides few reasons to be sanguine; even a five per cent chance of strategic war is a contingency which merits precautionary measures. The strategic posture which we adopted in the late 1960s and which was at least partially reinforced by the SALT Accords considerably restricts our ability to limit damage to the United States or to control a nuclear conflict should war occur.[137] If the United States possessed little or no counterforce capability and the Soviets initiated war by attacking U.S. missile fields or other military installations, we could respond either by attacking Soviet cities-thus precipitating an all-out assault on American population centers in return-or by accepting the U.S.S.R.'s conditions for the termination of the conflict. Under the circumstances, which would be more likely? Which would be morally preferable?

Finally, the stability of a condition of mutual assured destruction obviously requires that its precepts be accepted by both sides, because if one side acquires even a limited ability to destroy the opponent's strategic forces, this endangers the retaliatory capability of the other. But Soviet strategic theory has traditionally rejected the targeting doctrine required by MAD. Moreover, the continuing Russian military buildup, reinforced by the advantages allowed them under SALT, will enable them to deploy a militarily significant counterforce capability within several years; this, quite apart from any theoretical difficulties inherent in his MAD strategy, raises the most serious questions concerning the wisdom of Kissinger's policies.

[137] For a brief but illuminating discussion of counterforce and city-avoidance strategies, see Thomas C. Schelling, *Controlled Response and Strategic Warfare*, Adelphi Papers, No. 19 (London: Institute for Strategic Studies, 1965).

Kissinger himself long ago recognized some of these dilemmas, but he barely paused to analyze their implications. Twice in *Necessity for Choice* he points out that were the United States to possess no counterforce capability at all and should the Soviets mount either a selective or a massive attack upon our strategic forces, an American retaliatory strike on Soviet cities would be "a completely irrational act." "To avoid this dilemma," he states, "our retaliatory force must retain some counterforce capability-at least sufficient to deter a campaign of attrition against our retaliatory force."[138] But there he stops, quickly passing on to the problem of limited war; he never explains precisely what sort of a counterforce capability he envisons for the American strategic force, or why he believes we require a counterforce capability sufficient to deter only a limited campaign of attrition against our strategic forces.

His subsequent discussions of the problem are similarly inadequate. In a 1962 article he observes in a footnote, without elaboration, that he "is of the view that in case of an attack on our retaliatory force a counterforce capability gives us the greatest degree of flexibility and may be an extremely important bargaining device." But his discussion of counterforce in the text of the article is devoted solely to a denunciation of McNamara's belief that a counterforce capability could help deter an attack on Europe, and in fact grossly distorts McNamara's position by implying that the Kennedy Administration proposed to rely purely on a first-strike deterrence strategy to protect America's global interests. Here-as often elsewhere-he writes as if counterforce and first-strike are coterminous, and exhibits only the most limited awareness of the possible uses of a counterforce capability for deterrence purposes at a variety of levels.[139] Later that year, when writing of the Cuban missile affair, he grudgingly conceded that our counterforce potential had "proved its efficacy" during the crisis, but immediately declared that U.S. superiority would prove impossible to maintain over the longer term; in any case, he attributed our triumph primarily to errors of judgment by the Soviets.[140] He apparently learned nothing from the Cuban crisis, and indeed it is notable that the affair was barely mentioned in his subsequent discussions of U.S. strategy and U.S.-Soviet relations. In neither *Problems of National Strategy* nor

138 N.C., *pp. 40,* 43-45.

139 "The Unsolved Problems of European Defense," *Foreign Affairs, XL* (July, 1962), *pp.* 516-20.

140 "Reflections on Cuba," *The Reporter,* November *22,* 1962.

in *The Troubled Partnership* does he add to his strategic views,[141] although he has in all four *State of the World* messages raised in some form the dilemma he first recognized in *Necessity for Choice,* hinting that some limited form of counterforce may be desirable to increase U.S. options in the event of war.[142]

Nevertheless, Kissinger has exhibited no great enthusiasm for the new targeting doctrine announced in 1974 by Secretary of Defense Schlesinger,[143] and has been reported to be somewhat critical of DoD proposals for improving the counterforce capability of the Minuteman ICBM through development of new guidance systems and higher-yield warheads-perhaps because he fears an adverse Soviet reaction which will cause difficulties in SALT. In any case, he has made it clear in both the 1971 and 1973 *Annual Reports* that deterrence still rests, in his view, primarily on our second-strike, counter-city capability, and he vigorously reasserted his commitment to a MAD posture in his 1972 post-SALT press conference and briefings for Congressional leaders.[144] Despite his occasional statements of alarm concerning the dangers of holocaust, he appears convinced that strategic deterrence will not fail, and that the United States therefore need not possess the actual ability to employ strategic weapons, even in a limited manner. In his early writings his solution to the dilemmas which the adoption of a pure counter-city deterrence posture might pose for the United States was a limited war strategy; in 1974, since detente in his view will eliminate serious confrontations between the superpowers, his solution is arms control.

It is a striking commentary on the ephemeral nature of much contemporary political and military commentary that Kissinger's analysis of limited war-one of the principal subjects of both *Nuclear Weapons* and *Necessity for Choice,* as well as many of the

141 *Problems,* pp. 11-16; and T.P., pp. 122-23.

142 See *U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970's: A New Strategy for Peace,* A Report to the Congress by Richard M. Nixon, President of the United States, February 18, 1970; p. 122; *1971 Annual Report, pp.* 170-71; *U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970's: The Emerging Structure of Peace,* A Report to the Congress by Richard M. Nixon, President of the United States, February 9, 1972, p. 158; *1973 Annual Report,* p. 184. The last contains the most complete statement.

143 See, e.g., Press Conference of January 22, 1974, Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, pp. 11-12.

144 The transcripts of the conferences and briefings have been conveniently reprinted in U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, *Hearings, Military Implications of the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems and the Interim Agreement on Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms,* 92nd Congress, 2nd Session, 1972, pp. 97ff.

articles which he wrote during the late 1950's and early 1960's-receives little attention today. Kissinger himself has written little about the problem during the past decade, and the reasons are not difficult to discern. Those who in the late 1950's advocated an improved conventional capability for the United States, on grounds that it simply was not believable that we would use the ultimate weapon to protect any but the most critical interests, resoundingly won their intellectual argument with the advocates of massive retaliation, few of whom in any event had ever taken the extreme positions often attributed to them. As suggested earlier, Kissinger's trenchant critique of massive retaliation and his clear exposition of the requirements of a conventional strategy, although somewhat marred by his polemical style, contributed significantly to that victory.[145]

Limited war is viewed by Kissinger as "essentially a political act," whose "distinguishing feature is that it has no purely military solution"; its ultimate objective is a compromise, to be achieved by diplomacy when stalemate or partial victory has been achieved on the battlefield. This he calls a "policy of intermediate objectives,"[146] necessary because total victory in war is now both undesirable and impossible. It is undesirable because it eliminates the opportunity for a political solution; it is impossible in the nuclear age because of the likelihood that the effort to achieve victory in the traditional sense will result in holocaust.

As previously observed, however, Kissinger advocated, at least in the 1955-57 period, a particularly active kind of limited war policy designed not only to contain the U.S.S.R. but also to reduce the Soviet sphere. He even criticized U.S. policy because " we recoiled before the suggestion of intervening in Hungary lest it unleash a thermonuclear war."[147] The extravagant claims which Kissinger mustered on behalf of his proposed military posture, in any case, were echoed by others; in time, they became part of the intellectual baggage of the Kennedy Administration, and they explain in part the willingness of the United States to overcommit its power and prestige in Vietnam, where a' particular kind of limited war was attempted with unhappy results. The outcome in Vietnam above

145 An often-quoted passage from N.W., p. *135,* provides the essence of his critique. See also N.C., pp. 14-15, *35-36, 57-58.*

146 N.W., pp. 140-41, 145-46, 149-201.

147 *Ibid.,* p. 144.

all explains the unpopularity of the "little war" thesis today-despite its continued relevance in Europe and elsewhere.

