# Zürcher Beiträge

**zur Sicherheitspolitik und
Konfliktforschung Nr. 56**

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# The Nuclear Revolution, Social Dissent, and the Evolution of Détente

**Patterns of Interaction, 1957-74**

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# PREFACE

Détente in Europe and its evolution in the 1960s and 1970s must be understood as a highly complex phenomenon, not unlike the establishment of the Cold War system in the 1940s and 1950s. As new archival material on the period becomes available, we will have to re-think how the "old" Cold War history described the origins and eventual failure of détente in this period of a rapidly changing international system. In the murky waters of the 1960s, the hotspots of the Cold War shifted from the nuclear-fortified post-war boundaries of Europe to peripheral areas and domestic spaces. While power became increasingly multi-dimensional, the management of alliance disputes under conditions of hege-monic decline became an overriding concern.

As this study claims, most prior studies of détente in Europe have neglected these important dynamics. Historians and political scientist alike have focused on the bilateral framework of Soviet-American relations and explained détente as a result from the nuclear stalemate between the two superpowers. Yet, the nuclear revolution made détente possible in its formative years from 1957 through 1963. However, in its period of stagnation (1964 to 1968) and during the following "high détente" (1969 to 1978), the nuclear peace provided also the fungus for the failure of détente, because of its alliance and domestic short-comings.

The authors argue that détente fell victim to the nuclear revolution that initially had made a period of hopeful peace possible, but not endurable. In order to understand the dynamics of the evolution of détente, the role of ideas and insti-tutions in an increasingly multipolar world must be taken into account. Only a rapprochement of social and a more international diplomatic history may provide the opportunity for new insights in this complex field of study. This paper is the first result of an interdisciplinary research project that will be carried on by the authors.

Zurich, June 2000

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# INTRODUCTION

The achievement of nuclear stalemate in the 1960s, contrary to most scholarship on the subject, made a transformation of postwar international politics conceivable and desirable. For empowered leaders and engaged citizens the possibility of global suicide had a surprisingly liberating effect. With the world permanently near destruction who could oppose attempts at alternative policy? The dominant strategic and social thinkers during this period placed a premium upon change, as contrasted to the seeming complacency of the 1950s.

Change in a context of nuclear stalemate, however, proved remarkably easy to contemplate, but incredibly difficult to implement. The institutions that mobilized resources for military needs, the geographic points of strategic conflict, and the constraints on truly open communication between groups all became more firmly entrenched by the achievement of plentiful and roughly balanced nuclear capabilities. Predictability bred stability, but stable apprehensions of instant and total annihilation hardly constituted the confidence, tranquillity, and free exchange associated with peace. This is the core contradiction of the nuclear revolution, and the central dynamic at work in the evolution of détente in the 1960s.

Understanding the nuclear revolution requires deep and wide-ranging investigation of this contradiction between aspiration and implementation in the 1960s. Hopes for reform, and even reconstruction, within the political and social constraints of the Cold War dominated the thoughts of rival leaders (John F. Kennedy and Nikita Khrushchev), disgruntled allies (Charles de Gaulle and Mao Zedong), and emerging dissident groups (the New Left and the scientific-literary community in the East bloc) during the decade after Sputnik. A shared imperative for reform across political and social lines produced the early détente of 1963. The Limited Test Ban Treaty marked the point at which continued political reliance on nuclear weapons as symbols of power forced the intra-alliance and domestic social pressures for reform to diverge irreparably from diplomacy and high politics. The language, structure, and political manifestation of what formerly constituted a dynamic urge for compromise among the great powers evolved, as a consequence of this divergence between diplomatic necessity and social aspiration, into a thin, elite veneer of great power stability. During the latter half of the 1960s structures of political authority failed to resolve points of international conflict, and instead displaced violence and contention into perceived peripheral areas (Vietnam, most explicitly) and domestic spaces (universities, most conspicuously).

We will argue that there exist distinct patterns of interaction between the nuclear revolution, social dissent, and the evolution of détente. Section 1 will examine the predominant international political and military pressures that elicited the unprecedented "little détente" of 1963. Section 2 will focus on the reform urges within alliances and domestic institutions. These aspirations for change coalesced during the middle 1960s in opposition to the perceived false promises of politics. In section 3 the long-term domestic shortcomings of détente will become most apparent, especially in light of the near global revolts of 1968 and successive years. The contrast between 1963 and 1968 is most revealing. During the latter year, unsatisfied urges for international and domestic reform shook the ground on which détente stood. Foreign policy initiatives undertaken by Henry Kissinger, Willy Brandt, and others provided relative international stability during the 1970s, but without the widespread consensus and idealism that shined through the rhetoric of the early 1960s. The Western alliance, through various NATO reforms, adapted begrudgingly to this less consensual world. The Eastern bloc, because of its more rigid and dogmatic composition, failed to institute new mechanisms for compromise and cooperation among uncertain allies.

The shortcomings of détente undermined postwar power and authority in both the East and the West. Comparative differences in political structure, however, made alliance and domestic challenges more debilitating for the Soviet Union than for its Western counterparts. Whereas the Western states entered a dark period of political suspicion, recrimination, and diminished expectation, the Kremlin confronted the deeper contours of precipitous decline and imperial dissolution. The verdict for Communist China – in the context of the nuclear revolution, social dissent, and détente – is unfolding before our eyes today.

# 1 The Nuclear Revolution and the Constructed Cold War Settlement

In January 1961, when a new American leadership brazenly promised to "bear any burden" on behalf of anti-communist containment, the Cold War international system was very much in flux. What many at the time recognized as a "nuclear revolution" drove the most significant changes in the international system.[1] This nuclear revolution, based upon near strategic stalemate and mutually assured destruction, shaped the evolution of détente in contradictory ways.[2] On the one hand, the evolving nuclear stalemate between the United States and the Soviet Union enhanced the willingness of the two dominant states to accept a great power status quo as the basis for their bilateral relations. On the other hand, the proliferation of nuclear weapons to the superpowers' most important allies enhanced multilateral political structures and encouraged new disputes within formerly more hegemonic alliances.

## 1.1 Nuclear Stalemate and Great Power Status Quo

Historical accounts of the postwar international system have assumed, until recently, that détente emerged in somewhat linear fashion from the nuclear stalemate between the two superpowers. Explanations of the so-called "long peace" agreed in large part with the central assumptions of realist theory – the

dominant force in the field of international relations theory through the 1980s. Largely based on American sources and dominated by American scholars, this "old" Cold War history inscribed the origins of détente – like most other international developments – within the bipolar framework of Soviet-American relations.[3]

From this perspective the increasing stability of the international system seemed primarily to flow from nuclear danger. The overwhelming destructive power of intercontinental thermonuclear weapons – loaded upon quick and accurate bombers and rockets – made evidence of mutual vulnerability ever-present for superpower leaders, thus reinforcing inclinations to accept and stabilize the status quo against risky activities. Mutual vulnerability in the missile age seemed unavoidable, but for strategic observers like Bernard Brodie it also provided prudent inhibitions against the reckless international behavior that sparked past conflagrations, World War I in particular.[4] Nuclear war dangers inherent in the Berlin, Taiwan, and Cuban missile crises between 1958 and 1962 tempered possible scenarios for military engagement, leading policy makers East and West to discern necessary areas of common interest that would avoid future great power conflicts and preserve the geopolitical status quo.[5]

This status quo in the context of the nuclear stalemate became an end for policy makers in itself. While the limited wars in Vietnam, the Middle East, and elsewhere continued and even escalated under these conditions, neither side displayed any serious willingness to risk nuclear war after the near tragedy of October 1962 around the small island of Cuba. In the rhetoric and thought of policy makers within the great powers "order," "stability," "predictability," and

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[1] For "examples of how the acknowledged "nuclear revolution" explicitly challenged standing policy concepts, like "national security" and "national interest," see C. Yost, "The Idea of National Security," 26 June 1958 and L. W. Fuller to George McGhee 27 November 1961, Folder: M.I.T., Box 122, RG 59, Lot 67D548 – Records of the Policy Planning Staff, 1957-1961, National Archives, College Park, Maryland [hereafter NA].

[2] On the meaning of the nuclear revolution see Robert Jervis, *The Meaning of the Nuclear Revolution: Statecraft and the Prospect of Armageddon* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1989); Michael Mandelbaum, *The Nuclear Revolution: International Politics before and after Hiroshima* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981); McGeorge Bundy, *Danger and Survival: Choices about the Bomb in the First Fifty Years* (New York: Vintage Books, 1988); Richard Ned Lebow, *Nuclear Crisis Management: a Dangerous Illusion* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1987); Andreas Wenger, *Living with Peril: Eisenhower, Kennedy and Nuclear Weapons* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997).

[3] See for example John Lewis Gaddis, *The Long Peace: Inquiries into the History of the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 215-45; Anders Stephanson, "The Big Two," in David Reynolds, ed., *The Origins of the Cold War in Europe: International Perspectives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 23-52; Christoph Hoppe, *Zwischen Teilhabe und Mitsprache: Die Nuklearfrage in der Allianzpolitik Deutschlands 1959-1966* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1993). For a historiographical overview see Michael J. Hogan (ed.), *America in the World: the Historiography of American Foreign Relations since 1941* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

[4] Bernard Brodie, *Strategy in the Missile Age* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), 147-304.

[5] Marc Trachtenberg, *History and Strategy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 163-234; Andreas Wenger, "Der lange Weg zur Stabilität: Kennedy, Chruschtschow und das gemeinsame Interesse der Supermächte am Status quo in Europa," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 46 (Januar 1998): 69-99.

most importantly, "détente," became associated with aspirations for peace. These conceptual connections allowed little room for principle or unregulated change.[6]

This bipolar analysis provides many important insights, but new evidence from the archives of the various states exposes the serious limits of this perspective on the far more complicated international system during the 1960s.[7] A few revisions of the standard historical model are in order. First, all of the relevant international players did not take a nuclear stalemate for granted, as did later observers. Nuclear weapons, in addition to their stabilizing effects, produced new international uncertainties related to power diffusion and credibility. Perceptions that the nuclear balance, even among the two rocket-armed superpowers, was indeed precarious lay at the roots of both the Berlin and the Cuban missile crises. From the Soviet perspective, fears of a nuclear-armed *Bundeswehr* and America's emerging first strike capability lay at the root of Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev's threatening overtures. More than any tangible assets in Berlin and Cuba, the Kremlin sought to redress the well-founded perceptions that the global balance of nuclear strike power favored the United States.[8]

Following Moscow's unexpected resumption of aggressive nuclear testing in September 1961, Washington responded by resuming its own underground experiments, preparing for a new round of nuclear tests in the atmosphere. Like their Soviet counterparts, the American leadership saw an imperative need to display images of nuclear strength and initiative in a world of approaching stalemate. The Kennedy administration, in particular, had to convince its European allies that the United States would not negotiate from weakness in Berlin and broader areas of European security.[9]

Even if one takes the inevitability of the nuclear stalemate for granted in retrospect, a perplexing puzzle remains unexplained. In spite of stalemate, the nuclear arms race proceeded and nuclear weapons continued to display considerable political relevance throughout the 1960s. Allied governments, East and West, emphasized relative nuclear capabilities and stockpiles, in spite of the fact that mutually assured destruction made a war even among unequal superpowers mutually suicidal. Politicians and strategic thinkers generally did not waver in the value they attached to destructive superiority, and in this sense nuclear weapons retained what political scientist Robert Jervis has identified as their central political importance.[10] .

Against the background of growing European doubts regarding U.S. resolve in 1961, Kennedy embarked upon a program of reassurance for his European allies. Henry Kissinger, then a part-time consultant to the National Security Council, traveled to West Germany under these auspices, with the express aim of allaying Chancellor Konrad Adenauer's heightened concerns about American commitment to the defense of West Berlin and the Federal Republic. The German leader sought clear "reassurance" from the United States that the Western alliance continued to command overwhelming nuclear superiority. Balance and stalemate were not enough in political and psychological terms.

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[6]  For a few instances, from an almost endless array of possible examples, where policy makers emphasized "order," "stability," and "détente" in the face of possible international crisis and chaos during the 1960s see Memorandum of Conversation between Soviet Ambassador Anatoli Dobrynin and American Ambassador Averell Harriman 22 June 1962, President's Office Files, Box 113a, Folder: China, Security, 1962-3, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, Boston, Massachusetts [hereafter JFKL]; Entretien entre le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères Maurice Couve de Murville et le Premier Ministre d'URSS Aleksei Kossyguine, Pitzunda, le 31 octobre 1965, Fonds Couve de Murville, Carton CM2, Dossier: Entretiens Couve de Murville et responsables URSS 29-31 octobre 1965, Archives d'histoire contemporaine, Foundation nationale des sciences politiques, Paris, France [hereafter Couve Papers]; Aktenvermerk über den Abschiedsbesuch beim Vorsitzenden der VR China, Genosse Liu Schau-tji, am 8. Februar 1961 in Peking, Walter Ulbrichts Nachlass, NY 4182, Microfilm FBS 363/15322, Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde, Deutschland [hereafter SAPMO-BArch].

[7]  The literature on the Kennedy years is marred by contradictory historical evaluations of foreign policy largely because Kennedy apologists and revisionists alike have frequently proven insensitive to the flux and uncertainty that characterized the international system during the early 1960s. On this point see Burton I. Kaufmann. "John F. Kennedy as World Leader: a Perspective on the Literature," in Hogan, *America in the World*, 326-57.

[8]  Trachtenberg, *History and Strategy*, 180-191; John Lewis Gaddis, *We now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 265-66.

[9]  See, for example, McGeorge Bundy to President Kennedy 29 May 1961, *Foreign Relations of the United States* [hereafter FRUS], 1961-63, XIII: 659-662; Possible draft letter from President Kennedy to President de Gaulle, FRUS, 1961-63, XIII: 672; Discussion between President Kennedy and President de Gaulle in Paris 31 May - 2 June 1961, President's Office Files, Box 116a, Folder: France, Security, 1961 (d), JFKL.

[10]  See Jervis, *The Meaning of the Nuclear Revolution*, 1-45, 226-57.