More controversial, in the past as now, has been Kissinger's vigorous advocacy of a tactical nuclear posture to supplement our strategic retaliatory force and the improved conventional capability which he advocated. In *Nuclear Weapons* his support for a strategy of tactical nuclear warfare is virtually unqualified; he views such a strategy as essential both for deterrence purposes and to overcome the manpower advantages of the Communist bloc in the event of major conflict along the containment periphery. Moreover he outlines in some detail the appropriate tactics to be employed in connection with tactical nuclear weapons, stressing the need for a "fluid battle line" and the operation of "small mobile detachments deep in the enemy's territory." He expresses few fears that such a war will escalate to all-out war, so long as diplomacy operates to clarify the limits of our purposes and the strategic nuclear stalemate is maintained.[148]

Unfortunately for his argument, however-which in some ways remains of considerable merit-Kissinger's investigation of the weapons technology relevant for tactical nuclear war was inadequate at best; his critics had a field-day with such statements as his claim that fall-out becomes a serious problem only in the range of explosive power of 500 kilotons and above.[140] He was consequently led to modify his position somewhat in *Necessity for Choice.* He there conceded that no "model" for the conduct of tactical nuclear war has ever won general agreement in Western military and political circles, and that the pressures toward escalation in a tactical nuclear conflict might be difficult to resist.[150] By this time, as well, his advocacy of containment had been considerably subdued in tone, and he was hoping that,

> Instead of using arms control negotiations to tempt or blackmail the West into unilateral disarmament, the Communist leaders may address themselves seriously to the problem of how to reduce the tensions inherent in an unchecked arms race. Then coexistence may become something more than a slogan.[151]

148 *Ibid.,* pp. *177-98.*

149 *Ibid.,* pp. *232,* 187. Although Kissinger recommends the use of nuclear weapons no larger than *400* kilotons, he declares at one point that "significant fall-out" occurs only at the level of about 1 megaton.

150 N.C., pp. *84-89.*

151 *Ibid.,* p. *7.*

Thus, he specifically called attention to the possible negative effect which the adoption of a tactical nuclear posture by the U.S. might have on arms control, and advocated a reduced emphasis on tactical nuclear capabilities.[152] Nevertheless, he was by now skeptical concerning the likelihood that the West would muster the political will necessary for a substantial conventional force buildup, and by 1965 in *The Troubled Partnership* he had reverted to his earlier views. Given the conventional force imbalance, only by relying unambiguously on a tactical nuclear strategy could we hope to deal with any large-scale Soviet ground assault, especially in Europe. He argued at length, however, for a careful study of existing nuclear stockpiles to determine which weapons combine the requirements of relative invulnerability with suitability for discriminating battlefield use.[153]

Whatever the merits of Kissinger's arguments on tactical nuclear warfare, they possess a curiously abstract quality which has prevented them from having major impact. The reason, once again, has to do with his failure to absorb the relevant technological details; one looks in vain in his writings for any but the most general discussion of what sorts of weapons might be used in what circumstances, against what sorts of targets, and with what kinds of effects. Kissinger's analysis lacks authority simply because he gives us no sign that it is based on a satisfactory awareness of the relevant and available factual material.

In the final analysis, then, Kissinger's analysis of the military dimensions of contemporary international politics must be judged seriously deficient. He seems to have forgotten that power is not only, or even primarily, the capacity to *destroy;* it is also the far more elusive but equally important capacity to *influence. As* the creation of a new international order has progressively become his dominant concern, he has failed to observe as well that the behavior of nations, and thus the nature of international politics itself, appears not to have changed notably during the three decades of the nuclear age, and that world peace is thus as elusive a goal as it was in 1945.

152 *Ibid., pp. 84, 86-98.*
153 **T.P.,** *pp.* 176-84.

IV.

Kissinger and Europe

Although Dr. Kissinger acquired his early academic reputation largely in the field of strategic studies, much of his writing has actually dealt in one way or another with Europe. Some of this work is quite clearly of superior quality, and in fact must be ranked among the best commentary on European problems by an American analyst during the decade which ended in 1965. Kissinger for many years has boasted privately to friends and colleagues that he is one of the few Americans who adequately understands European politics and who appreciates the difficulties involved in managing the Atlantic Alliance. Whatever the merits of that claim, it is surely the case that throughout his academic career he insisted that close relations with Europe must constitute a top priority for American foreign policy. Nowhere else but in Europe, he often wrote, are "the stakes so high"; in writing of Europe he has even been drawn into what for him are rare ruminations on the lasting significance of the moral values of the West (although to be sure even here there is a utilitarian cast to his reflections):

> If the states bordering the North Atlantic were to split up into a congeries of squabbling sovereignties it would be a final proof to all the uncommitted nations of the bankruptcy of the liberal values of the West. The United States would find itself isolated not only physically but also spiritually. Sooner or later these states on the fringes of the European land mass would be drawn into the Communist orbit. The source of our culture and our values would then be alienated. Americans for the first time in our history would live in a world where we were foreign in the deepest sense, where people would share neither our values nor our aspirations, where we might meet hostility everywhere outside of North America.[154]

"An even stronger reason for North Atlantic cohesion," he added, "is that it is a prerequisite for realizing opportunities for constructive action," and for building "a world based on the values of freedom and human dignity" in the face of "all concurrent revolutions of our time."[155]

Few American writers have written more sympathetically of the

154 N.C., p. 102. See also, e.g., N.W., pp. 269-70, where the stress is on "the accretion to our strength" which Europe represents and on the concomitant need "to deny the resources and manpower of Western Europe to an aggressor."

155 N.C., pp. 102-103.

European position on the various issues which have caused discord in the alliance than has Kissinger at his most solicitous. As early as *Nuclear Weapons,* by no means the work in which he is most Alliance-oriented, he urged the United States to "refrain from attempting to prescribe to our allies what their interests should be in every situation, because this is dissolving of any coalition . . . our allies may well be more sensitive than we in either the region of their primary concern or on matters that affect this region, as for example Middle Eastern oil for Europe." "In such a situation," he suggested, "we must be prepared to make some concessions to what our allies consider their essential interests."[156] In 1959 he criticized the United States for embarking upon bilateral negotiations with the U.S.S.R. without adequate consultation and coordination with the NATO nations, and in one early article objected as a matter of principle to Soviet-American talks without Allied participation.[157]

But these views by no means constitute the whole of Kissinger's position-even his early position-concerning the manner in which the United States ought to structure its relations with its NATO allies. Glimmerings of a quite different approach appear, for instance, as early as 1955, in his article "Military Policy and the Defense of the 'Grey Areas' ". Here he called attention to the contrasting responsibilities of a global power such as the U.S. and of lesser powers such as France and Germany, and suggested that allied military assistance would be vital to the United States only in the event of general war or a full-fledged Soviet attack on the NATO area. In local wars we do not need the support of the European states, and should not demand their assistance if they believe that they have no direct interest at stake. Indeed, when necessary we must act alone, ignoring the opposition of our allies. "We cannot permit the balance of power," he concluded, "to be overturned for the sake of maintaining the form of allied unity."[158]

This theme reappears in *Nuclear Weapons,* where Kissinger protests against what he perceives to be a trend toward the merger of the American system of alliances into a world-wide collective security system. Arguing that the U.S. must retain substantial freedom of ac-

156 N.W., *p. 253.*

157 See "'As Urgent as the Moscow Threat,' " *New Yorh Times Magazine,* March 8, 1959, pp. *76-77,* and "The Khrushchev Visit-Danger and Hope," *ibid.,* September 4, 1959, p. *44.* See also T.P., pp. *203-204.*

158 "Military Policy and the 'Grey' Areas," op. *cit.,* pp. *426-27.*

tion to deal effectively with problems as they arise, he insists that we must resist attempts to alter the basically regional character of our alliances: a comprehensive consensus against the variegated threats we are likely to confront is difficult to attain, and in broadly-based alliance systems the weakest and most timid member tends to use its veto power to block resolute action-which he believed was what occurred in Korea, Indochina, and S.uez,[159] "Our allies," he wrote, "must understand that we have an obligation to maintain not only a regional equilibrium, but the world balance of power as well .. . our allies must, therefore, be prepared to let us act alone or with a different grouping of powers outside the area of regional cooperation."[160]

In Kissinger's view, the dissimilar positions occupied by the United States and the European states within international politics are a consequence both of deliberate choice and of objective factors beyond the control of either power center. None of our allies, not even Great Britain, he has written, can any longer be considered a major power. In the nuclear age, "a major power is a state which can afford a retaliatory capability sufficient to destroy any possible opponent"; only the United States and the U.S.S.R., therefore, are major powers.[161] Kissinger repeatedly calls attention to what he terms Europe's "technological incompetence," particularly in the field of nuclear weaponry, as a factor which both has militated against her assumption of a major world role, and prevented the European states, whether jointly or separately, from participating in the Atlantic Alliance on an equal basis with the United States.[162] In a characteristic remark to be found in an article written in 1964, he summarily dismissed European claims to a greater role in Alliance decision-making with the observation that "the weight given to advice is evidently related to the competence that it reflects."[163]

Kissinger thus has always viewed the United States *as Primus inter pares* within the Alliance. To be sure, he urged the U.S. to manage

159 N.W., pp. 247ff.

160 ***Ibid.,*** p. *254.*

161 *Ibid.,* p. *251.*

162 This is a recurrent theme of *Nuclear Weapons;* see, e.g., pp. *246, 272-73,* 290-91, 310-11; *cf.* also T.P., pp. 11-12, 19-20.

103 "Coalition Diplomacy in the Nuclear Age," *Foreign Affairs,* XXXXII *(July,* 1964), p. *540.* To be fair, it must be noted that in this article and elsewhere Kissinger proposed that the U.S. share its nuclear knowledge with Europe, particularly in the field of tactical weapons, so that the European states would be better able to make good their claim to be heard on the military issues facing the Alliance.

alliance relationships with greater skill than we have exhibited heretofore, with due regard for the sensibilities of our associates and for the contribution which they can make within their narrow sphere of special competence and concern; indeed, we must "show understanding and compassion for the problems of states whose margin of survival . . . is far smaller than ours."[164] But Europe, in turn, must acknowledge our superior power and higher responsibilities and defer to us when global issues are at stake. Since in a bipolar world all issues are potentially global issues, the scope of U.S. dominance over the Alliance may, according to this logic, become extensive indeed. Since he has assumed a policy-making role, Mr. Kissinger has in fact been notably expansive in interpreting this principle.

In his writings on European problems Kissinger devotes an extraordinary amount of attention to the institutional structure of NATO itself. Fundamental structural reform, he argued, was essential if the Alliance was to transcend the differences over policy which had limited its effectiveness virtually from its inception. Significantly, however, Kissinger seemed unable to decide upon an appropriate structure through which to eliminate conflict in the Alliance, and as a result, the reforms he proposed lacked unity and coherence; in the final analysis it is difficult to determine his precise objectives.

Beyond the general remarks already noted, Kissinger said little or nothing about the organizational problems of the Atlantic Alliance in *Nuclear Weapons*. By 1959 he had become persuaded that NATO cohesion had been so weakened by the unimaginative leadership of the United States during the Eisenhower years and by Europe's declining faith in the American nuclear guarantee that radical steps to revivify the Alliance were essential. In an article written for the *New York Times Magazine* in March of that year he called for a strengthening of the European end of the Alliance, in language suggestive of the Kennedy-McNamara "grand design" of a few years later. It is vital, he said that Western Europe begin to consider itself as a unit. To that end, a "permanent committee of European diplomats" should be created-at what level he did not specify-which would be responsible for developing "a common European foreign policy." At the same time, the U.S. should seize the opportunity to encourage creation of a Western European Atomic Force "so that any threatened member of the Alliance would feel protected by the voice it has in the control of the overall military establishment." In

164 N.W., p. 254.

addition to allaying European fears, the creation of such a force might halt the trend toward proliferation of national nuclear capabilities, a trend which he believed directly resulted from the declining credibility of the American threat.[165]

It is clear in retrospect that the 1959 visit to continental Europe on which the *Times* article was based[166] led Kissinger to reflect more extensively than previously on the problem of nuclear force proliferation and its possible impact on the Alliance.[167] By 1961 he had become even more persuaded than earlier that the most pressing problems confronting the Alliance stemmed from the inability of the NATO nations to develop a common military strategy. The acquisition by the British and French of independent retaliatory forces, he asserted, would present the Alliance with insurmountable command and control problems; Kissinger's views concerning the military value of these forces had grown more negative over time. At the same time, he readily conceded that "however firm allied unity may be, a nation cannot be counted on to commit suicide in defence of a foreign territory,"[168] and challenged the wisdom of permitting the Europeans to have "no effective voice in controlling the weapons on which . . . their security primarily rests."[169] His solution once again was a "series of structural changes within the Western Alliance": "it is time," he argued, "to examine carefully the possibility of creating federal institutions comprising the entire North Atlantic Community."[170] He proposed the creation of a Steering Committee empowered in matters of defense policy to act for the Alliance as a whole, to direct negotiations with the Soviet Union, and to deal with any other matters involving the common interests of member states.

165 " 'As Urgent as the Moscow Threat,' " *op. cit.*, p. 78.

166 The thoroughness of Kissinger's research should not be exaggerated; he observes in the article that he spent only a month in Europe, principally in Germany and France; *ibid., p. 79.*

167 In *Nuclear Weapons* Kissinger opposed the development of independent deterrent forces by the European powers both because he believed that such forces could not serve their strategic purpose and because he considered them a wasteful duplication of the American effort. See, e.g., pp. 271-72, 295, 314. At the same time he believed that Britain and France could not be dissuaded from acquiring strategic weapons, and advised the U.S. to assist them lest too great a percentage of their resources be diverted from conventional defense.

168 N.C., *p.* 109. In an article published in 1959, he had used this identical phraseology in a passing comment, without addressing himself to the proliferation problem. See "The Search for Stability," *Foreign Affairs,* XXXVII (July, 1959), p. 548.

169 N.C., p. 119. See also pp. 12I ff.

Among its most important tasks would be the development, command, and control of a NATO nuclear force, to be created by combining the British and French forces (both nations, he suggested, might hold back token units as a hedge against the failure of the Alliance to act in a crisis) with a portion of the U.S. strategic force. The Committee would be composed of seven members: the U.S., Great Britain, France, and Germany, plus three rotating members selected from the smaller nations by the NATO Council. Five votes in the Committee would be required for a binding decision; dissenting states could appeal to the NATO Council, where a two-thirds vote would carry.

Through a plan of this sort, Kissinger argued, the strategic dilemma confronting NATO might be remedied-for he had no doubt that greater political cohesion was necessary if the military problem was to be solved-and the problem of nuclear proliferation controlled.[171] If such an approach should not prove feasible, he was willing to fall back on his 1959 suggestion for a European Atomic Force; but he made it plain that this option was now to be regarded as a most undesirable second choice, and he continued his strong opposition to the development of national nuclear forces by the individual European states.[172]

A year later, in a long article entitled "The Unsolved Problems of European Defense" published in *Foreign Affairs,* Kissinger substantially retreated from the advanced "Atlanticist" position of *Necessity* and also modified once again his views on European nuclear forces. Since 1960, he noted, European demands for a role in controlling the strategic deterrent of the West had increased substantially. He was unhappy with the response of the United States, arguing that it was "against all reason" to expect our allies to follow our lead in building a conventional defense while we retained a monopoly on nuclear power. Palliatives, he argued, were not enough. The command and control arrangements for the five Polaris subma-

[170] *Ibid., p.* 172.

[171] *Ibid.,* pp. 172-74. This proposal is also found-indeed, most of the language is identical-in his "For An Atlantic Confederacy," *The Reporter,* February 2, 1961, pp. 16-20.