Adenauer and his European counterparts demanded unquestioned Western strategic superiority.[11]

In their analyses of this period some scholars have looked to the domestic roots of foreign policy and emphasized the effects of bureaucratic politics.[12] Others have concentrated on psychological factors and called for more empirical studies.[13] Only recently, however, has the emergence of a "new" achivally-informed Cold War international history – emphasizing a multinational rather than a largely American perspective – increased our attention to the multiple influences between the two hegemons and their most important allies.[14] The emerging elements of tacit cooperation between Washington and Moscow, according to this research, reveal a more complex scenario than the surface reality of nuclear balance between the two superpowers in the 1960s. The emerging stability of the Soviet-American nuclear relationship reflected, somewhat paradoxically,

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[11]   For a summary of the discussion between Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and Henry Kissinger on 18 May 1961 see Aufzeichnung 23. Mai 1961, Konrad Adenauers Nachlass, Ordnung III/59, Stiftung Bundeskanzler-Adenauer-Haus, Rhöndorf, Germany [hereafter Adenauer papers]. For a similar discussion between Adenauer and Kissinger on 16 February 1962, a few months after Kissinger officially resigned from the NSC, see Aufzeichnung 20. Februar 1962, Ordnung III/60, Adenauer papers. For an American perspective on these talks see Telegram from Dowling, American Embassy in Germany to the Department of State, 17 February 1962, FRUS, 1961–1963, XIV: 824–27. One should note that as the German text of these meetings between Adenauer and Kissinger reveals, the part-time NSC consultant did a very poor job of allaying Adenauer's concerns. During their 1962 meeting Kissinger explicitly confirmed Adenauer's expressed fears that America suffered from too much of an "isolationist" tradition. This phrase and other negative Kissinger comments about American foreign policy are absent from the American text of the 1962 meeting.

[12]   Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1971); Desmond Ball, *Politics and Force Levels: the Strategic Missile Program of the Kennedy Administration* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980); Morton H. Halperin, *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1974); John D. Steinbrunner, *The Cybernetic Theoriy of Decision: New Dimensions of Political Analysis* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974).

[13]   Robert Jervis, *Perceptions and Misperceptions in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976); Robert Jervis, *The Illogic of American Nuclear Strategy* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1984); Robert Jervis, Richard Ned Lebow, and Janice Gross Stein, *Psychology and Deterrence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985); Alexander George and Richard Smoke, *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974).

[14]   For new perspectives of the Cold War see Geir Lundestad*, 'Empire' by Integration: the United States and European Integration, 1945-97* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Gaddis, *We now Know*; Marc Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace: the Making of the European Settlement, 1945-1963* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999).

the increasing importance of political and social issues previously ignored in the counsels of early Cold War diplomacy. The 1960s witnessed deep fault lines within and between the alliances around threats of nuclear proliferation, fracturing intra-alliance economic relations, and competition for leadership in formerly colonial lands. The nuclear balance remained predominantly bipolar, but power seeped into more multidimensional forms.

## 1.2   Nuclear Proliferation and Alliance Disputes

International political power in the 1960s became increasingly multidimensional, and nuclear power in particular became multinational. Economic and ideological factors increasingly affected relations both within as well as between states East and West. The evidence of proliferating nuclear capabilities within Britain, France, and China clearly indicated that the international system had lost important elements of its postwar bipolar military structure. While none of the newly empowered nuclear states could build forces comparable to the arsenals of the superpowers, the two hegemons lost their pre-existing privilege of near exclusive nuclear deterrent. In an increasingly multipolar world, where nuclear capabilities spread and other forms of power grew in importance, effective management of alliance disputes under conditions of hegemonic decline became an overriding concern.[15]

The diffusion of power from Washington and Moscow to the most influential allies – the NATO states on the one hand, and China on the other – characterized intra-bloc relations in the early 1960s. Discord deepened within each of the two postwar alliances due to a confluence of forces affecting international relations at the time. The evolution of the nuclear stalemate – which made the two superpowers more cautious in their dealings with each other – brought the far flung and inflexible military commitments of the two bloc leaders into question. The fact that NATO's defensive strategy came to rely heavily on nuclear first-use during the 1950s increased European doubts about the credibility of

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[15]   For an example of critical thought surrounding alliance management during the middle 1960s see Ronald Steel, *The End of Alliance: America and the Future of Europe* (New York: Viking Press, 1964).

Washington's security guarantees when a limited crisis threatened to devastate American, as well as allied, territory. French President Charles de Gaulle proved most vocal in his doubts about superpower credibility amidst intercontinental nuclear stalemate. The hero of the French resistance to Nazi occupation in World War II informed the American leadership as early as 1958 that his government could "no longer consider that NATO in its present form meets the conditions of security of the free world."[16]

Against this same background of questionable nuclear commitments, Moscow's alliance partners began to needle the Soviet Union for its timidity in relations with the United States. Both Mao Zedong and Fidel Castro, in particular, called upon the Kremlin to jettison its "revisionist" claims to "peaceful coexistence" with the West. Conservative Soviet "revisionism" apparently supplanted hopes for active socialist internationalism in a world of nuclear stalemate.[17] While tensions within the two alliances manifested themselves in varied forms, their results were comparable: important allies began to steer a course increasingly independent from their bloc leaders, particularly in the nuclear field. As a result, weapons proliferation raised the specter of new potential threats to the national security of the two superpowers.[18]

In addition to problems of credible commitment, the emergence of nationalism in so-called "third world" countries and the increasing importance of these new states in international politics accentuated differences in interests, economic models and social structures between, but also within the two blocs. Washington sought with great difficulty to balance its alliance interests with its democratic and anti-colonial tradition.[19] Moscow had to make sure that China's revolutionary model did not look more attractive to the former colonies than its own.[20] Emerging trends clearly pointed to increasing independence within the two blocs regarding former colonial territories – in particular North Africa and Southeast Asia, areas where France and China respectively claimed specific spheres of influence independent from their alliance partners.[21] Apprehensions in Washington and Moscow grew that other states and groups would exploit power vacuums left vacant by the United States and the Soviet Union.[22]

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[16]  Letter From President de Gaulle to President Eisenhower, 17 September 1958, FRUS, 1958-1960, VII (part 2): 81-83.

[17]  See Chinese and Cuban criticisms of Soviet compromises with the United States, particularly after the Cuban Missile Crisis. Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, *'One Hell of a Gamble:' Khrushchev, Castro, and Kennedy, 1958-1964* (New York: Norton, 1997), 290-315. Roderick MacFarquhar describes how the Chinese leadership accepted Nikita Khrushchev's 1956 denunciation of Stalinist excess, but also grew increasingly uncomfortable with the apparent "revisionist" line of the new Kremlin leadership. Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, Volume 1: *Contradictions Among the People, 1956-1957* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), 46-56, 169-76.

[18]  See McGeorge Bundy to President Kennedy 7 May 1962, President's Office Files, Box 116a, Folder: France, Security, 1961 (d), JFKL. Interestingly, states most intent on developing their own nuclear forces in the 1960s recognized that extensive nuclear proliferation would prove detrimental to everyone. De Gaulle epitomized this point of view when, in 1960, he simultaneously pushed French development of a nuclear *force de frappe* and refused Israel assistance in its own nuclear weapons development. De Gaulle warned of a dangerous arms race if Israel, Egypt, and other Middle Eastern countries embarked upon independent nuclear efforts. In this sense, some of the key nuclear revisionists and the established nuclear powers shared a similar fear of weapons diffusion. Non-nuclear states – like France, China, Israel, and some elements in West Germany – wanted their own nuclear forces, but they were prepared to deny them to others. See Entretien du General de Gaulle avec Monsieur Ben Gurion, le 17 juin 1960 a l'Elysee, Carton CM9, Dossier 2, Couve Papers.

[19]  See Tony Smith, *America's Mission: the United States and the World Wide Struggle for Democracy in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994). The Suez crisis of 1956 is the obvious example: Scott W. Lucas, *Divided We Stand: Britain, the US, and the Suez Crisis* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1991); Maurice Vaïsse, "France and the Suez Crisis," in Willam Roger Louis and Roger Owen (eds.), *Suez 1956: the Crisis and its Consequences* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989): 131-43.

[20]  On the deepening ideological competition between China and the Soviet Union see Akten-vermerk über den Abschiedsbesuch beim Vorsitzenden der VR China, Genosse Liu Schau-tji, am 8. Februar 1961 in Peking, Walter Ulbrichts Nachlass, Microfilm FBS 363/15322, SAPMO-BArch. See also Gordon H. Chang, *Friends and Enemies: United States, China, and the Soviet Union, 1948-1972* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990); MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, Volume 1, 169-249.

[21]  For evidence of growing French resentment toward American influence in Morocco and other parts of francophone North Africa see Michel Debre, Premier Ministre à Couve de Murville 5 janvier 1960, Carton CM7, Dossier: 1960, Couve Papers. Available documentation from communications between Chinese leaders and their counterparts in Southeast Asia reveals consistent Chinese criticism of Soviet "revisionism" and "anti-revolutionary" behavior in the region. The Chinese leadership clearly used these condemnations of the Soviet regime to enhance Beijing's influence and prestige in the region. See Odd Arne Westad, et al., eds., "77 Conversations Between Chinese and Foreign Leaders on the Wars in Indochina, 1964-1977," Cold War International History Project Working Paper number 22 (May 1998), documents 1, 4, 10, 18, 19, 24.

[22]  On the American side, this perception was closely linked to Nikita Khrushchev's 6 January 1961 speech about wars of national liberation. With his promise to support national liberation struggles the Soviet leader seemed to expand the Soviet commitment in the Third World. Kennedy thought Khrushchev's speech was "one of the most important speeches of the decade." Summary of President Kennedy's Remarks to the 496th Meeting of the National Security Council, 18 January 1962, FRUS, 1961-1963, VIII: 238-42. For Khrushchev's speech see Khrushchev Report on Moscow Conference of Representatives of Communist and Workers

The rapid economic growth of the capitalist production in Western Europe and Japan through the 1950s, as well as the apparent focus of the Soviet Union and China on the development of their "planned" economies, signaled that economic power had now also become an increasingly important and diffuse commodity in international politics.[23] For the West, the "economic and development challenge" of the 1960s posed new complications as America sought to displace the increasing costs of defensive commitments upon allies, without ceding military control to those now paying a growing proportion of the bills.[24] Pressures for favorable trade terms among the member states of the emerging European Economic Community (EEC) and the United States, as well as demands for new commercial openings across the Iron Curtain, prevented security imperatives from easily trumping immediate market considerations, as they had in prior moments of postwar crisis.[25] For the East, the new importance of trade and industrial production accentuated differences in economic models and strategies,

Parties, 6 January 1961, President's Office Files, Box 126a, Folder USSR, Khrushchev Reports, 1961, JFKL.

[23] See for example Walt Rostow's discussion of foreign aid programs in: Memorandum From the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Rostow) to President Kennedy, 28 February 1961, FRUS, 1961-1963, IX: 204-9. See also Rostow's famous book: Walt W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960).

[24] On the emerging conflicts over burden sharing and developmental assistance in the Western alliance see the following West German analysis of the new pressures – primarily from the U.S. and Britain – for Bonn to expend more on NATO defense and foreign assistance. Aufzeichnung über den Verteidigungsbeitrag der Bundesrepublik und anderer NATO-Partner 9. November 1962, Ordnung III/1, Adenauer Papers.

[25] During the mid-1960s the West German Foreign Ministry devoted considerable attention to trade issues within the Western alliance, and between the West and the East. These records reveal the extent to which the states of the emerging European Common Market competed for beneficial trade terms. The political leaders of France, Italy, West Germany, and other Western states also faced growing industrial pressures for increased access to the markets East of the Iron Curtain. See "Frankreichs Handel mit der SBZ," 11. Januar 1965, IIIA6, Band 167, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Bonn, Germany [hereafter AA]; Dr. Rölf Pauls an den Bundesverband der Deutschen Industrie 29. März 1965, IIIA6, Band 167, AA; Aufzeichnung 14. Dezember 1965, IIIA6, Band 167, AA; "Studienreise des Deutschen Teppich- und Gardinenhandels e.V. in die UdSSR 1. April 1965, IIIA6, Band 198, AA. As early as 1960 West German Foreign Minister Heinrich von Brentano criticized industrialists in his state and other European countries for seeking economic profit through trade at the cost of alliance solidarity and security. Brentano correctly foresaw that these economic pressures, antithetic to political policy, would grow through the decade. See Heinrich von Brentano an Bundeskanzler Konrad Adenauer 11. März 1960, Heinrich von Brentanos Nachlass, N 1239, Archivsignatur 158, Bundesarchiv, Koblenz, Germany [hereafter BA].

increasing the consequent pressures to close the evident gap with the West.[26] The Soviet Union and her satellites in Eastern Europe had to walk an economic tightrope as they sought to procure Western technology and capital, while steadfastly opposing the strings of dependence that would constrain hopes for socialist development.[27] Recently declassified materials reveal that after the tragic failures of the Great Leap Forward the Chinese leadership found itself walking the same tightrope between foreign borrowing and domestic autonomy.[28] In these terms, the states most ardent in their condemnation of what Lenin identified as financial imperialism, realized, in the technological world of the 1960s, that socialist solidarity alone would not produce necessary economic growth and innovation.[29]

Despite the seeming stability of the bipolar nuclear stalemate, policy makers in America, Europe, and Asia found no easy road to détente. Deepening alliance disputes presented complex challenges to the leadership of the two superpowers. The changing dynamics of relations between alliance partners provided concomitant opportunities and risks for Soviet-American cooperation. On the one hand, both Washington and Moscow sought to reassure their allies that they

[26] Considering the different economic strategies Khrushchev wrote: "It was patently clear to us that Mao Zedong had started down a wrong path that would lead to the collapse of his economy and, consequently, the failure of his politics. We did all we could to influence the Chinese and stop them before it was too late, but Mao thought he was God." Cited in Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996): 219.

[27] Soviet and East European hopes for technical cooperation with the more industrially advanced Western states became explicit as early as 1961. See Akademia Nayk CCCR do Doctory, Ingeniery Sosengeymery, Düsseldorf, 17 Maya 1961, IIIA6, Band 198, AA; Botschaft der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Moskau an das Auswartige Amt, 6. August 1964, IIIA6, Band 198, AA; Mittags-Gespräch mit Botschafter Smirnow 23. June 1965, IIIA6, Band 198, AA.

[28] On this point see the East German Ambassador to China's report on a conversation with Chinese leader Zhou Enlai in February 1961. Zhou, according to the internal East German report, appeared despondent following the tragic failures of the Great Leap Forward. During his conversation, Zhou stressed the need for China to seek external assistance, possibly even from capitalist states in the West. Aktenvermerk von Wandel, DDR Botschafter in China 25. February 1961, Walter Ulbrichts Nachlass, NY 4182, Microfilm FBS 363/15321, SAPMO-BArch.

[29] See Chinese leader Liu Shaoqi's emphasis, in discussions with the East German Ambassador, on the importance of economic "praxis" in place of prior ideological rigidity. Aktenvermerk über den Abschiedsbesuch beim Vorsitzenden der VR China, Genosse Liu Schau-tji, am 8. Februar 1961 in Peking, Walter Ulbrichts Nachlass, NY 4182, Microfilm FBS 363/15322, SAPMO-BArch.

would not succumb to the other side. Considerations related to credibility and prestige heavily affected the decisions of both superpowers during the Berlin, Taiwan, and Cuban missile crises. Credibility and prestige also had a significant impact on defense budgets and arms control decisions. Conscious of their respective credibility shortcomings, Kennedy and Khrushchev resorted, often with short-term success, to rhetorical overkill in public speeches.[30] In a world of nuclear stalemate, military maneuvers constituted dangerous shows of strength. Tough talk, however, could create an intrepid image with far less risk of inadvertent battlefield escalation.

This rhetorical overkill notwithstanding, the political leadership in the United States and the Soviet Union began to analyze the international situation in terms of national rather than alliance interests. This new focus opened novel opportunities for progress on a bilateral negotiation track. The Limited Test Ban Treaty of 1963, decidedly disadvantageous for allies like France and China who refused to sign the agreement, illustrated how the established nuclear powers would value bilateral interests above the concerns of less secure states.[31] Bilateral progress in relations between the United States and the Soviet Union required compromise and it elicited, despite the promises of broader international stability, deep dispute among postwar allies.

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[30] A good example for Khrushchev's rhetoric is his speech of 17 October 1961 when he announced the explosion of a 50 megaton nuclear device. For the speech and American comments on it see Roger Hilsman, Intelligence Note: Foreign Policy Highlights of Khrushchev Speech, 20 October 1961, National Security Files, Box 189, Folder USSR, Khrushchev Speeches and Commentary, 10/61-8/62, JFKL. Kennedy's rhetoric also sounded belligerent chords. See for example John F. Kennedy, Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union, 30 January 1961, *Public Papers of the Presidents*, 1961: 19-28.

[31] The leadership of France and China shared this exact critique of the Limited Test Ban Treaty. Both states refused to sign the treaty in 1963. In 1964, brought together in part by their opposition to Soviet-American bilateral negotiations, Paris and Beijing established direct diplomatic relations. See Points essentiels traites lors de l'audience du General de Gaulle à l'Ambassadeur de Chine, Monsieur Huang Chen, à l'Elysee le 19 juin 1964, Séries: Asie, 1956-67, Sous-Séries: Chine, Volume 527, Les Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Paris, France [hereafter Quai d'Orsay]; Entretien entre Monsieur Couve de Murville et Monsieur Huang Chen, Ambassadeur de Chine, le 12 mai 1966, Séries: Asie, 1956-67, Sous-Séries: Chine, Volume 533, Quai d'Orsay.

## 1.3 The "Little" Détente of 1963: Constructing a Cold War Settlement

The changing international system, driven by the contradictory effects of the nuclear revolution, constituted the primary force behind the evolution of the "little" détente of 1963. From 1957 through August 1961, the diffusion of power within the two alliances produced an increasingly dangerous challenge to the status quo of a divided Berlin, within a divided Germany, at the central axis of Europe. Allied criticism of superpower policies dramatically increased within both the East and the Western alliances, highlighting growing credibility problems for the two hegemons. A spiral of international fear and suspicion congealed around the respective decisions taken in Moscow and Washington to resolidify sinking positions of bloc leadership, while also exploiting perceived adversarial weaknesses. Misperception and miscommunication about possible long-term aims in Central Europe – particularly regarding independent West German nuclear forces – contributed significantly to the most dangerous confrontation of the Cold War, the Berlin Crisis of 1961.[32] The danger of nuclear war, however, restrained the two superpowers' behavior as tanks approached one another on the narrow Friedrichstraße thoroughfare. Both Washington and Moscow drew back from the precipice of military engagement, forging a tacit acceptance of the territorial status quo in Europe, symbolized by the Berlin Wall – built by the Soviets without any significant resistance from the United States.[33] The Wall stabilized Central Europe, but this was a most Pyrrhic stability. Around the ugly detritus of permanent brick barricades popular revulsion

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[32] The argument that the Berlin crisis was even more dangerous than the Cuban missile crisis is twofold: First, during the Vienna summit in June 1961 both Kennedy and Khrushchev threatened war over Berlin without knowing whether the other side meant business or was merely bluffing. Paul Nitze, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, makes the point in his memoirs: "The risks were great and miscalculation on either side was our greatest potential enemy. To my mind, the Berlin crisis of 1961 was a time of greater danger of nuclear confrontation with the Soviet Union than the Cuban missile crisis of 1962." Paul H. Nitze, *From Hiroshima to Glasnost: at the Center of Decision* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1989): 205. Second, the vital interests of both superpowers were at stake in Berlin but not in Cuba, which was clearly in the American sphere of influence and far away from the Soviet Union. On both crises see Michael Beschloss, *The Crisis Years: Kennedy and Khrushchev, 1960-1963* (New York: Harper Collins, 1991), 211-90, 354-575.

[33] On the Berlin crisis and the construction of the Wall see Trachtenberg, *History and Strategy*, 169-234; John C Ausland, *Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Berlin-Cuba Crisis 1961-1964* (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1996); Beschloss, *The Crisis Years*, 266-90.

and a pervasive sense of betrayal – East and West – elicited deeper disbelief in the promises, commitments, and claims of the established leadership within both alliances.[34] If the United States, in particular, would choose a Wall instead of war, might future occupants of the White House opt for disengagement from Germany or France instead of risking the security of American cities?[35]

The period from August 1961 to October 1962, marked by the rejection of détente among the major allies, highlighted the dilemmas confronting Soviet-American relations. Discussions between Moscow and Washington vacillated between accelerated, promising negotiations and a continued nuclear and conventional arms race.[36] As a consequence of these dilemmas a remarkable gap grew between the bilateral communications of the superpowers, and their acts of alliance reassurance. In bilateral negotiations the main elements of a *modus vivendi* for the two superpowers in Europe centered around the future status of

Germany and the nuclear question,[37] while among allies deliberations focused upon possession of continued military might.[38]

The divergent tracks of bilateral and alliance politics proved progressively more unmanageable in the early years after the Wall. The necessities of alliance politics very quickly produced significant obstacles to the progress of bilateral negotiations. In late 1961 and early 1962, a series of decisions in Washington and Moscow, primarily aimed at the reassurance of allies, quickly began to erode whatever chances existed for a negotiated superpower settlement. In December 1961, Kennedy embarked upon a rapid military procurement program to bolster the nation's strategic nuclear forces, largely for the purpose of reinforcing relative nuclear superiority in the eyes of the European allies. The same message of reassurance lay at the heart of McNamara's famous May 1962 speech in Athens, Greece before NATO's assembled foreign and defense ministers. Although the American Secretary of Defense doubted the practicability of a counterforce strategy – where American forces would prepare to destroy Soviet military capabilities in quick order – he found the counterforce rhetoric useful for political persuasion among nervous allies.[39]

These assurances to allies proved deeply threatening to the attentive adversary. Khrushchev's hollow nuclear boasts in the late 1950s left the Soviet leader vulnerable to a U.S. program that, after the false fears of an American "missile gap" had passed in late 1961, exposed Soviet nuclear inferiority. In addition, the

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[34] See for example: Willy Brandt, Brief an den Präsidenten der Vereinigten Staaten, Berlin, den 15. August 1961, President's Office Files, Box 117, Folder Germany, Security, 8/61-12/61, JFKL. On popular demonstrations against the Wall in West Berlin see Alexandra Ritchie, *Faust's Metropolis* (New York: Carroll and Graf, 1998), 710-26. For an example of East German dissent against the construction of the Wall see Rainer Eppelmann, *Fremd im eigenen Haus: Mein Leben im anderen Deutschland* (Köln: Kiepenheuer and Witsch, 1993), 11-43.

[35] See de Gaulle à Georges Pompidou et Maurice Couve de Murville 27 octobre 1963, reprinted in Charles de Gaulle, *Lettres, Notes, et Carnets*, 1961-1963 (Paris: Plon, 1986), 382-3. For West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer's similar worries about continued American willingness to make sacrifices on behalf of West European nuclear defense see Aufzeichnung 20. Februar 1962, Ordnung III/60, Adenauer papers.

[36] Khrushchev implemented a series of deep conventional force reductions during the second half of the 1950s, but in 1961 the Soviet Premier suspended further cuts. On this point, and the internal resistance to Khrushchev's military cuts of the late 1950s, see Matthew Evangelista, "'Why Keep Such an Army?': Khrushchev's Troop Reductions," Cold War International History Project Working Paper number 19 (Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars, 1997), especially 1-13.

[37] See for example: Letter From President Kennedy to Chairman Khrushchev, 15 February 1962, FRUS, 1961-1963, XIV: 819-22; Memorandum from Kohler to Rusk, 10 March 1962, FRUS, 1961-1963, XV: 4-6; Wenger, "Der lange Weg zur Stabilität," 81-88.

[38] One sees this for the Western alliance most clearly in the positive appraisals of President Kennedy's toughness during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Adenauer, Brandt, and even de Gaulle praised the U.S. for displaying determination and a sincere willingness to use direct military force for the protection of vital Western interests. See de Gaulle à Kennedy 1 decembre 1962, *Lettres, Notes, et Carnets*, 1961-1963: 278-9; Adenauer an de Gaulle 20. November 1962, Ordnung III/3a, Adenauer Papers; Willy Brandt an Lucius Clay 29. Oktober 1962, Egon Bahrs Nachlass, Box 44a, Archiv der sozialen Demokratie der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Bonn, Germany [hereafter Bahr papers].

[39] On the 1963 defense budget decisions and the American program of reassurance see: Speech by Deputy Secretary of Defense Roswell Gilpatric, 21 Octtber 1961, quoted in: Memorandum, Yarmolinsky to Sorensen, "Missile Gap Controversy," 3 May 1962, "May 1962 Folder," Nuclear History Box 14, National Security Archive, Washington, D.C. [hereafter NSA]; Remarks by McNamara, NATO Ministerial Meeting, 5 May 1962, Restricted Session, "May 1962 Folder," Nuclear History Box 14, NSA; Wenger, *Living with Peril*, 241-71.

Kremlin had many reasons to fear that the United States would try once again, after the Bay of Pigs fiasco, to humiliate Moscow through an attack against its new partner in Cuba.[40] Under growing pressure from his domestic, East European, and Chinese critics, the Soviet Chairman decided to redress a series of threats to the Kremlin's strategic standing with a single, dramatic stroke.[41] Khrushchev secretly stationed nuclear-capable Soviet missiles within one hundred miles of American territory, thus setting the stage for what became the Cuban missile crisis after Washington's premature discovery of these weapons.[42]

This conflict in the Caribbean deepened the restraining influence of nuclear weapons on Soviet-American relations. Both Kennedy and Khrushchev realized that events had almost slipped out of their control. The crisis revealed that an unwanted nuclear war could indeed come from the very pace of confrontation itself.[43] Mutual superpower adherence to a controlled and durable nuclear stalemate grew for other reasons as well. The results of the 1962 nuclear weapons test series, in particular, supported the view that a technological breakthrough from the present deadlock remained improbable. Carl Kaysen, a prominent member of the National Security Council, informed the President that the "information learned from the tests has been of moderate importance,

but it has little prospect of affecting the strategic balance one way or the other."[44]

The Cuban Missile Crisis also further increased the determination of the most important bloc partners – Germany, France and China – to follow a more independent course, especially with regard to military affairs. Both the Franco-German treaty of friendship in January 1963 and Chinese nuclear development efforts after the withdrawal of Soviet advisers promised that crisis avoidance in the future would become more difficult as additional nuclear players joined the game. The Sino-Soviet split and the Indo-Chinese border war of 1962 served as preludes for possible future confrontations engaging three or more nuclear states with uncompromising ambitions. From the perspective of both Moscow and Washington these now more assertive countries seemed most likely to become a threat to the global status quo. The Limited Test Ban Treaty and the ensuing "little" détente of 1963 evolved from this convergence of vital interests for the Soviet Union and the United States.[45]

This "little" détente in Europe flowed from mutual superpower acceptance of the territorial and nuclear status quo. Growing insight into the limited control of each bloc leader over the decisions and actions of key allies prompted Kennedy and Khrushchev to work hard for a negotiated settlement.[46] While the Soviet Chairman accepted the status quo in Central Europe and pledged not to renew his threats against the Western military presence in Berlin, the American President affirmed that West Germany would remain a non-nuclear state, integrated within the institutional structure of NATO and closely regulated by the United

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[40] Fursenko and Naftali, *One Hell of a Gamble*, 132-48.

[41] On Khrushchev's general sense of desperation in the spring of 1962 see Gaddis, *We now Know*, 260-66; Zubok and Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War*, 261-66.

[42] Fursenko and Naftali, *One Hell of a Gamble*, 166-215.

[43] See the famous passage in Khrushchev's letter to Kennedy 26 October 1962: "If, however, you have not lost your self-control and sensibly conceive what this might lead to, then, Mr. President, we and you ought not now to pull on the ends of the rope in which you have tied the knot of war, because the more the two of us pull, the tighter that knot will be tied. And a moment may come when that knot will be tied so tight that even he who tied it will not have the strength to untie it, and then it will be necessary to cut that knot." Telegram From the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the Department of State, 26 October 1962, 7 p.m., FRUS, 1961-1963, VI: 172-77. Addressing the National Security Council in January 1963, Kennedy noted that if the Soviets "had only to act in an hour or two, their actions would have been spasmodic and might have resulted in nuclear war." Notes on Remarks by President Kennedy before the NSC, 22 January 1963, Cuban Missile Crisis microfiche collection 1962, No. 02869, NSA.

[44] Memorandum from Kaysen to Kennedy, 24 December 1963, FRUS, 1961-1963, VII: 599-601.