[172] He conceded that both Britain and France could develop a force with considerable capability, but he argued that the effort would be extremely costly and technically difficult, "and would use up resources required for the development of a conventional defense"; moreover, he doubted its strategic value because it would be "subject to the same inhibitions as the United States Strategic Air Command and on the same issues." N.C., pp. 113-25, 129-32.

rives which we had "committed" to NATO in 1962 remained unsatisfactory to the Europeans. The proposed "Multi-Lateral Force," moreover, to consist of missile-firing surface ships with mixed-national crews, had no clear military purpose, and its political end was defeated by the stipulation that the U.S. could veto its use. He now professed to see "a major and perhaps insoluble constitutional issue" in any proposal which held out the possibility that foreign powers could commit the United States to war without our explicit consent-something which apparently had not occurred to him when he proposed his Atlantic Confederation in *The Necessity for Choice.*

Dr. Kissinger thus revived once more the idea for a European Atomic Force which he had first proposed in 1959 and which was to be based on a merger of the British and French deterrents. While awaiting internal transformations in political attitudes in the U.S., Great Britain, and France which would have to occur before an E.A.F. could be created, he suggested that we should aid the French in the development of their own national force, at least to the extent of assisting with the construction of delivery vehicles. While continuing to insist that America's unfavorable assessment of the military utility of independent deterrence forces was fundamentally correct, he now argued that the French national effort was not as "senseless" as had often been alleged, because the use of nuclear weaponry by the French would surely result in United States nuclear involvement, no matter what the circumstances leading to the French action. But in any case we required French assistance in developing an adequate conventional defense in Europe, and cooperation with them in their development of a strategic force was not too high a price to pay. He concluded with a brief allusion to the more grandiloquent hopes of *Necessity,* noting that a resolution of the Alliance's strategic problems might "liberate energies that could transform the nations of the North Atlantic into a true community."[173]

By 1963, Mr. Kissinger had moved an additional step away from the concept of an Atlantic Confederation, and was increasingly viewing military and political issues through European eyes. He observed that few Europeans agreed with our judgment about the fea-

[173] "The Unsolved Problems of European Defense," *op. cit.,* pp. 531-41. For additional analysis of the wisdom and consequences of American efforts to inhibit the development of European nuclear forces, see his "The Skybolt Affair," *The Reporter,* January 17, 1963, pp. 15-18, and "Strains on the Alliance," *Foreign Affairs,* XXXXI (January, 1963), pp. 262-63.

sibility of a conventional defense, and suggested-without, let it be added, any acknowledgement that he bore some blame in this respect himself-that on this issue "we had pushed valid arguments to such extremes as to defeat our objectives." He judged the possible military utility of the British and French nuclear forces more favorably than he had earlier, and now conceded that they might serve as effective deterrents against the Soviet Union under a variety of conceivable circumstances.[174] Finally, he suggested that we had lost sight of, and should labor to restore, our original "great conception" of the future relationship between the United States and Europe: a "strong, unified, and self-sufficient Europe" capable of acting as "a more effective partner for the United States," even as it developed its "own specific policies" in both the economic and military spheres. In this article, a lengthy review of the problems facing the Alliance, there is to be found only one brief mention of the need for trans-Atlantic political insitutions.[175]

Dr. Kissinger's most thorough analysis of European problems, however, is to be found in *The Troubled Partnership: A Reappraisal of the Atlantic Alliance,* first published in 1965 and judged by no less prominent a commentator than Bernard Brodie to be Kissinger's "best book" and "certainly the best book I know of on the subject."[176] Here his treatment of the European position on a wide variety of military and political issues important in intra-Alliance relationships, including the British and French national deterrents, is more sympathetic than ever before. In considerable measure, he suggests, European-American differences are the inevitable concomitant of differing national characters and traditions. The United States has a distinctive "historical perspective" which makes it difficult for it to understand the outlook of continental powers; our "technological approach to policy making," our "proclivity toward abstract models," and "the continuing disparity in strength between the two sides of the Atlantic," have all combined to render us insen-

174 See "NATO's Nuclear Dilemma," in David M. Abshire and Richard V. Allen (eds.) *National Security: Political, Military, and Economic Strategies in the Decades Ahead* (New York: Praeger, 1963), pp. 295-98. This essay may also be found in virtually identical form in *The Reporter,* March 28, 1963.

175 "NATO's Nuclear Dilemma," *op. cit., pp.* 312-14. The sole reference to trans-Alantic institutions occurs on p. 299, where he asks whether, in preference to the McNamara concept of a single strategic force and a single chain of command, it might not be possible to have "several centers of decision coordinated politically so that their power serves a common end."

176 In *The Reporter,* quoted in the 1966 Doubleday Anchor edition.

sitive to European fears and insecurities-an insensitivity which has been reflected, *inter alia,* in the sharp swings of American policy on European defense.[177] An alliance cannot remain vital, he points out, unless it at least partially conforms to the images the member states have of themselves. In this context he writes, with perception and understanding, of the French disaffection from NATO, in the process treating the policies of de Gaulle as sympathetically as did any American writer during the 1960s. He also analyzes the Kennedy "grand design" for a European-American "partnership of equals," the so-called "twin pillars" concept, pointing out the difficulties standing in the way of its achievement and observing that should Europe become in important respects the "equal" of the United States, the result would more likely be a European challenge to American hegemony rather than a new era of European-American cooperation.[178]

By 1965, in fact, Kissinger was persuaded that the new, more assertive Europe which was already vigorously objecting to American policies on a broad front was here to stay, although he suggested that the assertiveness in part masked insecurity and weakness.[179] Europe's political revival, however, would not lead to a greater willingness to assist the United States in the continuing struggle to defend free world interests around the world. On the contrary, Kissinger repeats his long-held conviction that the European states had ceased to think of themselves as world powers, with the possible (and partial) exception of Great Britain; consequently the U.S. could not expect allied support for such United States policies as "the defense of Southeast Asia." Indeed, he writes, "we are now the only member of NATO with world-wide interests," and this is the source of more conflict with our allies.[180]

Last among the factors contributing to a decline in the cohesion of the Alliance during the 1960's, according to Mr. Kissinger, was the growing movement toward an East-West political accommodation. Detente, in fact, imparts a particular urgency to the task of reorienting the Alliance:

> As detente develops, the need to transform the Alliance from its present defensive concept into a political arrangement defining it-

177 T.P., pp. 23-25.
178 *Ibid.,* pp. **41-65, 31-39, 234-41.**
179 *Ibid.,* pp. 5-9, 21-22.
180 *Ibid.,* pp. *7-9.*

> self by some positive goals will grow even more urgent. Defense against a military threat will soon lose its force as a political bond. Negotiations with the East will prove corrosive unless they go hand in hand with the creation of common political purposes and the insitutions to embody them. The need, in short, is to go from alliance to community.[181]

Kissinger then makes one last attempt to design a new political structure for NATO. He suggests, in language similar to that of *Necessity for Choice,* the formation of an Executive Committee of the NATO Council composed of the five larger nations plus a rotating representative of the smaller powers to plan long-term policy, to "manage crises," and to "control the nuclear weapons of the Alliance." These weapons should be coordinated in such a way as to leave open the possibility of the eventual emergence of a European nuclear force.[182] All decisions of the Committee would be by a two-thirds vote, with a guaranteed right of appeal to the NATO Council (where such appeals would also be decided by a two-thirds vote).[183] Within such a framework, the European states might form a closer association; in that event, the relationship between Europe and the United States would approximate the relationship envisioned by the "twin pillars" concept of the Kennedy period.[184] But whatever the specifics of these arrangements, he writes enthusiastically, the objective is to create an "Atlantic Commonwealth in which all the peoples bordering the North Atlantic can fulfill their aspirations," creating unity out of diversity in a new burst of energy worthy of the great political tradition of the West.[185]

This vision is doubtless Kissinger's most grandiloquent thus far, and remains so up to the time of his utterances of 1972 and 1973 on detente. But one cannot avoid noticing its essential lack of detail. Such critical issues as the nature of the relationship between the emergent NATO nuclear force and Western deterrence strategy generally and the precise ways in which the force might be employed-and controlled-under wartime conditions are largely ignored. There is no assessment of the possible inducements which are to be offered

181 *Ibid.,* p. 10. He had also made this point in "Coalition Diplomacy," *op. cit.,* p.541.

182 *Ibid.,* pp. 172-74.

183 *Ibid.,* pp. 243-44. For an interim period, each ally would have the right to refuse to abide by an adverse Council decision.

184 He had previously been quite critical of the "twin pillars" approach; see, e.g., "Coalition Diplomacy," op. *cit.,* p. 542, and T.P., pp. 36-38.