[45] The Limited Test Ban Treaty intended to serve the common goal of prohibiting both a nuclear Germany and a nuclear China. This becomes evident in a conversation between Secretary of State Dean Rusk and French Ambassador Hervé Alphand in February 1963. Rusk pointed out that "the Soviets might be prepared to withhold nuclear cooperation from the Chinese if the West withheld nuclear cooperation from the Germans." Memorandum of Conversation between Rusk and Alphand, 28 February 1962, FRUS, 1961-1963, VII: 650-52; see also Memorandum of Conversation between Rusk and Dobrynin, 10 December 1962, FRUS, 1961-1963, VII: 620-21.

[46] See, for example, Kennedy letter to Khrushchev, 15 February 1962, FRUS, 1961-1963, XIV: 819-22. Khrushchev's political vulnerability in the face of domestic and Chinese criticism became evident in the Soviet Premier's rude letter of 3 April 1963, where he accused the American government of treating the Soviet Union as a second-class power. Memorandum from Robert Kennedy to the President, 3 April 1963, FRUS, 1961-1963, VI: 262-65.

States.[47] This meant that the Federal Republic had to rely permanently for its security on American guarantees, credible only if the United States agreed to maintain its military forces permanently on the continent. The reach of Washington's military arm assured the Soviets that America would keep the dynamic West Germans down.[48]

The changing balance of power between the two superpowers clearly cannot alone explain the development of this "little" détente framework. Progress in bilateral Soviet-American negotiations also reflected the way the United States "ran" its alliances, transforming West Germany into a strong capitalist democracy and managing NATO in a consensus-oriented way. The Soviets, however, relied more heavily on brute force and economic coercion to influence allies like East Germany, Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. Moscow's interests in Eastern Europe and Asia, as a consequence, confronted inherent instabilities, paradoxically dependent on Western assistance for maintenance of the status quo after the late 1950s.

The confrontations over Berlin and Cuba marked a transition in the Cold War. The old hopes for "liberation" and victory through force came to a head between 1961 and 1962. As they approached the precipice of nuclear war, leaders in Washington and Moscow backed down. Acceptance of an unsatisfactory international peace created the first step to détente. This new, more stable Cold War path was, however, marred by the deeply unpopular compromises at its core. Social and political conditions within each of the great powers increased the international salience of détente-inspired popular dissent soon after 1963.

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[47] See Khrushchev's remark to Averell Harriman that "Berlin [was] no longer a source of any trouble" and Kennedy's letter to Khrushchev of 11 April 1963. Memorandum of Conversation between Khrushchev and Harriman, 26 April 1963, FRUS, 1961-1963, XV: 510-11; Message from Kennedy to Khrushchev, 11 April 1963, FRUS, 1961-1963, VII: 672-73; Memorandum of Conversation between Rusk and Khrushchev, 9 August 1963, FRUS, 1961-1963, XV: 563-70.

[48] Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, chapter 9.

## 2 Growing Social Dissent and the Unfulfilled Promises of the Nuclear Peace

The nuclear revolution, like most prior revolutions, consumed its children. The absence of great power war betrays a literal interpretation of this statement.[49] The political and social consequences of the nuclear peace, however, confirm this proposition. The structure of international politics in the nuclear age created, in dialectical terms, the seeds of it own demise. As the changes in assumption wrought by nuclear developments occurred primarily at the level of domestic policy and alliance behavior, the new challenges to the nascent Cold War settlement of 1963 divided similarly. The domestic criticisms of the great power status quo and the growing assertiveness of allied governments deconstructed the provisional "little" détente in East-West relations before the anticipated lessening of tensions could coalesce in full form. For this basic reason the self-proclaimed "thaw" in international tensions remained just that, and did not re-solidify as something recognizably new. The sudden departures of Kennedy and Khrushchev in 1963-64, accompanied by the emergence of France's *force de frappe* and China's nascent nuclear capability, as well as pervasive student protests on an almost a global scale, symbolized the fragility and uncertainty of domestic political and alliance structures in the early 1960s. The forthcoming sections will sketch the general contours of domestic and alliance dissent, emphasizing the neglected international sources of pervasive dissatisfaction.

### 2.1 Nuclear Fear and Growing Domestic Imbalances

For the political leadership in Washington, Bonn, Paris, London, Moscow, and Beijing the heightened rhetoric of what Michael Beschloss calls the "crisis years" deployed bombastic affirmations of national will to cover deeper domestic insecurities.[50] One need not resort to complex psychoanalysis in order to observe the overwhelming evidence that policy makers sensed their sources of

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[49] On this general point see John Mueller, *Retreat from Doomsday: The Obsolescence of Major War* (New York: Basic Books, 1989).

[50] Beschloss, *The Crisis Years*.

power eroding at the very moment when their material capabilities proved most impressive. Nowhere did this phenomenon surface quicker and more deeply than in the United States.

This pessimistic perversion of former post-World War II optimism appears in President Dwight Eisenhower's ruminations on the dreaded "military-industrial complex,"[51] and in his successor's appeals for assistance from established Democratic Party authorities, less naively optimistic than the Ivy League "whiz kids" around the White House. During a particularly moving 1962 visit to the bedside of the sick Supreme Court justice and distinguished New Deal activist, Felix Frankfurter, President Kennedy's publicly disguised pessimism became most evident. Already acknowledged as one of the most effective orators of his day, the young president spoke privately about the difficulties of public persuasion in an environment of evident nuclear stalemate. Frankfurter joined Kennedy in these reflections, commenting that the central political dilemma of the 1960s revolved around the very complexity and interdependence of contemporary issues. Franklin Roosevelt, according to Frankfurter, had a much easier task during his presidential tenure in describing the obvious requirements and clear hopes of agricultural support, social security, and the war against fascism. Kennedy, on the other hand, had to make more obtuse and subtle public appeals. In spite of somewhat simplistic rhetoric regarding a "New Frontier" in politics and society, the White House confronted a counter-intuitive quandary: how could an American president convince listeners that an environment of ever-present nuclear terror would preserve the peaceful and secure world Americans long enjoyed from their splendid ocean isolation?[52]

Within Western scientific, intellectual, and popular cultural institutions the failure of American foreign policy to merge traditional ideals with the more complex, modern realities of the nuclear age fed a rising fervor of discontent. Public fear of the ecological consequences of nuclear testing, in addition to deeper apprehensions of nuclear war, increased social activism for a nuclear test ban,

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[51]  Dwight D. Eisenhower, "Farewell Radio and Television Address to the American People," 17 January 1961, *Public Papers of the Presidents*, 1960-1: 1035-40.

[52]  Summary of the President's Call upon Justice Frankfurter, 26 July 1962, Folder 148, Box 12, Papers of Dean Acheson, Yale University – Manuscripts and Archives [hereafter Acheson papers]. For a similar discussion within the U.S. State Department see Walt Rostow to Dean Rusk 17 September 1963, Folder: USSR, July-December 1963, Box 256, Record Group 59, Lot File 70D199, NA.

while also strengthening the long pre-existing peace movements in the United States and Europe.[53] The growing realization that a nuclear stalemate would create life threatening by-products, a permanent financial strain on resources, and a more dreaded "garrison state" gave a new urgency to test ban and ban-the-bomb activities.[54] Public figures like Albert Schweitzer, Norman Cousins, Linus Pauling, and Bertrand Russell spear-headed popular campaigns against the nuclear status quo.[55] By the late 1950s these pressures visibly entered the highest levels of foreign policy discourse, becoming centrally important to American relations with the Federal Republic of Germany, as well as other important entities at home and abroad.[56] The urgent and unprepared attempts by the United States and its allies to pursue arms control talks with the Soviet Union after 1958 developed in this setting. The American State Department, in particular, realized that it had to formulate new arms control proposals now that assertions of national security through nuclear overkill no longer commanded a strong domestic consensus. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles – long caricatured as a recalcitrant moral dogmatist – went so far as to implore American overseas posts for new "affirmative" suggestions that might, in the context of evident nuclear stalemate, re-awaken broad enthusiasm for the nation's foreign policy.[57]

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[53]  See Lawrence S. Wittner, *Resisting the Bomb: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement, 1954-70* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 41-82.

[54]  For extended discussions of the concept of the "garrison state" and postwar America see Michael Hogan, *A Cross of Iron* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), especially 1-68; Aaron L. Friedberg, "Why Didn't the United States Become a Garrison State?," *International Security* 16 (Spring 1992), 109-42.

[55]  Robert A. Divine, *Blowing on the Wind* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); Wittner, *Resisting the Bomb*, 98-159.

[56]  The diaries of David Bruce, American Ambassador to West Germany, 1957-9, provide a fascinating confirmation of the growing influence anti-nuclear movements exerted within foreign policy circles. Bruce did not possess any close affiliation or personal sympathy for anti-nuclear activist groups. He was, instead, a long serving Washington insider – a member of the non-partisan cohort of American presidential advisers that included John J. McCloy, Robert Lovett, Clark Clifford, and Douglas Dillon. Bruce's diaries display the growing importance of anti-nuclear domestic pressures within Washington, West Germany, and other parts of Europe. See, for example, Bruce's diary entries for 25 April 1957, 29 May 1957, 16 June 1957, 23 July 1957, Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Virginia. See also Nelson D. Lankford, *The Last American Aristocrat: The Biography of Ambassador David K. E. Bruce* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1996).

[57]  See Dulles to Herter, Murphy, Dillon, Henderson, and Smith 19 January 1958, Box 124, Folder: New Ideas, Record Group 59, Lot File 67D548 – Records of the Policy Planning

These elements of leadership insecurity and domestic discontent in the West found a close analogue in the East. America's former World War II ambassador to Moscow, Averill Harriman, observed during an extended visit to the far corners of the Soviet Union in 1959 that boredom and discontent characterized many aspects of life in what had become a self-proclaimed industrial rival to the United States.[58] Soviet scientists and literary figures – most famously Andrei Sakharov and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn – gave public voice to the domestic deprivations within Soviet society. The sufferings of Soviet citizens, according to these dissidents, grew from the regime's reliance upon violence, international conflict, and nuclear weapons. While Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn offered very different prescriptions for Russia's future, the two shared a similarly emotive criticism of the dogmatism and isolation of Soviet institutions mobilized in pursuit of military and industrial balance with the wealthier West.[59]

Solzhenitsyn, in particular, provided a dark metaphor for Soviet life in his depiction of the Siberian Gulag. Ordinary Soviet men, in the former prisoner's widely read portrayal of *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, labored under the debilitating burdens of government terror, incessant work imperatives, and continual mobilization on behalf of unattainable national aims.[60] A somewhat more open Soviet society under Khrushchev could not escape the terror and deprivation experienced by Ivan Denisovich, especially as the regime attempted to maintain pace with the more dynamic West.

Staff, NA. By 1961 the call for new ideas launched by the late Dulles produced a number of attempts within the State Department to re-think the very nature of security in explicitly cooperative, not competitive, terms. See L.W. Fuller to McGhee 27 November 1961, Box 122, Folder: National Security, Record Group 59, Lot File 67D548, NA. For a well informed corrective to recurring Dulles charicatures among contemporaries and historians see Richard H. Immerman, *John Foster Dulles: Piety, Pragmatism, and Power in U.S. Foreign Policy* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1999), especially 147-98.

[58] See Averell Harriman's Diary I from his visit to the Soviet Union, Folder: USSR Visit - May 12-June 26, 1959, Box 426, Papers of Averell Harriman, Library of Congress, Washington D.C. [hereafter Harriman papers].

[59] See Andrei Sakharov, *Memoirs*, trans. Richard Lourie (London: Hutchinson, 1990), especially 215-94; Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *The Oak and the Calf: Sketches of a Literary Life in the Soviet Union*, trans. Harry Willetts (New York: Harper and Row, 1980); Michael Scammell, *Solzhenitsyn: A Biography* (New York: Norton, 1984). See also Ludmilla Alexeyeva and Paul Goldberg, *The Thaw Generation: Coming of Age in the Post-Stalin Era* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1990), especially 79-276.

[60] See Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, trans. Ralph Parker (London: V. Gollancz, 1963).

Young Soviet university students, who by this time benefited from broader educational access and less material deprivation than ever since the Revolution, felt the frustration and disillusion of Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn most acutely. A close reading of the Soviet press reveals that, contrary to conventional wisdom about a "totalitarian" Soviet monolith, informal student resistance threatened – as Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn predicted – the Soviet leadership's hopes for permanent standing as a military, economic, and political equal with the United States. One Soviet journalist and playwright, Viktor Rozov, employed the phrase "psychological radiation," in 1961 to describe the existential angst created by nuclear production and geopolitical stalemate.[61] The youth newspaper *Komsomolskaya Pravda* openly reported that many teenagers and college students saw little need in a world of ever-present nuclear threat to make sacrifices for higher, distant goals.[62] One student, commenting upon the pervasive cynicism among Soviet youth, published a depressing rumination common to colleagues at Moscow State University and other educational institutions. "I've lost faith in the future, faith in life," the troubled young writer explained.[63] The Soviet Union possessed, according to another native journalist, a self-conscious "lost generation."[64]

The complexity of Soviet and American society prohibits a simple and straight forward analysis of nuclear fear or public dissent. Regional, professional, and individual differences among citizens produced non-contiguous and often contradictory experiences. While some university students, East and West, despaired for their future, others joined the optimistic fervor for accomplishments like Yuri Gagarin's first manned space flight, and idealistic ventures like the "Peace Corps" – created as part of the Kennedy administration's agenda for international development.[65] "Nuclear fear" surely did not dominate the lived existence of every citizen in the Soviet Union or the United States during the

[61] "The Danger of Atomic War and Soviet Youth," 21 December 1961, Box 80/1/497, Records of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Open Society Institute, Budapest, Hungary [hereafter RFE/RL].

[62] See *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, 27 April 1961, 10 May 1961, 31 July 1961.

[63] *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, 20 August 1961.

[64] "A Representative of the Soviet 'Lost Generation,'" 1 August 1962, RFE/RL.

[65] See Viktor Stepanov, *Iurii Gagarin* (Moskva: Molodaya Gvardia, 1987), 275-84; Irving Bernstein, *Promises Kept: John F. Kennedy's New Frontier* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 259-79.

1960s. The anxiety, pessimism, and despair wrought by the ever-present threat of instant annihilation did, however, exercise enough influence within the two largest nuclear states to unsettle concerned political leaders.

From the perspective of the Soviet leadership the "lost generation" became a serious hindrance to policy when open interest in rock n'roll, Western fashion, and modern art replaced resigned willingness to join military service, work on collective farms, and make general sacrifices for the expressed ideals of the Soviet state.[66] Nihilism and cynicism threatened to undermine the renewal of Communist faith and the increased domestic mobilization that Khrushchev demanded for peaceful coexistence in the nuclear world. More immediately, the spread of non-conformist and openly rebellious sentiments produced new challenges to social order necessary for a stable international status quo. In 1962 the KGB informed the Soviet premier of a marked increase in public "terrorist" threats against the government leadership from within the state.[67] In early June of that same year, three days of worker's riots in the southern city of Novocherkassk required the open fire power of Red Army tanks and twenty-three civilian casualties before order returned to the machine-building factories in the area.[68] These disturbances, while relatively isolated, revealed the depth of domestic discontent threatening to disrupt Soviet sustenance in the stalemated nuclear competition with the West. In contrast to emerging stability abroad, the Kremlin and its elaborate domestic security apparatus devoted increasing attention to these violent rumblings at home, especially after June 1962.[69]

Like Kennedy, Khrushchev needed new policy initiatives to create an image of movement and progress, instead of the stolid stagnation of great power policy elicited by the nuclear stalemate. After his second meeting with Khrushchev in 1959, Harriman made this very same point about the communist leader's predicament in a world of nuclear stalemate. The long-time Kremlin watcher

observed that "it appeared to me from our talks that the load of the armaments race, particularly in the nuclear and missile fields, was weighing heavily on the Soviet economy and competing with Khrushchev's promises to the Russian people of an increased standard of living with that of the United States."[70]

Secretary of State Dean Rusk made use of this insight in the fall of 1961, during negotiations over Berlin with his Soviet counterpart, Andrei Gromyko. Soviet insistence on a peace treaty for the two Germanys would, Rusk warned, prolong international tensions and ultimately retard Soviet economic plans. In this sense, international crisis and military mobilization endangered Khrushchev's domestic initiatives to re-appropriate state resources from the military for increased agricultural and industrial production.[71] When the United States sought to pressure Moscow in the early 1960s, especially during the Berlin Crisis, the American Secretary of State often returned to a similar analysis of Soviet domestic needs.

Within this context of depleting resources for further expansion of military commitments, the continued arms race no longer reflected crisis conditions. Instead, bloated military arsenals symbolized resolve and determination in both military and economic terms; bigger and more plentiful missiles served as status markers, promising greater overall political and economic power at home and abroad. No one intended to use these horrifying weapons – they were almost exclusively for show. In this manner the arms race increasingly mutated into a functional substitute for war.[72]

[66] See *Izvestia*, "What to do with 'disturbing' students?" 11 September 1962; "What is the Outlook of Soviet Youth," 27 April 1962, Box 80/1/497, RFE/RL; "K Probleme molodeji v SSSR," study produced by the Institute for the USSR in Munich, 6 February 1962, Box 80/1/497, RFE/RL.

[67] See KGB Report to the Central Committee 2 June 1962, reprinted in *Istoricheskii Arkhiv* 1 (1993), 114-16.

[68] For a detailed contemporary description of the 1962 Novocherkassk riots see M. Modich, "Yoonskii sobitia 1962 goda," 11 December 1962, Box 85/12/196, RFE/RL.

[69] Zubok and Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War*, 261-6.

[70] Harriman statement, undated, Folder: USSR: Khrushchev reception, September 17, 1959, Box 426, Harriman papers. For a similar analysis from America's Ambassador to the Soviet Union at the time, Llewellyn Thompson, see Ambassador Thompson's Remarks at Planning Board, 13 January 1959 (document dated 27 January 1959), Folder: NSC General, Box 123, RG 59, Lot 67D548 – Records of the Policy Planning Staff, 1957-1961, NA.

[71] On Khrushchev's program for reallocating military resources to civilian production see Evangelista, "'Why Keep Such an Army?,'" 17-26.

[72] During the Berlin-discussions between Rusk and Gromyko in September 1961, the American Secretary of State threatened to respond to Soviet pressure in Berlin with an arms race: "We did not want [an] arms race but would not draw away from it if Soviet threats [were] executed." Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in France, 22 September 1961, FRUS, 1961-1963, XIV: 431-33. One should note that Rusk threatened an arms race, not an actual armed conflict. In this manner, arms procurement directly substituted for military engagement on the battlefield. See also Wenger, *Living with Peril,* 254.

This diverse evidence of leadership uncertainty and domestic discontent illustrates that the new arms race, the test ban, measures for non-proliferation, and other efforts at détente in the 1960s reflected not only strategic analysis, but also what Kennedy and Khrushchev certainly saw as the dark side of the nuclear revolution – the tendency for stalemate to produce stagnant policy and unfulfilled domestic expectations. Through the test ban the leadership of the great powers attempted to appease popular anguish concerning the permanence of nuclear danger. While the virtual dissolution of the anti-nuclear movement after 1963 reflected the successes of this maneuver,[73] the inability of leaders to stem the broader, growing tides of domestic dissent points to the deeper dearth of alternative international policy options in the context of nuclear stalemate.[74] The bipolar military confrontation between East and West became more predictable in the 1960s, but it remained mired in nuclear overkill and the associated anxieties inextricably bound to permanent risk of instant thermonuclear annihilation. A bipolar balance of nuclear peril created new, increasingly frustrating, domestic imbalances.

## 2.2   Nuclear Politics and Growing Alliance Disputes

New imbalances also emerged within the respective Western and Eastern alliances at this moment of nuclear symmetry. Most significantly, the credibility of superpower commitments to nuclear defense confronted new uncertainties voiced by those in Europe and Asia with the most to lose in military engagements short of full-scale nuclear war. French President Charles de Gaulle, according to his biographer Maurice Vaïsse, was convinced from the first days

of the Fifth Republic that the dependence of the prior regime upon external assistance in various forms undermined national interests.[75] Whereas prior French leaders – Robert Schuman and Jean Monnet in particular – envisioned a restoration of French power within a tightly knit Western community,[76] de Gaulle recognized that the risks inherent in the nuclear stalemate would create strong incentives for Washington and Moscow to "manage" the most critical international affairs without consulting the allies.[77]

French anger with American alliance leadership reached a high point during 1961 when unilateral U.S. intervention in Laos and bilateral superpower discussions concerning the future status of Germany neglected input from de Gaulle. For Paris, a reassertion of national independence became imperative to avoid the apparent loss of political voice within the emerging nuclear stalemate.[78] French nuclear development, the de Gaulle-Adenauer rapprochement of 1963, Paris' opening to China in 1964, and French economic overtures to the East symbolized a new diffusion of authority within the Western alliance. The stubborn French veto of British membership in the Common Market, accompanied by de Gaulle's intemperate military withdrawal from NATO in 1966, produced an institutional fraying of the Western states at the same time that the East-West nuclear balance had become more solid.

The West German government also contributed to the diffusion of power within the Western alliance, but here the moving force grew from economics and popular sentiment more than political leadership. While the Hallstein Doctrine – Bonn's official policy of isolating the East German state – affirmed the divisions between the two Germanys through the end of the 1960s, the construction of the Berlin Wall in August 1961 had the paradoxical effect of unleashing new pressures for East-West inter-personal interaction. Most immediately, the Wall dispelled myths of reunification within the geopolitical status quo. It also

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[73]   Wittner, *Resisting the Bomb*, 415-62; Paul Boyer, "From Activism to Apathy: The American People and Nuclear Weapons, 1963-1980," *Journal of American History* 70 (March 1984), 821-44.

[74]   The American government's progressive military commitment in South Vietnam between 1963 and 1964 epitomizes this point. Most policy makers, especially President Lyndon Johnson, did not want to extend American commitments on the Indochinese peninsula, but they were unwilling to accept the departures from containment doctrine that disengagement would require. Johnson repeatedly sought a moderate "middle position" that favored the status quo over any alternatives – hawk or dove. See Fredrik Logevall, *Choosing War: The Lost Chance for Peace and Escalation of War in Vietnam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), especially 43-107, 375-413.

[75]   Maurice Vaïsse, *La grandeur: Politique étrangère du général de Gaulle* (Paris: Fayard, 1997), 111-61.

[76]   On this general point see William Hitchcock, *France Restored* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

[77]   See de Gaulle à Pompidou et Couve de Murville 27 octobre 1963, de Gaulle, *Lettres, Notes, et Carnets*, 1961-1963: 382-3.

[78]   See de Gaulle a Pompidou, Messmer, Couve de Murville, et le général de division aérienne Gauthier 25 octobre 1963, de Gaulle, *Lettres, Notes, et Carnets*, 1961-1963: 381.

initially made familial separations more rigid.[79] American leadership, in this context, no longer appeared to Defense Minister Franz-Josef Strauss and others as the obvious answer to German woes.[80] Instead, pressures began to build for more independent West German military leverage and possible peace overtures to the East. As early as 1962 West Berlin's Mayor, Willy Brandt, began to hint in the latter direction while Strauss emphasized military options.[81]

The German foreign ministry, while it continued to adhere to the Hallstein doctrine, sought new independent overtures to Moscow for the cause of German reunification. Bonn softened its containment of the Soviet Union for more active roads to self-interested "engagement" with East of the Elbe. The "Angst" surrounding West German politics and reunification aspirations only increased during the early 1960s, drawing German vision farther and farther from Washington's lead.[82]

Chancellors Ludwig Erhard and Kurt Georg Kiesinger, as well as many important figures in the West German Foreign Ministry, endeavored with great vehemence to counter this trend. Contrary to de Gaulle and his counterparts in Central Europe, Adenauer's immediate successors conceived of West German security within a firmly rooted and cohesive Western alliance structure.[83] The very "economic miracle" that this strategic thinking helped to produce, however, undercut Western-rooted aspirations in the 1960s. The Federal Republic's remarkable economic success made this reconstructed dynamo deeply fearful of shrinking markets and growing competition. As a consequence, pressures grew within influential circles for increased West German trade with untapped areas, particularly Eastern Europe. France and other states had already made overtures in this direction, and the Federal Republic began to worry that it would find

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[79] On the effects of the Berlin Wall see Ritchie, *Faust's Metropolis*, 770-91.

[80] For a general statement of Strauss' views see Franz-Josef Strauss, *The Grand Design: A European Solution to German Reunification*, trans. Brian Connell (London: Wiedenfeld and Nicolson, 1965).

[81] On early thoughts of independent West German overtures to the East, within a strengthened NATO security umbrella, see Willy Brandt's 1962 speeches at Harvard University. Willy Brandt, *The Ordeal of Coexistence* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963).

[82] See Weissbuch der Bundesregierung für Wiedervereinigungspolitik, 1965, IIA1, Band 75, AA.

[83] "Überlegungen zu den wichtigsten aussenpolitischen Fragen," 14. November 1966, Karl Carstens Nachlass, N 1337, Mappe 641, BA; Karl Carstens an Bundeskanzler Kurt Georg Kiesinger 25. September 1967, Karl Carstens Nachlass, N 1337, Mappe 663, BA.

itself isolated – as a reverse result of the Hallstein Doctrine – from potential economic gains. While the renewed American commitment to the stability and security of Western Europe increased Washington and London's efforts to procure financial compensation for military expenditures on behalf of West Germany at the time, emboldened economic thinkers in the Federal Republic clearly saw more benefit through an independent allocation of resources to Eastern markets.[84]

The Soviet bloc – both the Warsaw Pact and the Sino-Soviet alliance – displayed even deeper disintegrating tendencies during this period. While Moscow generally did not conduct consensual relations with allies, the Kremlin's connections with communist leaders in East Germany and China displayed many elements of mutual interest. After 1949 both Pankow and Beijing procured aid from the "big brother" for military organization, border defense, and revolutionary proselytism. Khrushchev's public pledge to give the East German government control over access routes to Berlin, and his contemporaneous aid to early Chinese nuclear efforts – both of which entrenched East-West divisions during crises in Central Europe and the Taiwan Straits – marked the last moment of visible unity within the postwar Soviet alliance structure.[85]

The ensuing achievement of near nuclear balance with the United States created new debilitating strains in Moscow's relations with the governments in East Germany and China. In both cases, the respective leaders – Walter Ulbricht and Mao Zedong – became apprehensive about growing Soviet incentives to maintain the status quo instead of supporting the avowed revolutionary aims and interests of allies. Soviet restraint and compromise throughout the crises in the Taiwan Straits, Berlin, and Cuba displayed a clear Kremlin inclination to choose conservative stability over risky change. In the case of East Germany, Khrushchev negotiated in 1959 and 1961 with little Warsaw Pact input. Soviet timidity ultimately drove Ulbricht to manufacture a crisis of his own in hope of

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[84] See Heinrich von Brentano an Bundeskanzler Konrad Adenauer 11. März 1960, Heinrich von Brentanos Nachlass, N 1239, Archivsignatur 158, BA; Dr. Rölf Pauls an den Bundesverband der Deutschen Industrie 29. März 1965, IIIA6, Band 167, AA; Aufzeichnung 14. Dezember 1965, IIIA6, Band 167, AA.

[85] Zubok and Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War*, 194-202, 210-35, 248-58.

finding redress for a terrible emigration drain across the open border to the more attractive West.[86]

East Germany, notwithstanding its growing discontent with Soviet conservatism, had little choice but to continue its dependence on support from Moscow. China, on the other hand, possessed independent capabilities more analogous to France and Germany. While Mao begrudgingly accepted a peaceful resolution of the second Taiwan Straits Crisis in 1958, he utilized the economic mobilization of the Great Leap Forward, increased aid to North Vietnam, and independent nuclear development to assert a separate road to socialism without any further acknowledged Soviet tutelage.[87] The heightened Sino-Soviet split created a direct challenge not only to Moscow's material influence, but also to the very revolutionary claims of the first communist state. China became an alternative source of aid and encouragement for national liberation movements in South Asia and disgruntled Soviet allies in Europe, including Albania and East Germany. The Soviets now confronted more recalcitrant allies, some even daring, as in the case of Czechoslovakia, explicitly to challenge the Soviet Union's monopoly on the model for socialist development.[88] North Vietnam went so far as to exploit the Sino-Soviet split for the purpose of fostering competitive bidding between two potential communist patrons.[89]

[86] Hope M. Harrison, "'Ulbricht and the Concrete 'Rose': New Archival Evidence on the Dynamics of Soviet-East German Relations and the Berlin Crisis, 1958-1961," Cold War International History Project Working Paper number 5 (May 1993).