185 *Ibid., pp.* 245-49.

to de Gaulle to persuade him to cooperate in the scheme. Perhaps most striking of all, he remains uncertain whether fundamental political change in Europe, including altered attitudes toward national sovereignty, must precede efforts to restructure the NATO alliance, or whether the process of restructuring itself might engender the necessary attitudinal shifts.[186]

Perhaps it was his inability to deal satisfactorily with such questions despite the substantial effort put forth in *Troubled Partnership* which soon thereafter led Kissinger to abandon the quest for what he came to call deprecatingly the "architectonic approach" to Alliance problems. In a balanced appraisal of NATO's problems published in 1966 (much of which is drawn directly from *Partnership),*[187] he suggests that "it seems high time to consider how much integration the United States really wants." The logic of our existing position, he argues, has created pressure for ever more integration of our military forces, including our strategic forces, into the NATO structure. Eventually the Europeans may demand participation in global decisions, he writes, and since the Alliance seems able to agree only on doing nothing, the end result might be a complete paralysis in American foreign policy. Indeed, while, as noted earlier, Kissinger throughout his writings often wonders about the desirability of subordinating U.S. freedom of action within a supranational organization,[188] his doubts surface here in particularly acute form; the contrast with the final pages of *Partnership* startles even the reader accustomed to frequent shifts in Kissinger's views:

> Of course, we should cooperate with Europeans whenever possible. But cooperation cannot be an end in itself. It functions best through balancing incentives for responsible policy. A multiplication of

[186] See, e.g., his statements on the declining relevance of traditional notions of national sovereignty, *ibid.,* pp. *15,* 120, and *cf.* the assertion on p. 39 that "the nation-state is not so obsolete as sometimes alleged." Compare also his repeated assertion in *Necessity for Choice* that political unity within the Alliance must precede integration of the allied nuclear forces with the argument in T.P., pp. 170-*75.*

[187] "For a New Atlantic Alliance," *The Reporter,* July 14, 1966, pp. 18-27.

[188] Such doubts appear even in *T.P.* See, e.g., p. *40,* where he directly challenges the assumption that a united Europe would inevitably conduct policies compatible with those of the U.S. "A separate identity," he notes (in language he employed in 1973 during the post-Middle East War crisis in Atlantic relations), "has usually been established by opposition to a dominant power. The European sense of identity is unlikely to be an exception to this general rule...."

> legal devices, unsupported by a real conception of common interest, defeats its own purpose.[189]

His structural recommendations are limited to suggestions for enhancing the powers of SACEUR, the committees within NATO which deal with military affairs, and possibly the West European Union. He repeats these recommendations in "Central Issues of American Foreign Policy." In the latter article, moreover, he asks whether a division of functions within the Alliance might not be possible, in which Western Europe plays the principle role in relation to East Europe while the U.S. concentrates on relations with the U.S.S.R. Europe would thus be confined to a purely regional role, while the U.S. would assume full responsibility for dealing with broader global issues on behalf of the West.'[190]

By 1968, then, Kissinger's dreams of an Atlantic Commonwealth have long since faded, and the intellectual framework he will employ to deal with Europe as Nixon's Special Assistant and as Secretary of State has been firmly established. Although he continued to articulate the now-inevitable phrases concerning "the need for the closest possible consultation" within the Alliance and the "highest possible priority" which he assigned to European-American relations,[191] it was clear that Europe occupied a subordinate-albeit important-role in Kissinger's conception of the emerging international order. Those familiar with his last writings on European problems were not surprised by the trans-Atlantic crisis of 1973: that crisis occurred simply because Europe refused to define its interests and role in world affairs as narrowly as Kissinger had defined them on its behalf. Early in his career, Europe had presented Kissinger with a serious intellectual dilemma: on the one hand he is in several ways more sympathetic to the European political outlook then he is to the American; fundamentally, however, he is inclined to favor characteristically-American "technical" and institutional approaches to the solution of political problems. Unable to reconcile the basic in-

189 "For a New Atlantic Alliance," *op. cit.,* p. 25. *Cf.* his remarks in T.P., p. 228, where he asserted that the challenge in restructuring NATO "is not only to provide a forum for the expression of a point of view-important as this is-but also to bring about a framework which encourages the emergence of responsible attitudes. Setting up lines of communication without paying corresponding attention to what flows through them is to evade the key problem."

190 See "Central Issues of American Foreign Policy," *op. cit.,* p. 78.

191 See, e.g., *Nomination Hearings,* Part I, pp. 230-31.

compatibility of these dispositions, he became entangled in a miasma of contradictions. By 1968, he was well on his way to resolving the dilemma by the simple expedient of turning from Europe to more global concerns, principally the new international order to be built on the basis of detente with the Soviet Union.

V.

Henry Kissinger, Realist and Idealist

The preceding overview of Mr. Kissinger's theory of international relations and his views concerning contemporary problems has endeavored to portray the subtlety and complexity of a man who remains an enigma to many. There are a variety of reasons, some fairly straightforward, others far more elusive, for the widely differing interpretations of his policies.

On the one hand, at the most general level Mr. Kissinger has displayed an amazing persistence in attempting to implement his 20 year-old conceptualization of the stable order characterized by a general and historical equilibrium. But it is not surprising that few have fully understood this conceptualization: it is abstract in its formulation and in no one place is it succinctly and fully explained. On the other hand, in his statements on revolutionary powers, his writings on strategic theory and policy, and his advocacy of a new American policy toward Europe, Kissinger's writings abound with contradictions.

In part these inconsistencies are explained by the fact that his views on certain issues changed over time; indeed, given the ephemeral nature of international political phenomena and the duration of his career as a political analyst, it would have been surprising had not Mr. Kissinger's attitudes evolved somewhat. Likewise, one should realize that before 1969 Mr. Kissinger's role was above all that of critic of policies of others, a role he played enthusiastically; indeed, his criticisms of others have in some cases been far more insightful than his suggestions for alternative policies. Thus in Mr. Kissinger's eyes Eisenhower could do no right, and his critique of the Kennedy Administration's European policy camouflaged his own basic agreement with much of the McNamara strategy. Such considerations do not suffice to explain the more numerous and important of his inconsistencies, however, particularly those which are to be found within a single work. It is ambiguities of the latter sort which

stymie his more careful readers and mislead the less wary, who focus on certain strongly-stated passages to the exclusion of others.

Many of the apparent contradictions in his writings must, in fact, be understood as a function of the Kissinger mode and style, for he is a polemicist and a debater as much as he is an analyst. His works are characterized by an impatience with detail, and in promoting an idea he will invariably muster every conceivable argument on its behalf, whether or not a particular point is compatible with arguments he has presented elsewhere. Thus he cannot be examined too closely on any particular issue, lest the reader be driven to one critic's exasperated declaration that "nowhere is it really possible to be sure what he believes, because the premises he uses to reach one conclusion seem unrelated to the assumptions he makes in some other context."[192] The Kissinger mode explains as well why his books tend to lack coherence; several can better be described as a series of argumentative essays than as an orderly and consistent treatment of a body of related material. Finally, his style partly explains why he has proven singularly adept at manipulating and neutralizing potential critics on both the Right and the Left: there is something for almost everyone in Kissinger's writings, save possibly for an unreconstructed Wilsonian.

This ability to forestall criticism, moreover, suggests the existence of a more fundamental explanation for the unintegrated character of his writings as well as for the sometimes startling discrepancy between the admonitions of Kissinger the Professor and the behavior of Kissinger the Secretary of State. To unearth that explanation, one must probe deeply into his philosophy of history and theory of international relations. Thereupon one discovers that his understanding of reality embraces strains of realism and surprising elements of idealism, the uneasy coexistence of which has had a profound impact upon both his writings and his diplomacy.

On first reading Mr. Kissinger's philosophy appears to embody the ethos of realism. His writings are replete with pessimistic assessments of the outlook for "true" peace, predictions that national interest will continue to be the primary determinant of the behavior of nations, recommendations for caution and hard-headed bargaining in dealing with other major powers, and a preference for the overtly modest goals of order and stability. Because Dr. Kissinger's

192 **Kaufman,** *op. cit.,* **p. 585.**

outlook appeared conditioned above all by an awareness of the nature of an international system in which power was uncontrolled and in which there seemed to be little prospect for significantly altering this circumstance, he came to be widely regarded as a realist. Because he sought a system which was not based on force alone but upon a sense of obligation and justice as well, he appears to be a principled realist; and his fundamental opposition to Marxist-Leninism endeared him to conservatives, particularly after strong anti-Communism lost much of its acceptability among American liberals. In fact, however, his realism was never unambiguous, and that aspect of his philosophy decreased in importance over time, particularly after he assumed office. Moreover, his realism has always been of the *realpolitik* variety, largely uninfluenced by ethical considerations, and exhibits little philosophical commitment to the values of Western Civilization which conservatives hold dear.