[87] Roderick MacFarquhaur, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution,* Volume 3: *The Coming of the Cataclysm, 1961-1966* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 261-465; Jasper Becker, *Hungry Ghosts: Mao's Secret Famine* (New York: The Free Press, 1996), 58-82; John Lewis and Xue Litai, *China Builds the Bomb* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988).

[88] H. Gordon Skilling, *Czechoslovakia's Interrupted Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976); Kieran Williams, *The Prague Spring and its Aftermath* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 3-28.

[89] Ilya Gaiduk, *The Soviet Union and the Vietnam War* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1996), especially 57-155.

## 2.3 The Limits of the "Little" Détente of 1963: Deconstructing the Cold War Settlement

At the very time when the nuclear revolution reinforced the superpower status quo, evidence accumulated that the nature of this precarious peace stirred domestic social dissent and alliance dispute. In these formative years of détente, 1957 through 1963, we can speak of a climate of social and alliance unrest intensified by international détente. Policy makers in Washington and Moscow saw no real alternative to the unsatisfying course of superpower stabilizing efforts. The nuclear revolution created a deep disjuncture between the international pressures for détente and the domestic discontents of the period. Unlike the early 1950s, when ideology and material resources were still tightly coupled, the nuclear peace of 1963 raised a specter of troubling questions both within states and alliances.

How stable was the nuclear peace in the long run? How peaceful was a world built on the threat of mutual extinction and the permanent division of countries, continents, and indeed the entire planet? How would statesmen fulfill their responsibilities not only for the survival, but also for the well-being and liberty of their people? How could allied leaders, committed to a comparable set of values and principles, satisfy the growing yearnings for independence within their nations? How could politicians provide both "guns and butter" within the context of sky-rocketing arms expenditures?

Political leaders – like Kennedy and Khrushchev – became acutely aware that government policies had lost, in the words of prominent observer Hans Morgenthau, the "organic connection with the innermost purposes of the nation."[90] Conscious of this shortcoming, the constraints of the nuclear peace frustrated most well intentioned attempts to re-build this "organic connection." The inflated rhetoric of Cold War politics between 1957 and 1962 – Kennedy's muscular "New Frontier," Khrushchev's cultivated virgin lands and sausage-like missile production, Adenauer's "economic miracle," and Mao's determined "great leap forward" – became a substitute for material change in political and social policy. This explains why much of the historical literature on this period emphasizes changes in style rather than substance. With the growth of pervasive

[90] Hans J. Morgenthau, *The Purpose of American Politics* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1960), 3-4.

international anxiety in the aftermath of the Cuban missile crisis, "rhetorical overkill" could no longer palliate "nuclear overkill."

These trends produced significant disruptions, most immediately at the level of alliances; later more violently within civil society. China's condemnation of the two nuclear devils – America and the Soviet Union – crystallized the nuclear stalemate within both alliances in the first half of the 1960s. The preliminary discussions of possible Soviet-American cooperation to prevent Chinese nuclear development illustrated that new common interests had grown between the global nuclear hegemons.[91] The impetus to even contemplate this unlikely course of action against China illustrated the shallowness of superpower strategy. Soviet-American common interests did not reflect shared values among peoples or alliances, nor did they represent public affirmation of the virtues in East-West balance. Instead, the leaders in the United States and the Soviet Union found themselves ever more desperate to fortify the status quo against strong tendencies within various societies to deconstruct the very order and stability that nuclear balance appeared initially to bring.

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[91] See the almost surreal discussion of possible American and Soviet joint military action against China in Memorandum from Robert Komer to McGeorge Bundy 18 September 1964, FRUS, 1964-1968, XXX: 96-99. See also Gordon Chang, *Friends and Enemies: The United States, China, and the Soviet Union, 1948-1972* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 228-52.

# 3  The Evolution and Failure of Détente

The years after 1963 produced a coming together of political interests on the European continent, but also a coming apart within societies participating in extensive connections abroad. The coming together, manifested in new trade and cultural interactions among formerly antagonistic states, as well as a redefinition of security within the NATO alliance, added good reasons for hope to the daily course of diplomacy. Distinguished diplomats rushing to a number of new negotiations with former adversaries, however, did so at peril for their own safety at home.

Survival was not enough. Détente grew from a widely held urge to escape Cold War risks and deprivations. The nuclear revolution inspired this change of attitude in large part, but it also constrained the possibilities for something new. The late 1960s witnessed a common attempt to transcend traditional Cold War rhetoric and organization, but this transcendence lacked consensus. The period of "high" détente failed to bring the Cold War to a desired close because it could replace its aspirations but not its constraints.

## 3.1  Successful Détente in Europe: a Diplomacy of Moving

The "little détente" of 1963 clearly did not eradicate cultural and personal misunderstandings across distance. For all of his extensive postwar experience in the upper echelons of great power diplomacy, American Secretary of State Dean Rusk lamented, in a revealing September 1963 conversation, that he could use the advise of a psychiatrist to understand the seemingly irrational behavior rampant in world affairs at the time. While a cooperative breakthrough in the form of a limited international nuclear test ban seemed imminent, foreign policy makers – to Rusk's rueful consternation – grappled with a series of new developments they found difficult to interpret. State elites operated in an environment that lacked its former stasis and common points of group organization. International influence in the middle 1960s diffused throughout a dynamically

developing web of diverse interests and multiplying initiatives.[92] In this complicated context U.S. foreign policy could no longer rely primarily on a superpower status quo. Harlan Cleveland of the U.S. State Department reflected in 1966 that: "[T]here are forces at work on both sides, which neither the US nor the USSR can control fully, working against the *status quo*." "In our hearts," the respected U.S. official admitted "we know that there is no permanent security trying to maintain the *status quo*."[93]

By late 1963 the Kennedy administration realized that the "little" détente of 1963 was indeed very limited. The constructed Cold War settlement carried a very high geopolitical price. The nuclear impasse between Washington and Moscow did not allow ample opportunity for a final or even progressive settlement of disputed issues – German reunification, Chinese reunification, East European national independence, arms control, and disarmament. Between 1963 and the last years of the decade these issues remained largely frozen in place. Discussions with the Kremlin did not progress beyond relatively limited agreements, like the test ban treaty and the Washington-Moscow "hot line."

The diffusion of power, especially within the two alliances, further limited the control of the superpowers over important international issues. The settlement of 1963 left both blocs in a state of disarray, with the Sino-Soviet split deepening by the day, and tensions within NATO at a new high. New manifestations of East-West cooperation in trade, culture, and eventually travel reduced mutual fears and recriminations across the now stable Iron Curtain. These initiatives, however, also softened the postwar fibers of united purpose in Western Europe, particularly in France.[94]

What was to be done? The United States required, as members of the State Department recognized, "a diplomacy of movement rather than of position."[95] Broader détente would evolve only within an organic, historic process involving as many collective Western enterprises as possible. Such an environment would favor the Western rather than the Eastern alliance, according to prominent policy planner, and later national security adviser, Walt Rostow. "The general point," Rostow wrote Rusk in late 1963, "is that in the Free World – and here we have a marked advantage over the Communist bloc presently organized – the atmosphere of *détente* and the assertion of more familiar nationalist impulses does not eliminate all the areas of common interest within the West, nor does it preclude continued movement forward in joint ventures which would, in effect organize the world of diffusing power into a world of diffused responsibility."[96]

Rostow made a virtue of alliance and domestic necessity. He interpreted the decentralized and disconnected structures of Western interaction as sources of long-term strength. This perspective did not hold common sway in the past, and many policy makers in Washington continued to view the more centralized communist bloc as a comparative advantage for the Soviet Union in international competition.[97] In the fluid international system of the 1960s, however, the view began to take shape that the complex political structures of the Western bloc absorbed dispute, tension, and disagreement far better than the authoritative instruments of the East. Western institutions, based on a common set of values, provided a firm basis for a world of diffused responsibilities. This was true even in the case of de Gaulle's vision of a "European" Europe led by France. Although the General withdrew from NATO's military structures in

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[92] On this point see Memorandum, W.W. Rostow to Secretary Rusk, "State of the World," 17 September 1963, Folder: USSR, July-December 1963, Box 256, RG 59, Lot 70D199 – Records of the Policy Planning Staff Council, 1963-1964, NA.

[93] Memorandum, Harlan Cleveland to Secretary Rusk, "East-West Relations in NATO," 17 November 1966, Records of the Ambassador at Large, Llewellyn E. Thompson, 1961-1970, Entry 5008, Lot 67D2, Box 7, Folder NATO-No. 2, NA. See also Memorandum for the Council, L.W. Fuller S/P, "The President's Meeting with Erhard," 1 November 1963, Folder: Germany 1963, Box 252, RG 59, Lot 70D199 – Records of the Policy Planning Staff Council, 1963-1964, NA.

[94] For a series of reflections on these developments see Memorandum, Llewellyn E. Thompson to the President, "Talks with Gromyko on October 10," 8 October 1963, Folder: POL US-USSR 10/1/63, Box 4121, RG 59, 1963 Alpha-Numeric Political and Defense POL, NA.

[95] Memorandum for the Council, L.W. Fuller S/P, "The President's Meeting with Erhard," 1 November 1963, RG 59: Records of the Policy Planning Staff Council (S/PC), 1963-1964, Entry 5041, Lot 70D199, Box 252, Folder Germany 1963, NA.

[96] Memorandum, W.W. Rostow to Secretary Rusk, "State of the World," 17 September 1963, RG 59: Records of the Policy Planning Staff Council (S/PC), 1963-1964, Entry 5041, Lot 70D199, Box 256, Folder USSR July-December 63, NA.

[97] On the American perception of Eastern alliance centralization as a strategic asset in the early 1950s see Robert R. Bowie and Richard H. Immerman, *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998): 149-57.

1966, France remained firmly ensconced in the political structures of the Atlantic Alliance.[98]

In the mid 1960s the U.S. State Department began to define a diplomacy of "movement" which paved the way for the breakthrough of a truly multilateral détente in Europe during the next decade. Over time, several major cornerstones evolved for the new policy. Most importantly, the United States would sustain a cooperative framework for its relations with the Soviet Union, safeguarding through continual consultations the basic geopolitical status quo against diffusing power within the alliances, and unpredictable dangers in areas of strategic concern. The superpowers, according to this logic, had a common interest in maintaining stability and order in the broader international environment. "[R]ather than abolish the two alliances," Cleveland wrote to Rusk, "both 'blocs' should mutate in characteristic fashion and engage in mutually valuable intercourse until the time comes when it seems unimportant to keep open the old political scores."[99] In this sense, where the East-West division of Europe and Asia created the early conflicts of the Cold War, the pressures of the 1960s made this division seem necessary for the future.

Given the longing for reunification within the divided German nation, America's Central European policy could no longer focus on freezing the status quo without significant reform.[100] The Western alliance, at the behest of Bonn, integrated the German question within "a multipolar world of diffused power and stirrings of détente."[101] In an attempt to harmonize short and longer term objectives, both superpowers – over-committed in Central Europe – had to modify their German policies. As a first step, Washington confirmed the recent West German realization that unification, rather than resulting from force, would come through a flexible process of cooperation. The leaders of the Federal

Republic, especially after 1965, worked to coordinate their Eastern policy with the U.S. around this point of view.[102]

The US also sought to "level barriers between the satellite states and Western Europe, including Germany,"[103] moving "from 'driving wedges' to 'building bridges' as the aim of U.S. policy vis-a-vis Eastern Europe."[104] This "bridge building" concept hinged upon a shift of emphasis from competition to cooperation across the Iron Curtain. Fears of international chaos focused upon multidimensional change without adequate overriding controls. The "bridges" proposed by the US would channel the floods of strategic and economic reform throughout Europe into newly calm and interspersed waters. In specific terms, this framework would place West Germany more firmly in the West, while at the same time encouraging new economic and cultural overtures to the East. The "bridges" would preserve order and stability in Europe with an intended slant toward Western values. In this framework the Soviet border states would remain within a veritable Moscow-dominated Eastern bloc, but they would also return to a broader, more flexible single European community. The new structure of European politics would reconcile the former satellites to an independent but non-aggressive German heartland.

Along these lines many American planners argued that NATO should preserve its military functions but at the same time expand to encompass what Henry Kissinger called "an Atlantic Commonwealth."[105] In addition to providing a

[98] On de Gaulle's attitude towards the Atlantic Alliance after 1963, and the U.S. in particular, see Vaïsse, *La grandeur*, 363-412; Frank Costigliola, *France and the United States: the Cold Alliance since World War II* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1992), 136-59

[99] Memorandum, Harlan Cleveland to Secretary Rusk, "East-West Relations in NATO," 17 November 1966, Folder: NATO - number 2, Box 7, RG 59, Lot 67D2 – Records of the Ambassador at Large, Llewellyn E. Thompson, 1961-1970, NA.

[100] On rising public concern for reunification in West Germany see Weissbuch der Bundesregierung für Wiedervereinigungspolitik, 1965, IIA1, Band 75, AA.

[101] Memorandum for the Council, L.W. Fuller S/P, "The President's Meeting with Erhard," 1 November 1963, Folder: Germany, 1963, Box 252, RG 59, Lot 70D199 – Records of the Policy Planning Staff Council, 1963-1964, NA.

[102] Karl Carstens an Bundeskanzler Kurt Georg Kiesinger 25. September 1967, Karl Carstens Nachlass, N 1337, Mappe 663, BA; Egon Bahr Vermerk, no date (circa February 1967), Box 341, Bahr papers.

[103] Memorandum for the Council, L.W. Fuller S/P, "The President's Meeting with Erhard," 1 November 1963, Folder: Germany, 1963, Box 252, RG 59, Lot 70D199 – Records of the Policy Planning Staff Council, 1963-1964, NA.

[104] Memorandum, Harlan Cleveland to Secretary Rusk, "East-West Relations in NATO," 17 November 1966, Folder: NATO – number 2, Box 7, RG 59, Lot 67D2 – Records of the Ambassador at Large, Llewellyn E. Thompson, 1961-1970, NA. President Lyndon B. Johnson also publicly announced that the United States intended to intensify its relations with Eastern Europe, and Poland in particular: "We intend to build bridges to Poland – bridges of friendship, bridges of trade, and bridges of aid." Lyndon B. Johnson, Remarks at the Dedication of the Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa, Doylestown, Pennsylvania, 16 October 1966, Johnson *Public Papers of the Presidents*, 1966 II: 1210-14. See also Lyndon B. Johnson, Annual Message to the Congress on the State of Union, 12 January 1966, Johnson *Public Papers of the Presidents*, 1966 I: 3-12.

[105] Henry A. Kissinger, *The Troubled Partnership: A Re-appraisal of the Atlantic Alliance* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1965), 248.

continuing deterrent against the Warsaw Pact, a permanent U.S. military presence in West Germany appeared as "an essential element in maintaining minimum stability in parts of the world which are inherently explosive if left to themselves."[106] Beyond this basic policing function, many Americans and West Europeans argued that NATO should expand its political functions. Kissinger, among others, emphasized as early as 1964 that in the context of détente the Western alliance required a mechanism for more "effective sharing of political decisions," in order to formulate and implement broader goals.[107]

This blueprint for a deepening of détente differed remarkably from the contours of the constructed Cold War settlement in 1963. Détente now emphasized changing diplomatic guide posts rather than a stagnant status quo. New initiatives appealed to the national aspirations of the United States' key allies in Europe, in addition to basic core interests of the United States. Formulations of détente after 1963 stressed common values and political cooperation, rather than pervasive threat and nuclear stalemate, as the foundations for superpower security. East-West cooperation accentuated the political and social functions of multilateral alliances, rather than their purely strategic and military functions. Leadership, at least in the Western alliance, relied upon persuasion, rather than control. Most importantly, policy makers in American and much of Europe consciously endeavored to make détente a fluid historic process, rather than a static situation in the form of a final settlement.

The institutional structure of NATO proved instrumental in forging a major convergence of European security perspectives among the United States and its allies. NATO's Harmel report of December 1967 established a new balance between the military and the political functions of the alliance. While NATO would "maintain adequate military strength and political solidarity to deter aggression and other forms of pressure, [as well as] to defend the territory of member countries if aggression should occur," the way to peace and stability rested "in particular on the use of the alliance constructively in the interest of détente."[108] Following the logic of the ground-breaking Harmel report, the

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[106] Memorandum, W.W. Rostow to Secretary Rusk, "State of the World," 17 September 1963, Folder: USSR, July - December 1963, Box 256, RG 59, Lot 70D199 – Records of the Policy Planning Staff Council, 1963-1964, NA.

[107] Kissinger, *The Troubled Partnership*, 23.

[108] Ministerial Communiqué, North Atlantic Council, "Harmel Report: The Future Tasks of the Alliance," Brussels 13-14 December 1967, http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/c671213b.htm.

alliance adopted an overall strategic concept of flexible military response. This change in NATO strategy only proved successful because of France's withdrawal from the alliance's military structure in 1966. Free of Paris' veto against any deviation from a nuclear "trip-wire" strategy in Europe, NATO became more committed to overcoming the rigidity of political and military divisions between East an West.[109]

While fostering détente, NATO played an important role in stemming the tide of nuclear proliferation. Following the demise of the Multilateral Force proposal for shared nuclear stockpiles among the Western states, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara oversaw the creation of a Nuclear Planning Group (NPG) which gave the European allies, excluding France, unprecedented input on nuclear issues. In December 1967, the NPG held its first meeting, quickly becoming an important body for nuclear learning among the allies.[110] The NPG increased the role of the allies in formulating NATO nuclear policy, reducing European fears of American disengagement from the continent's defense. In this sense, increased alliance consultation helped alleviate some of America's credibility conundrum in the context of nuclear stalemate. The NPG, in particular, helped provide a sustainable solution to the touchy question of independent German nuclear access. This alliance breakthrough paved the way for successful negotiation of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty in 1968, and later progress in the field of strategic arms control talks.[111]

The convergence of European security perspectives within the institutional structure of NATO opened up unprecedented possibilities for a West German strategy of rapid and broad engagement with Eastern European neighbors, including East Germany, Poland and the Soviet Union. With President Richard

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[109] The strategy of flexible response represented a compromise between a full-scale conventional defense, advocated by the United States – in particular Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara – and a trip-wire strategy, advocated by major European allies. Jane E. Stromseth, *The Origins of Flexible Response: NATO's Debate over Strategy in the 1960s* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988), 175-194.

[110] See Paul Buteux, *The Politics of Nuclear Consultation in NATO, 1965-1980* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983), 39-68; J. Michael Legge, "Theater Nuclear Weapons and the NATO Strategy of Flexible Response." *RAND Report R-2964-FF*. Santa Monica: The RAND Corporation, 1983, 17-34.

[111] On the strategic discussions within Nato see Helga Haftendorn, *Kernwaffen und die Glaubwuerdigkeit der Allianz: die NATO-Krise von 1966/67* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1994).

Nixon and Special National Security Assistant Henry Kissinger increasingly focused on Vietnam and the containment of rising unrest at home, the initiative in consolidating the Central European territorial increasingly shifted to West Germany. Willy Brandt's *Ostpolitik*, the word most closely associated with détente in Europe, lifted the question of post-World War II borders on the continent out of the bilateral Soviet-American context of the "little" détente of 1963. Brandt re-focused these issues within the broader multilateral context of an all-European security system.[112] The Helsinki Final Act of 1975 established a mutually accepted framework of values and principles in which the historic process of European détente could proceed.[113]

The relatively successful "diplomacy of moving" in the West was accompanied by new overtures from the Soviet bloc and China for increased cultural, economic, and ultimately diplomatic exchange.[114] Without this new openness in the communist bloc, détente would have amounted to much less. The implications of improved East-West relations for intra-alliance politics, however, proved far less transformative for the communist bloc than for its Western counterpart. If anything, it appears that new relations with the West only increased the tension and estrangement between Moscow and Beijing. The Sino-Soviet border clashes in 1969 highlighted the progressive worsening of the conflict between

the two former allies at the very time when their respective openings to the West became most propitious.[115]

In Eastern Europe, a similar absence of positive movement characterized the period. In the aftermath of the Prague Spring, for example, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and other regimes faced increasing pressures from Moscow to purge dissident voices. The Kremlin-orchestrated shift in East German leadership from Walter Ulbricht to Erich Honecker in 1971 illustrated the extent to which the Soviet Union employed détente to tighten control and limit flexibility within the Warsaw Pact. Ulbricht had become an established, influential, and somewhat obstinate voice within East bloc deliberations. Honecker, on the other hand, evinced few ideas other than those focused upon the immediate preservation of the East German state and broader Soviet authority in Eastern Europe. As the Western alliance became more porous and multilateral during the period of "high" détente, the communist states grew more politically rigid and hegemonically constrained.[116]

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[112] On West Germany's *Ostpolitik* see A. James McAdams, *Germany Divided: From the Wall to Reunification* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993): 79-95; William E. Griffith, *The Ostpolitik of the Federal Republic of Germany* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1978); Arnd Bauerkamper, Martin Sabrow, Bernd Stover (Hg.), *Doppelte Zeitgeschichte: deutsch-deutsche Beziehungen 1945-1990* (Bonn: J.H.W. Dietz, 1998).

[113] On the process of European Détente see Raymond L. Garthoff, *Detente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan*, revised edition (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1994), 123-45; Wilfried von Bredow, *Der KSZE-Prozess: Von der Zähmung zur Auflösung des Ost-West-Konflikts* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1992).

[114] During the late 1960s, before the initiation of Kissinger's "triangular diplomacy," both Moscow and Beijing made a series of overtures to France, then seen as the most independent member of the Western alliance. On the establishment of closer Franco-Soviet relations see "'Declaration' Franco-Sovietique" 3 decembre 1966, Carton CM8, Dossier 1966, Couve Papers. On deepening Franco-Chinese relations see Compte Rendu de l'entretien du 8 octobre 1970 entre Zhou Enlai et Maurice Couve de Murville, Carton CM10, Dossier 2, Couve Papers.

[115] See the Report by Four Chinese Marshals – Chen Yi, Ye Jianying, Nie Rongzhen, and Xu Xiangqian – to the CCP Central Committee, "Our Views about the Current Situation" (excerpt), 17 September 1969, reprinted in the *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, Issue 11 (Winter 1998), 170.

[116] During the months before the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, 20-21 August 1968, Ulbricht was particularly vocal in his calls for Soviet military action against the Prague government. The reluctance of the Soviet leadership to initiate military action hardly deterred Ulbricht in his determination to assure, at great cost, the survival of a favorable regime in Czechoslovakia. See Ulbricht comments in Jaromir Navratil et al., eds*., The Prague Spring, 1968: A National Security Archive Documents Reader* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1998), documents 52, 68, 79. Honecker's activities as an East German Politburo member in the late 1960s hardly displayed the same determination and independence of mind. Honecker, in contrast to Ulbricht, followed Soviet positions particularly closely, especially with regard to overtures to the West and criticism of Chinese belligerence. For two examples among many, see Honecker's speeches on 10 and 13 July 1969, Büro Honecker, DY 30/2374, SAPMO-BArch.

## 3.2 Unsuccessful Détente: a Diplomacy of Disillusion and "Internal Overstretch"

While diplomacy on the European continent exhibited characteristics of movement in the second half of the 1960s, politics within the respective societies witnessed deepening stagnation. This condition grew from the very institutions of nuclear production, military management, and technological innovation that made the diplomatic peace of the period possible. In this sense, the demands of the nuclear peace reinforced domestic institutional structures that pushed already evident social dissent into more radical forms, inaccessible to traditional governmental responses. The violence and apparent fanaticism of 1968 throughout America, Europe, and Asia manifested institutional shortcomings as much as personal and group predilections.[117]

In the United States, for instance, the pressures on universities and businesses to integrate their activities closely with the concerns of government became palpable in the phenomenal growth of selected institutions – Silicon Valley and the Ivy League for instance[118] – and in the socio-cultural focus upon industrial production and rational management among mainstream groups.[119] John Kenneth Galbraith, himself a beneficiary of these very institutions and values, repeatedly criticized the stultifying domestic tendencies, and associated pressures for public conformity, in his correspondence with prominent personalities in the White House, the Council on Foreign Relations, university administration, and the business community.[120] Robert Kennedy, among others, found frustrating truth in this critique of the closed-mindedness produced by increasingly in-bred institutions. Kennedy lamented the stolid, uncreative collusion between government and unofficial institutions, and the consequent "gap opening between our best thought and our public voices."[121]

In this sense, the Keynesian fiscal stimuli integrated with American national budget-making in the 1960s provided more resources for domestic society, but also a more tightly knit framework for the allocation of these expanded means.[122] Influential economists brought into the White House – particularly John Kenneth Galbraith and Walt Rostow, later Francis Bator and Richard Cooper – emphasized quite explicitly that a focus upon public goods and shared sacrifices must accompany additional government spending.[123] Even a long-experienced and probing public thinker like Walter Lippmann found himself drawn to the promise of a more active and pervasive government. Writing with the assistance of Bator in 1960, Lippmann emphasized that Washington must extend its financial arm in a more active manner, targeted to public threats from

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[117] On this point see Jürgen Habermas, *Toward a Rational Society: Student Protest, Science, and Politics*, trans. Jeremy Shapiro (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), 13-61.

[118] Dean Acheson, former Secretary of State and Chairman of the Yale Corporation, grappled with the prospects of "internal overstretch" at research institutions, like Yale University, during the heady days of government expansion in the late 1950s and early 1960s. See A. Whitney Griswold, President of Yale University, to Acheson 18 August 1959, Box 14, Folder 176, Acheson papers; The President of Yale's Report to the Alumni, 1958-59, Box 14, Folder 176, Acheson. On the particular case of Stanford University see Rebecca Lowen, *Creating the Cold War University: The Transformation of Stanford* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

[119] For contemporary analyses and criticisms of the socio-cultural focus upon industrial production and rational management see William F. Whyte, *Men at Work* (Homewood, Illinois: Donsey Press, 1961); Herbert Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964).

[120] See Galbraith to President Johnson 22 April 1965, National Security Files, Memos to the President, Folder: McGeorge Bundy 4/15-5/31/65 Volume 10 [2 of 2], Box 3, Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library, Austin, Texas [hereafter LBJL]; Galbraith to John J. McCloy 3 November 1966, Folder: McCloy Correspondence About Council on Foreign Relations, November-December 1966, Box 72, Papers of John Kenneth Galbraith, JFKL.

[121] Robert F. Kennedy to John Kenneth Galbraith 28 November 1966, Folder: McCloy Correspondence About Council on Foreign Relations, November -December 1966, Box 72, Papers of John Kenneth Galbraith, JFKL.

[122] On Keynesian fiscal spending and its institutional connections to military policy see Michael Sherry, *In the Shadow of War: The United States since the 1930s* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 237-79; Lloyd Gardner, *Pay any Price: Lyndon Johnson and the Wars for Vietnam* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1995), 24-39.

[123] The emphasis that Rostow, Bator, Galbraith, and others placed on international development captured the intimate connection between increased government spending and more explicit emphasis upon public goods over private wants. See two of the many reports produced by the influential M.I.T. Center for International Studies, where both Rostow and Bator worked in the second half of the 1950s. "The Objectives of United States Economic Assistance Programs," January 1957 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1957); "Economic, Social, and Political Change in the Underdeveloped Countries and Its Implications for United States Policy," 30 March 1960 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1960). See also, Bator's influential book, *The Question of Government Spending* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960).

foreign enemies and the unfulfilled needs of neglected domestic groups.[124] Following this growing chorus, the American government, and many of its counterparts in Western Europe, spent more liberally through the 1960s. The public framework for these expenditures, however, made the machinery of governance more evident in the everyday activities of citizens across class, geography and generation. Leaders proved active in their ability to formulate vast and thoughtful plans, but their very planning and spending processes created institutional constraints upon local and largely independent initiatives that previously constituted the core of what Jürgen Habermas calls the "public sphere."[125]

Outside of the "public sphere," the history of the 1960s in both the West and the East reveals a phenomenal prevalence of social activism. Most critical and creative non-governmental initiative turned away from the growing web of official institutions, toward new spaces self-consciously free of traditional connections to political power. The New Left in America, the *Ausserparlamentarische Opposition* in West Germany, the student movement in France, the cynical youths in the Soviet Union, and even the Red Guards in China – for all of their differences, these protest movements manifested a similar revulsion toward what members of Students for a Democratic Society identified as the "blockage" then present in the broad, established institutions of each society.[126]

This "blockage," as we have argued, emerged from the parameters of the nuclear peace, and its implications for internal politics quickly deepened after 1963 beyond nuclear and other military issues alone. The decline of traditional peace movements during this period – observed by scholars such as Lawrence Wittner and Paul Boyer – does not reveal diminished apprehension about the possible perils of nuclear war, but instead a search for the deeper causes of these

perils and more original solutions.[127] Traditional social and political critics – "the Old Left" – had become, as a consequence of government's far reach, closely associated with acceptance, or at least tolerance, of the status quo. A younger generation of hopeful thinkers rejected this moderation that made significant movement on issues like international peace, economic reform, and racial justice seem so slow as to have little real promise.[128]

Government was earnest and it was everywhere, but it was now the central problem. While the promises of industrial management produced a popular rhetoric of faith in government solutions during the interwar years in America and Europe,[129] the self-proclaimed social managers in the second half of the 1960s possessed equally rational answers, but *not* to the questions most troubling for a growing number of people. Superpower détente and "bridges" between East and West in Europe strengthened shared stability and material comfort within most societies,[130] absent new justifications for the continued anxieties of war and individual suffering under the eyes of government. Leaders could no longer, in the context of permanent nuclear stalemate and contained conflict, provide compelling reasons for improved future expectations. In this sense, the late 1960s followed a clear Tocquevillian formula – improved living circumstances with little hope for continued progress created unprecedented

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124 Walter Lippmann, in consultation with Francis M. Bator, "America Must Grow," *The Saturday Evening Post*, 5 November 1960. Lippmann and Bator began a longer book length manuscript on this topic, but when Bator became more active in the National Security Council the authors abandoned this project.