Mr. Kissinger's position regarding the proper place of morality in foreign policy were fully evident from the outset. He rejected sole reliance upon the balance of power for purely pragmatic reasons, because it was inadequate to achieve stability, not because a "legitimate" system was morally preferable.[193] Although he called the legitimizing principle a "moral" symbol designed to establish the "justice" of competing claims, its content was and is of little interest co him, and the sole criterion he articulates for its selection is that it be acceptable to all the major powers in the short and long term:

> "Legitimacy" as here used should not be confused with justice. It means no more than an international agreement about the nature of workable arrangements and about the permissible aims and methods of foreign policy.[194]

In his philosophy of world politics Kissinger is thus a relativist. His "ethical principles," insofar as they exist, consist almost solely of a "recognition of limits" by the state. Traditional moral codes, he argues, are developed as a matter of convenience, and differ according to the circumstances and culture of each society.[195] "Parochial" concepts of the nature of justice are developed because of the need to create a stable domestic order by means of some agreement upon the nature of political obligation. "The more spontaneous the pat-

193 *This* attitude *is* made clear in "The White Revolutionary," *op. cit.,* p. 909.
194 W.R., p. 1,
195 See, *for* instance, "Congress *of* Vienna," p. **31,** and W.R., pp. *328-29.*

tern of obligation, the more `natural' and `universal' will social values appear," since a nation "has no other standard of judgment." Most important, the domestic version of justice must not be imposed upon other nations if an international order is to be stable, for a "claim to moral superiority" creates a revolutionary situation in which attempts will be made to force these views on others. "Justice" as defined at the international level must "include the existence of different principles of legitimacy," because there must be a voluntary "consensus" upon the legitimizing principle: "internationally, what is defined domestically as justice becomes an object of negotiation"; "for a `right' is established by acquiescence, not by a claim, and a claim not generally accepted is merely the expression of an arbitrary will."[196]

Thus Mr. Kissinger has no qualms about the establishment of a "legitimizing principle" which accords the Soviet Union equality and mutual benefit and grants it the legal right to hegemony in East Europe, so long as this contributes to the "self-limitation" necessary for stability. He is highly reluctant to judge one society "better" than another. In his writings on Soviet ideology it is the drive to impose Marxism-Leninism on others to which he objects, and he seldom denounces the intrinsic inhumanity of the Communist system. He has argued that U.S. efforts to alter somewhat the Soviet domestic political situation would similarly make of America a revolutionary power,[197] Thus Mr. Kissinger's insistence that detente precludes any American interference in Soviet domestic affairs is a logical corollary of his relativism. While he may be sincere in his arguments that the U.S. has not the power to force the Soviets to allow greater freedom for dissident intellectuals or more extensive emigration and that the desired results could best be achieved through other means, his position is basically philosophical. It is in fact deeply rooted in his ethical theory and inherent in his views on international stability. Mr. Kissinger, moreover, seems unable to distinguish between uncompromising absolutism and a limited and prudent attempt to advance principles and values by means of foreign policy.[198]

196 For these last two quotes, see N.W., p. 140, and "Congress of Vienna," p. 12.

197 See, for instance, his *Pacetn in Terris* speech, *op. cit.*, p. 3, in which he warns that the U.S. must seek only the "relative satisfaction" of its goals and rejects attempts to impose "absolute justice by one side," which attempts he identifies with "the quest for total security."

198 See "Congress of Vienna," p. 28; W.R., p. 316; interview of Mr. Kissinger by James Reston, October 13, 1974, Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, p. 2; and *Nomination Hearings*, Part I, p. 40.

This is not to say that Mr. Kissinger has conducted a totally amoral foreign policy on all fronts. His dedication to stability above all other values doubtless derives, in part, from a wish to spare the world the tumult and suffering of major wars. In addition, his policy is surely conditioned, subconsciously and perhaps consciously, by the cultural values he has absorbed; despite his philosophy of international relations he may, in certain instances when it will not adversely affect his grand design, be quite willing to allow his personal values to guide policy when he feels there is a choice, whether or not he regards those values as ultimately "parochial." He has conceded, for instance, that "if a country does something so repugnant to human morality-if extermination camps are constructed-then this will certainly affect the degree of cooperation in which we can engage with such a country."[199] But, needless to say, this is a concession which offers little solace to liberals who object to close U.S. ties with undemocratic regimes of the Right, or to conservatives who believe that U.S. foreign policy should stand for a bit more than "mutual benefit." In general, for Mr. Kissinger as for Bismarck, policy is "the art of the possible, the science of the relative."[200] It is not surprising, therefore, that, as in the case of Bismarck, those who have become Mr. Kissinger's most bitter critics are his erstwhile supporters, the conservatives. It could be demonstrated also that Kissinger has never fully understood that the conservatism of a Burke or a Metternich represents much more than an undiscriminating defense of the *status quo.* And while he subtitled *A World Restored* "The Politics of Conservatism in a Revolutionary Age," he wrote that "the conservative dilemma" lay in the total irrelevance of that philosophy during a revolutionary age.

Mr. Kissinger is not, therefore, a "principled" realist, and far less is he a conservative. Moreover, in significant respects he is not a realist at all. Ultimately, the strains of idealism in Mr. Kissinger's outlook can be traced to his all-important theory of statesmanship, which goes far toward explaining both the ways in which his current poi-

199 *Nomination Hearings,* Part I, p. 117. At this time Mr. Kissinger was questioned closely and critically regarding his views on human rights, and he did attempt to formulate for Congress some general guidelines on the subject. See, e.g., pp. 116-18, *244,*

200 See Bismarck's use of the phrase in "The White Revolutionary," *op. cit.,* pp. *906-07.* Although Kissinger sometimes shortens this to the phrase "the art of the possible," he uses the full quote in "The Unsolved Problems of European Defense," *op. cit.,* p.538.

icy seems to deviate from his former prescriptions and many of the puzzling contradictions in his writings. The overt realism which cloaks many of his statements on this subject can be very misleading. His comparison of the statesman and the prophet, for example, illustrates very well the chasm between the realist and the idealist, and is worth quoting at length:

> The statesman manipulates reality; his first goal is survival; he feels responsible not only for the best but also for the worst conceivable outcome. His view of human nature is wary; he is conscious of many great hopes which have failed, of many good intentions that could not be realized, of selfishness and ambition and violence. He is, therefore, inclined to erect hedges against the possibility that even the most brilliant idea might prove abortive and that the most eloquent formulaton might hide ulterior motives. He will try to avoid certain experiments, not because he would object to the results if they succeeded, but because he would feel himself responsible for the consequences if they failed. He is suspicious of those who personalize foreign policy, for history teaches him the fragility of structures dependent on individuals. To the statesman, gradualism is the essence of stability; he represents an era of average performance, of gradual change and slow construction.
>
> By contrast, the prophet is less concerned with manipulating than with creating reality. What is possible interests him less than what is "right." He offers his vision as the test and his good faith as a guarantee. He believes in total solutions; he is less absorbed in methodology than in purpose. He believes in the perfectibility of man. His approach is timeless and not dependent on circumstances. He objects to gradualism as an unnecessary concession to circumstance. He will risk everything because his vision is the primary significant reality to him. Paradoxically, his more optimistic view of human nature makes him more intolerant than the statesman. If truth is both knowable and attainable, only immorality or stupidity can keep man from realizing it. The prophet represents an era of exaltation, of great upheavals, of vast accomplishments, but also of enormous disasters.[201]

Although Mr. Kissinger obviously identifies himself with the "statesman"-just as he believes Metternich and Castlereagh belonged to that category-he has revealed himself to be at least as much a "prophet" as he is a statesman. To be sure, as pointed out above, he does not have the "moral" vision of the prophet, although he has a vision nevertheless, and he shows no sign that he believes in the "perfectibility of man." On almost all the other points of contrast,

[201] "Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy," *op. cit.,* pp. 46-47.

however, Mr. Kissinger is far more a "prophet" than he would care to admit.

"The statesman manipulates reality"; "by contrast, the prophet is less concerned with manipulating than with creating reality." On this most basic of levels, Mr. Kissinger is not in the last analysis a realist. He has declared, for instance, that,

> The overemphasis on "realism" and the definition of "reality" as being entirely outside the observer may produce a certain passivity and a tendency to adapt to circumstance rather than to master it. It may also produce a gross underestimation of the ability to change, indeed to create, reality. To recapture the ability and the willingness to build our own reality is perhaps our ultimate challenge.[202]

"Facts," he tells us, are not something to be adjusted to or manipulated, but rather they should be "transcended." For "there are two kinds of realists: those who use facts and those who create them. The West requires nothing so much as men able to create their own reality," men who will demonstrate that "whatever meaning history has is derived from the convictions and purpose of the generation which shapes it."[203] According to Kissinger, the contrast beweeen the statesman and the prophet parallels that between the "political" and the "revolutionary" approaches to foreign policy; elsewhere, he has distinguished those who "adapt their purposes to reality" from those who "seek to mold reality in the light of their purposes," the latter category including Bismarck and "all revolutionaries."[204] By his own admission, Dr. Kissinger is therefore more a "prophet" than a "statesman."

This view of political life derives ultimately from Kissinger's struggle early in his academic career to discover the extent and limits of free will in history.[205] While attracted by the sweeping theories of the rise and fall of civilizations which he found in the works of Spengler and Toynbee, and while acknowledging that "no civilization has yet been permanent, no longing completely fulfilled," he wrote that necessity was ultimately "an inward condition" rather

202 N.C., p. *370.*

203 T.P., *p. 249.* See also N.W., *p. 436.*

204 "The White Revolutionary," *op. cit.*, p. 910.

205 The following quotations are taken from his senior thesis, written for Harvard College when he was *27* years old, and entitled *Spengler, Toynbee, Kant and the Meaning of History*. See pp. *323-29.* A summary may also be found in Graubard, *op. cit., pp. 6-9.* He reaffirmed this cyclical view of history in T.P., p. *246,* and N.C., ***pp.* 314ff.**

than an objective state, and that "matter can defeat only those who have no spirituality to impart to it." Civilization is either in ascent or decline, and "there are no plateaus in international affairs." But even if history cannot be transcended, it is "activity," premised upon freedom, which gives meaning to man's life and enables him to express his personality: "But nothing can relieve man from his ultimate responsibility, from giving his own meaning to life, from elevating himself above necessity.... " Kissinger's relativism thus appears to lead him to embrace an existentialist philosophy in which man's worth depends upon the tenacity and boldness of his efforts to overcome what he calls the "fatedness of history."

The great statesman who occasionally bursts upon the pages of history may, by establishing the framework of a stable peace, at least temporarily halt the decline of a civilization which has lost its elan, revitalizing that society by his creative efforts. Mr. Kissinger's theory of "conjecture," which postulates the need for a total reliance upon the intuition of the great statesman, bears obvious philosophical kinship to his cyclical theory of history.

The realistic statesman, it will be recalled, is "suspicious of those who personalize foreign policy, for history teaches him the fragility of structures dependent on individuals"; he prefers "average performance." The prophet, for his part, "offers his vision as the test and his good faith as a guarantee." Here too Mr. Kissinger's philosophy of leadership bears striking resemblance to that of the prophet. He believes that "every creative act is lonely"[206] and that the truly great leader,

> must inevitably act on the basis of an intuition that is inherently unprovable. If he insists on certainty, he runs the danger of becoming the prisoner of events. His resolution must reside not in "facts" as commonly conceived but in his vision of the future.[207]

He feels that the element of conjecture is "crucial" to foreign policy during a revolutionary period such as exists today. Because "the old order is obviously disintegrating while the shape of its replacement is highly uncertain," "everything depends ... on some conception of the future."[208] But the bureaucracy and the public will inevitably express a variety of conflicting opinions and will be unable to agree

206 "Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy," *op. cit.*, p. 19.
207 "Reflections on Cuba," *op. cit.*, p. 24.
208 "Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy," *op. cit.*, p. 14.

on a proper course of action. Although certainty is not possible in such a situation, the statesman has the great advantage of his intuition: "The difference between great policy and mediocre policy .. . is usually an accumulation of nuances"; "you act on the basis of an assessment that in the nature of things is a guess."[209] Unfortunately, "a call to greatness is often not understood by contemporaries,"[210] and "statesmen often share the fate of prophets, that they are without honour in their own country," because "their greatness is usually apparent only in retrospect when their intuition has become experience." Statesmen must have the courage of their convictions-they must "act as if their intuition were truth," attempting to "educate" their countrymen in the process.[211] Mr. Kissinger, therefore, like the prophet, "offers his vision as the test and his good faith as a guarantee." In view of his philosophy of leadership, it is not surprising that his foreign policy has been characterized by the very "personalism" he once deplored in others, and that he has reacted with abruptness and even fury when others, such as the Europeans, have questioned his vision.

The realistic statesman, according to Mr. Kissinger, is "conscious of many great hopes which have failed"; thus his first goal is "survival," and he will "avoid certain experiments" and "erect hedges against the possibility that even the most brilliant idea might prove abortive," preparing himself for the "worst contingency." The prophet, however, will "risk everything because his vision is the primary significant reality to him. . . . The prophet represents an era of exaltation, of great upheavals, of vast accomplishments, but also of enormous disasters." Once again, Mr. Kissinger's great statesman appears to have more in common with the prophet than with the sober realist. He must be willing to run great risks of a creative nature and to pursue his vision with the daring that is necessary if one is to have a chance of success in overcoming the cyclical process of history. If he does not succeed, he can take comfort in the thought that he has by the very grandeur of his efforts achieved tragic stature. The attribute "which has enabled the spirit to transcend an impasse at so many crises of history" is "the ability to contemplate an abyss, not with the detachment of a scientist, but as a challenge to overcome-

209 Reston interview, *op. cit.,* pp. 9, 2.

210 "The White Revolutionary," op. *cit.,* p. 913, or N.W., p. 432.

211 "Congress of Vienna," p. 32, or W.R., p. 329. See another version in N.W., p. 431'-'as if his aspiration were truth."

or to perish in the process."[212] "Tragic stature" lies not in the "bittersweet resignation" of Metternich, who built his order upon an outmoded principle, but in "contemplating chaos," adapting to new trends and gambling that one can shape them rather than be overcome by them. Greatness resides in "the task of construction," for "profound policy thrives on perpetual creation" rather than on "the quest for calculability that becomes the prisoner of events."[213] Admittedly, "international agreements are sometimes possible only by ignoring safeguards against capricious action," and the result may be "essentially arbitrary decisions" which are "especially dangerous in a revolutionary period."[214] The statesman is therefore like "one of the heroes in classical drama," or,. as Kissinger once referred to himself, like "the lone cowboy," who follows his solitary vision in pursuit of greatness, and is willing to "contemplate chaos" in the process. He may fail to achieve that vision, but greatness lies in the attempt and in the grandeur of the vision as much as in actual success. "For men become myths, not by what they know, nor even by what they achieve, but by the tasks they set for themselves."[215] It is better to risk greatly and fail than to be content with mediocrity or stodgy prudence, to be like "the fallen angel who is beautiful but without peace, great in his conceptions and exertions but without success, proud and lonely," as Bismarck put it.[216]

Thus, while Mr. Kissinger's theory of statesmanship makes excellent script for a Greek tragedy, it is ultimately incompatible with the pursuit of a consistently realistic foreign policy. Although he has on many occasions acknowledged that policy must be prepared for the "worst contingency," his fundamental preference is for daring rather than caution. His most cherished goal is to partake in "creation," a word which reappears constantly in his writings and speeches. Hence his affinity for the architectonic, for the well-integrated and neatly-ordered design. For example: the problems of the world are essentially "structural" and will be solved by the creation of a new "structure of peace" in which global relationships will conform to a carefully calculated "equilibrium"; one must avoid loose ends in South Vietnam by negotiating a settlement rather than simply continuing with the phased withdrawal that was part of the Viet-

212 W.R., p. 322.
213 W.R., pp. 323, 326, 327.
214 "Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy," *op. cit.*, p. 23.
215 W.R, p. 322.
216 "The White Revolutionary," *op. cit.*, p. 922.

namization program; the problems of NATO will be solved through massive organizational restructuring and by, in some ill-defined manner, revitalizing the "spirit" of the Alliance. Mr. Kissinger is in fact impatient with the intractable realities of the present and there glimmers within him some of the utopian penchant for absolute, sweeping solutions which concentrate instead upon a vision of the future. Although he has often criticized Americans for these very tendencies, he is in fact more American than he knows.