125 Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989). See also Habermas*, Toward a Rational Society*, 1-12.

126 On this point see the SDS Port Huron Statement of 15 June 1962, reprinted in James Miller*, Democracy Is in the Streets: From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987), 329-74 . On the common perception of social and political blockage voiced by various protest movements in the 1960s see Robert Daniels, *The Year of the Heroic Guerilla* (New York: Basic Books 1989), 235-47.

127 Wittner, *Resisting the Bomb*, 415-62; Boyer, "From Activism to Apathy."

128 On this general point see Maurice Isserman, *If I Had a Hammer: The Death of the Old Left and the Birth of the New Left* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 77-219.

129 For the rhetoric of progressivism in American and Europe during the early twentieth century see Daniel T. Rodgers, *Crossing the Atlantic: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), especially 52-75.

130 We do not intend to say that most societies were equally comfortable, nor do we wish to diminish the reality of poverty in significant segments of most societies. These important caveats notwithstanding, we wish to observe that the mass of citizens within America, Europe, the Soviet Union, and even China, had more assured access to food, shelter, and education than during nearly any prior historical period. Not without reason, Eric Hobsbawm has labeled the late 1960s the "golden years." See Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914-1991* (New York: Random House, 1994), 257-86. The growth of protest movements in this context of relative material comfort reflects the central insight of Alexis de Tocqueville. Protests are difficult to organize when many potential revolutionaries face starvation. Social movements, however, coalesce more easily with improved material conditions and rising expectations. Alexis de Tocqueville, *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution* (Paris: Gallimard, 1952), especially 218-25.

social space for popular expressions of discontent and pervasive political pressure for new hinges of temporary social order.[131]

The Vietnam War and the Czechoslovak crisis of 1967-8, in this context, augmented the central domestic detractions from détente. America's failure to solidify the South Vietnamese government and the Soviet Union's inability to coordinate communist discipline in Eastern Europe highlighted the obvious shortcomings of promises for effective government management of important affairs. Neither Washington nor Moscow wished to become further engaged in Saigon or Prague, but the very logic of holding the line against international and domestic disruptions necessitated direct involvement. President Johnson sought an exit from Indochina as early as 1964, but he also acutely recognized that he could not afford – in terms of credibility at home or abroad – to withdraw with little in return, or become more deeply and militarily committed. Instead, he adhered to a consistently moderate, but tragic course of incremental escalation, accompanied by vain hopes for negotiation.[132]

General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev similarly exhibited restraint for more than a year when confronted with a regime in Czechoslovakia purporting to follow its own path to socialism through newfound emphasis upon individual freedoms, independent interaction with the West, and less state-centered economic controls. The Soviet Union, like the United States, attempted to influence the Prague Spring through active but moderate measures that included verbal cajoling and transparent military maneuvers. Brezhnev eventually authorized the

Warsaw Pact invasion of a fellow sovereign communist state on 20 August 1968, when further Czech and Slovak criticisms of Soviet policy threatened to undermine Moscow's authority within and without Soviet borders.[133]

As moderation brought both American and Soviet policy to tragic consequences in Vietnam and Czechoslovakia, similar stolid moderation from allies carried the virus of anti-governmental cynicism to places like West Germany, Britain, and Poland. Attempts by leaders – East and West – to avoid any association with the perceived radicalism of Ho Chi Minh or Alexander Dubcek made the stagnant over-reach of government institutions blatantly apparent. Virtually no established institution in America, Europe, or the Soviet Union could contribute substantially to freedom instead of war in Vietnam or Czechoslovakia. Nearly all public leaders were implicated for their unwillingness, in the context of nuclear stalemate and early détente, to take a strong and effective public stand of any sort.[134]

The escalating public protests of 1968 grew from the now largely irreconcilable gap between governing elites and groups unable to find redress for grievances within existing political structures. The shocks of Paris, Berlin, Chicago, and other urban disruptions in this fateful year reflected the breakdown in many strands of the "organic connection" between established societal and international institutions, and those living within these very pervasive structures. The hollowness of government largess contributed considerably to these great shocks. While the contours of the various revolts in 1968 displayed many diversities, nearly all of the young students who took to the streets attacked the moral vacuum in governmental authority. The spontaneous and proliferating tracts of

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[131] See Ibid. French historian François Furet applied a similar Tocquevillian formula to his analysis of the student revolts in 1968. See Furet à Raymond Aron 13 juin 1968, Fonds Raymond Aron, Dossier: François Furet, Centre de Recherches Politiques Raymond Aron, L'École des hautes études en sciences sociales, Paris, France. Jeremi Suri thanks Raymond Aron's daughter, Professor Dominique Schnapper, for permission to work in the Aron papers. This use of Tocqueville to understand 1968 underpinned Furet's famous reevaluation of the French Revolution in terms of early liberal politics and a revolt against over-centralized, paternalistic government. See François Furet, *Penser la Revolution française* (Paris: Gallimard, 1978), especially 13-130. Furet's *magnum opus* is as much about the 1960s as Jacobin France.

[132] Johnson's dilemma is most clearly articulated in his agonizing telephone conversation with long-time companion Richard Russell, Senator from Georgia. President Johnson telephone conversation with Richard Russell, 27 May 1964, 10:55 AM, approximately 28 minutes of conversation, Recordings of Telephone Conversations, White House Series, Tape WH6405.10, LBJL. See also Robert McNamara's description of creeping war escalation during the Johnson years. McNamara, *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam* (New York: Random House, 1995), 169-206.

[133] For Brezhnev's deepened worries about stability in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union see the transcripts of the Soviet leader's August telephone conversations with Czechoslovak Communist Party Secretary Alexander Dubcek in Navratil, et al., eds., *The Prague Spring, 1968*, documents 77, 81. Also see Brezhnev's 18 August 1968 speech to leaders of the Warsaw Pact, excluding Czechoslovakia, document 92.

[134] During the late 1960s the Soviet Union and many of its East European allies tried, with little success, to moderate North Vietnamese policy and encourage negotiations with the U.S. See Ilya Gaiduk, *The Soviet Union and the Vietnam War*, especially 133-93. During the same period, the United States and her Western allies provided little public or private condemnation for the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. At some moments, Western policy-makers seemed to welcome the stability that continued Soviet authority would provide in Eastern Europe. See Memo of Conversation between Rusk, Bohlen, and Dobrynin 22 July 1968, FRUS, 1964-68, XVII: 212-14; Summary of Meeting with President Johnson, Walt Rostow, and Dobrynin 20 August 1968, FRUS, 1964-68, XVII: 236-41.

French university and lycée students in the fateful weeks of May 1968, for example, reveal far less radical theorizing than one might expect. Instead the student broadsides manifest a consistent meditation upon the deep contradictions between the stagnant pedagogical aims of educational institutions and the changing needs of society. French students sought to open blocked avenues for creative reform in foreign policy, economic distribution, inter-personal interaction, and cultural production. Gaullist France might have represented an extreme example of tendencies at work throughout what Raymond Aron called "industrial society,"[135] but here and elsewhere students saw little alternative than to make their everyday lives – in the classroom, the workplace, and the home – the touchstones for new initiatives smothered by political constraints in more traditional reform channels.[136]

The diplomacy and politics of the late 1960s created, as already became evident earlier in the decade, the disillusion and radicalism that made for their own undoing. Domestic institutional growth and international balance reinforced, within each of the great powers, the perverse circumstances of "internal overstretch." Historian Paul Kennedy has convincingly argued that pre-nuclear empires suffered from over-extended military commitments and under-funded financial capabilities in the context of global competition. The predictable consequence for Kennedy comes with domestic decline and external fragmentation due to "imperial overstretch."[137] The external restrictions on expansion imposed

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[135] See Raymond Aron, *Dix-huit leçons sur la société industrielle* (Paris: Gallimard, 1962), especially 97-117. This book is based upon Aron's lectures at the Sorbonne, 1955-6. While Aron continued to view the political organization of the industrial societies with a critical eye, he found himself deeply at odds with the student protesters in 1968, and their attacks upon the established French intelligentsia, Aron included. See Aron's articles in the French newspaper, *Le Figaro*, May through June 1968. See also Raymond Aron, *Mémoires: 50 ans de réflexion politique* (Paris: Julliard, 1983), 471-97.

[136] The Bibliothéque nationale de France, site François Mitterand, posseses a microfiche collection of more than 19,000 pages from French student tracts originating in 1968: *Les tracts de mai 1968*, 4 - Lb61 - 600 (1968). For a few examples of student tracts produced in Nanterre and at the Sorbonne – key centers for student protest in May 1968 – see Microfiche 48/Document 1202; Microfiche 49/Document 1214; Microfiche 56/Document 1406; Microfiche 58/Document 1418; Microfiche 68/Document 1656. In these and other tracts the common themes are the "blockage" in "industrial society," the role of the university as a creative and reforming touchstone, and the need for new social-political experimentation. Similar themes dominate the letters sent by West German students at this time to the Ministerium für gesamtdeutsche Fragen. See the multi-volume collection of letters in B137/2291, BA.

[137] Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* (New York: Random House, 1987), 515.

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by nuclear weapons brought the polar opposite process to pass after 1963. Governments took on exorbitant financial commitments at home while eschewing new opportunities for significant power acquisition abroad. The great powers, by 1968, did not only suffer from over-commitment to far away territories like the empires of the past. In addition, they suffered from too little opportunity to expand the horizons of their citizens.

## 3.3  Transcending the Cold War: Ideas and Institutions

The nuclear revolution made détente possible in its formative years, from 1957 through 1963. In its period of stagnation (1964 to 1968), and during the years of "high" détente (1969 to 1974), the domestic social and alliance constraints of the nuclear peace proved responsible for the ultimate failure of attempts to end the Cold War. The very urge to uphold geopolitical stability deepened pressures within states and alliances that ultimately undermined further progress towards a deeper, more meaningful détente. Ideas stimulated by the nuclear stalemate transcended both the international and the domestic Cold War framework. Desires for change in domestic and international institutional structures replaced the balance of military capacities as the central regulating principle in an age of nuclear plenty.

The realization that détente would not flow top-down from a status quo-oriented great power policy lay at the heart of flexible diplomatic initiatives in Europe during the 1970s. Policy-makers in Washington proved relatively successful in shaping a more permanently peaceful Western Europe because they increasingly understood détente as a process encompassing the needs and aspirations of their allies, as well as the hopes and expectations of those living in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. While NATO could not resolve all of the differences over military strategy among its members, the alliance proved sustainable because it played an important role in mitigating political disputes within the Western bloc. In particular, NATO provided an institutional answer to the West German nuclear question, opening new opportunities for diplomatic initiatives on a regional level. Brandt's *Ostpolitik* paved the way for a multilateral *modus vivendi* in Central Europe, evolving within the framework of values and principles later articulated by the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

Prior explanations of détente in Europe have neglected important dynamics. Historians and political scientists have emphasized the balance of power in a bipolar nuclear system, but they have underestimated the roles of ideas and institutions in an increasingly multipolar environment. The differences in how the Soviet Union and the United States led their respective alliance systems through the murky waters of the 1960s is most telling in this regard: cooperation in a coalition of authoritarian states – like the Soviet Union and China – was based on a blend of ideology and geopolitics. Once geopolitical interests started to drift apart, ideology became a source of competitive rivalry, not continued cooperation. Absent a durable alliance structure, the Soviet Union could not "control" or "manage" its awkward relations with China, nor solidify the status quo in Asia.

International conflict, as a consequence, began to shift from the nuclear-fortified postwar boundaries of Europe to the remaining areas of disputed authority in Asia. The Vietnam War, in particular, promised opportunities for expanded superpower influence in the region, but after more than a decade of military engagement – most tragic for the citizens of Southeast Asia and the United States, but also taxing for the Soviet Union and China – the respective foreign powers abandoned the use of their weapons for a strategic stalemate similar to Europe and the Taiwan Straits. This became, in the days of Henry Kissinger's "triangular diplomacy," the final key to the more multipolar global détente of the early 1970s.

By then, however, the connection between the structures of the international system and the domestic dimensions of détente had reversed itself to a considerable degree. The social climate began to change the nature of political deliberation, as policy makers became increasingly focused on isolating political control within their societies. Social protest, growing from the internal "blockages" of the nuclear revolution, turned away from the moderating web of traditional domestic institutions. The Vietnam War and the Czechoslovak Crisis highlighted the gap between the moderation of governing elites and those domestic groups demanding fundamental social and institutional changes. The ultimate failure of détente flowed from these unfulfilled domestic political promises of the nuclear peace.

International disputes, by the early 1970s, no longer revolved primarily around relations among governing elites in Washington, Moscow, Bonn, Paris, and Beijing. Conflict transcended these established postwar patterns to turn inside states. The nuclear revolution, and consequent relations within the framework of détente, succeeded in transforming the Cold War in this regard. The deep chasm

between domestic aspirations and the established institutions of political power produced new dilemmas for which leaders could offer few creative solutions. Détente brought the Cold War close to an early end, but it offered little to replace dominant post-1945 ideas and institutions. Détente, as a consequence, fell victim to the Cold War and the nuclear revolution that initially made an awkward period of hopeful peace possible, but not endurable.

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