It is thus not surprising that Kissinger became impatient with containment, for he is philosophically and doubtless temperamentally unsuited to a policy of long-term, patient, firm, and vigilant counterpressures. He himself has pointed out that Europe was forced to draw a line at which the Turks and Arabs were defeated in battle and then to exercise "unremitting pressure" for "several centuries" before decay set in among the enemy civilizations; likewise, it was 150 years after the destruction of Carthage before Rome became a *status quo* nation.[217] But in a similarly "revolutionary" situation Mr. Kissinger's own patience lasted for less than two decades. He at first was among the most aggressive interpreters of the containment policy, advocating action on a broad front to block any Communist advances and even suggesting that we reduce the Soviet sphere; as containment settled into a largely reactive policy, he became restless and urged that we articulate some "positive goals"; then he abandoned altogether his original prescriptions on how to deal with revolutionary powers and advocated instead attempts to reach a basic settlement with the Soviets; finally he became convinced that the prospects were bright indeed for the creation of a more stable international order.

The longing for a carefully planned final solution to every problem and the obvious impatience with ambiguity are hallmarks of the idealist. So too is the rationalism which betrays itself in the theory that all states may eventually be made to realize and act upon their pragmatic interest in global peace and stability, and the tendency to rely upon "the man on the white horse" to banish evil from history.

In a curious way, the pessimism generated by a cyclical theory of history has also contributed to Mr. Kissinger's lack of realism. If it is true that all societies eventually disintegrate, then the potential collapse of the statesman's efforts is not so disastrous a possibility as it

217 N.W., p. *357,* and N.C., p. 311.

might otherwise be; for while failure may hasten the civilization's decline, disintegration would have occurred even had these risks not been taken, and there is always the chance that the statesman's daring might succeed in rescuing the society or prolonging its vitality. Kissinger has often expressed his belief that the West is today at a, turning point in history:

> The world stands uneasily poised between unprecedented chaos and the opportunity for unparalleled creativity. The next few years will determine whether interdependence will foster common progress or common disaster. Our generation has the opportunity to shape a new cooperative international system; if we fail to act with vision we will condemn ourselves to mounting domestic and international crises.[218]

"History has, I think, placed me in a key position at a time when we are moving from the relics of the postwar period toward a new international structure."[219] The West, suffering "from political malaise, from inner uncertainty and a lack of direction,"[220] he appears to believe, is teetering on the brink of decline as the Third World increasingly rejects its leadership and the Communist states continue to expand in strength. And Mr. Kissinger promises to usher us through that period relatively unscathed if we learn to adapt gracefully to historical trends without holding too stubbornly to our parochial version of justice.

VI.

Conclusion

The relationship between Mr. Kissinger's academic writings and the policies he has pursued since becoming the principal architect

218 From a speech by Mr. Kissinger in Los Angeles, January 24, 1975, Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, p. 1. See also pp. 3, 7. For other statements indicating that the U.S. appears to be at a stage where it will decline if great efforts are not made to forestall this process, see, e.g., Reston interview, *op. cit.,* pp. 1, 6, 7, 10; Salinger interview, op. *cit.,* pp. 2, 4; Walters interview, *op. cit.,* p. 6; speech of June 23, 1975, *op. cit.,* pp. 1-3, 7; and interview of Mr. Kissinger by Bill Moyers, January 16, 1975, Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, p. 1.

219 Reston interview, *op. cit.,* p. *10.*

220 Interview of Mr. Kissinger published in *Business Week,* January 13, 1975, p. 3. For other indications of the reasons why he believes the U.S. is in decline, see: Reston interview, op. *cit.,* pp. 1, 10; Walters interview, *op. cit., p.* 6; speech of June 23, 1975, *op. cit.,* p. *3;* and his testimony on the trade reform bill, *Congressional Record,* December 12, 1974, p. S 20963.

of American foreign policy in 1969 has been a source of endless fascination for commentators for several years. To analyze this relationship would carry us far beyond the scope of this article, which is in any case already overly long; hopefully the foregoing evaluation provides an adequate basis for comparison. A few additional remarks also seem in order.

First, it should be obvious from the presentation above that in certain particulars Mr. Kissinger the practitioner has ignored the advice which he dispensed to others as an academic and consultant to government agencies during the 1950s and 1960s. The one=time bitter critic of summitry has become the world's preeminent summiteer; yesterday's staunch advocate of close U.S. ties with Europe proclaimed not long ago that "I don't care what happens to NATO, I'm so disgusted"; the hardline cold warrior of the mid-1950s now asserts that Soviet-American detente is probably irreversible.

Too much, however, should not be made of these discrepancies. It should not surprise anyone that Mr. Kissinger's views on several important international issues have changed over time; indeed, it would be startling were this not the case. The exigencies of his present position, moreover, obviously prevent him from presenting his views on certain problems with full candor; whatever his real intentions, for example, he could not announce that an important objective of current U.S. foreign policy is to play off Communist China against the U.S.S.R. It must be stressed above all that Mr. Kissinger's views on many issues are elusive and cannot be definitively grasped by reading only a few works or even by a cursory overview of all his writings and policy statements. In part this is because he is aware of the complex nature of most international problems and, depending upon his concern of the moment, will in individual writings or situations focus on certain aspects to the exclusion of others; in the last analysis, however, such complexities frequently are neglected due to his abiding fascination with the integrated overview and the final solution. In part, as suggested earlier, his views are difficult to pin down because he is frequently as much a polemicist and a debater as he is a scholar. One can often find, therefore, specific passages which initially appear at variance with the analysis presented above.

Ultimately, however; the fundamental harmony between his diplomacy since 1969 and the approach to contemporary international problems found in his writings transcends any specific in-

congruities. When read together, Kissinger's writings present a grand design for achieving international stability and peace between the major powers. In *A World Restored* he set forth the general conditions for global stability in an international system characterized by anarchy and the absence of functioning supra-national organizations. In *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy* he argued that the possession of invulnerable second-strike forces by both superpowers could bring about a stalemate in the competition between them and to that extent stabilize current international politics. In *The Troubled Partnership* and subsequent works he called attention to changes he perceived in Soviet objectives and behavior, which in the future might make possible a substantial improvement in U.S.-U.S.S.R. relations. And throughout his writings he asserts that the great statesman, operating on the basis of his superior knowledge, insight, and intuition, can manipulate these and other factors in the system to create "structures of peace" and mitigate the consequences of international anarchy.

Since 1969, Kissinger has made his assumptions concerning nuclear stalemate and the altered objectives of the U.S.S.R. the basis for his policy of detente, a policy which under his guidance has become the primary international objective of the United States. He clearly believes, moreover, that he himself is the great statesman envisioned in his writings, who may be able to fashion order from chaos and lead the world in spite of itself into a lasting era of stability and relative peace.

If one were more confident of the extent of Mr. Kissinger's realism, one might feel less uneasy about placing full trust in his vision. However, one is given pause by his belief that increments of power are of "marginal advantage" and that the "traditional maxims" of foreign policy and the "old pure power political" terms no longer apply to Soviet-American relations.[221] This, combined with his philosophy of statesmanship, raises grave doubts about whether he will be sufficiently cautious in pursuing his dream of a "structure of peace."

There is much in Kissinger's work that is of value. He strove in his theoretical writings to tread the narrow line between realism and idealism, seeking to integrate the proper amount of "inspiration" into an outlook basically conditioned by an awareness of the

[221] For these quotes see Salinger interview, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

unpleasant realities of international politics. Thus he distinguished two types of realists, one content with the sterile manipulation of given facts, the other much like Bismarck, the "white revolutionary," who attempts more than this and at the same time strives to avoid the errors of the prophet. It is unfortunate, even tragic, that he was unable to maintain that balance, and that in practice the many less felicitous aspects of his philosophy have under his stewardship come to dominate the foreign policy of the United States.

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