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Social Democratic Parties in NATO Countries

A Return to Consensus?

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INTRODUCTION

"In fifty-eight minutes at the United Nations General Assembly, Mikhail Gorbachev has presented the Western Alliance with the most serious challenge it has yet confronted – the challenge of rethinking the superpower confrontation with which the world has lived for the past four decades." Not our words, but those of a normally sober commentator in one of Britain's more sober newspapers. With scarcely enough time to draw breath after the trauma of the INF years, the Alliance must strive to within fashion a new consensus on the role of America's nuclear weapons on European soil and on the balance of conventional forces.

By consensus, we mean, in the words of the Oxford English Dictionary, a "general concord of different organs of the body in effecting a given purpose", and within every NATO state "a sharing of basic outlooks about the nation's objectives in relation to its external environment." These are demanding definitions, all the more difficult to satisfy when a Soviet leader has managed to seize the moral high ground from the West. We should, of course, take comfort from the fact that NATO has already withstood a notable lack of consensus over Cruise and Pershing and seen as a result the ratification of a thoroughly beneficial treaty. And we can welcome signs that the Alliance is better prepared now – in terms of presenting its case to the public – to compete with Mr Gorbachev for the disagreements that characterized the early 1980s and some that may face us in the early 1990s to dispel any temptation to complacency and meet Mr Gorbachev's challenge to establish, in his words "a new world order through a universal human consensus."

Our purpose here is to review the way Western Europe's major socialist parties within NATO countries have approached defence in the post-war world. By and large, but not exclusively, we mean parties that belong to the Socialist International. But as to the main parties: what principles have they sought to adhere to; indeed, can any <u>common</u> principles and policies be discerned? How have they coped with the call of internationalism while Europe's relationship with the US, and how did they tackle the upheavals of the late 1970s? Finally, and most importantly, what is their approach to NATO in the Nineties? Are they thoroughly disillusioned with Flexible Response, or is a new consensus possible now that the arms control logjam is broken?

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

After the Second World War, the socialist-radical tradition in foreign policy – pacifism, the repudiation of considerations of power in international relations and the antipathy for military alliance – looked rather tarnished. The spirit of socialist internationalism had twice been badly let down in Europe in the space of thirty years. And most socialists in north-west Europe acknowledged, reluctantly in some instances, that the only alternative to isolated and vulnerable neutrality was collective security.

Many on the left hoped the newly-created United Nations could provide this, but like its predecessors it lacked the power to enforce its decisions. Hence the need for a new security guarantee for Europe. It was the foreign Secretary in Britain's Labour Government, Ernest Bevin, who was one of the driving forces behind the creation of the Atlantic Alliance. Left-of-centre politicians in government in the Netherlands and Belgium, chastened by Nazi occupation, also supported both the Brussels Treaty with France and Britain in 1948 and the foundation of the Alliance a year later. French socialists were also in favour of the Atlantic Pact. Elsewhere, compromise had to be made. In Scandinavia, many on the left had sought a Nordic security solution. However, when this proved infeasible, an SPD government in Denmark and a Labour government in Norway were both responsible for taking their countries into NATO as founder members – although to achieve a consensus on membership, the Norwegian and Danish governments decided to forbid the basic the basing of foreign forces on their territory, and later the stationing of nuclear weapons in peacetime.

What swung the democratic left behind NATO at the end of the 1940s was the ruthless post-war behaviour of the Soviet Union in imposing its economic and political control over half of Europe, exemplified by the coup in Czechoslovakia, overtures to Finland and Turkey and ultimately, the Berlin blockade.

As democracy emerged in Italy and West Germany, the PSI and SPD discovered that they would be consigned to opposition unless they supported the collective security provided by the Alliance. The governing coalitions headed by the Christian Democrats in Italy regarded membership of the Alliance as restoring Italy's international legitimation and domestic stability. The Socialist party accepted this position in the early 1960s as a prerequisite for entering government. The SPD initially opposed West Germany's membership of the Alliance in 1955, believing it counter to the principal aim of reunification. Shunned by the electorate two years later, the party transformed its position at Bad Godesburg in 1959.

Nevertheless, the ambivalence of many on the left about the role of the Alliance and in particular about nuclear weapons has never quite gone away. In Belgium, the Socialist

party split over Brussels being the venue for NATO headquarters. In Britain, the 1950s and 1960s were marked by outbreaks of guerilla warfare in the Labour party.

In the late 1960s, opposition to American policy in Vietnam in particular, and to the use or threat of military force in general, gave a foretaste of the dissent to emerge over dual-track. It was no coincidence that many of the student radicals of the 1960s became the new generation of socialist "leaders-in-waiting" in the 1970s – a decade when poor growth and rising demands on welfare systems cast a critical spotlight on military spending.

THE CONSENSUS CRUMBLES

It would be a gross distortion to see the last decade as one where divisions between left and right have caused NATO's every problem. There has been real disquiet across the political spectrum on both sides of the Atlantic about the plausibility of the US nuclear umbrella, about the ability of Europe to build a worthy second pillar of the Alliance. Europeans of all political shades have had to come to terms with the shifting gravity of US policy towards the Pacific. They have been alarmed by a growing American tendency towards unilateral action in matters that affect Europe – the promulgation of SDI in 1983, the Libyan raids and the extraordinary negotiations at Reykjavik in 1986. Those very negotiations illustrated another problem: how to adjust to a very different style of Soviet leadership.

But reviewing the last decade, dissatisfaction at the transatlantic relationship and NATO's direction has been more keenly felt on the left, particularly with a new generation of democratic socialists. These socialists who never knew the stark world of the Berlin Blockade assumed positions of influence, in some cases gaining power, and challenged the presumptions of Helmut Schmidt or James Callaghan. Few of them have questioned membership of NATO, support for which has remained strong in the West German SPD and British Labour Party. However, a mixture of the young radical left and elder statesmen such as Willy Brandt have increasingly questioned the leadership, judgment and commitment of the US.

The quality of both NATO and the US commitment was first seriously questioned with President Carter's inept handling of proposals for the neutron bomb. But far more objectionable to the European left was the behaviour of the incoming Reagan administration, whose belligerent anti-Communist appeared to mirror the ideological rigidity of Moscow. Socialists were appalled at what they perceived as a reckless global militarism in the Administration's support for the Contras, in its invasion of Grenada and

in its very one-sided intervention in Lebanon. They were rather more appalled several years on by the air raids on Libya.

The Administration also appeared unwilling to take arms control seriously, and to the left its attitude was an affront to the spirit of Ostpolitik and efforts to lower tension in Europe. A leading figure in the West German SPD, wrote: “Many Europeans fear that both nuclear world powers – especially the USA – believe it possible to control a nuclear war, to begin and conduct it so that it can be limited to Europe.” The promulgation of the Strategic Defence Initiative in 1983 was widely regarded by the left (and not just the left) as provocative and destabilizing, a scheme that would endanger strategic stability and undermine the ABM treaty. The British Labour party and the West German SPD pledged themselves to scrapping the government-to-government agreements with Washington over participation in SDI.

The deteriorating atmosphere in East-West relations and the prospect of a new nuclear arms race in Europe ensured a prolonged and heated debate over INF deployment, and cause the Alliance its most testing time since France left the integrated military command. Perhaps NATO had become a victim of its own success – after nearly forty years of security in Europe fewer believed in a “Soviet threat.”

As had occurred briefly in the early 1960s, popular anxiety about the state of East-West relations drew the debate out of the cosy preserve of defense analysts and obscure committees in Brussels, and into the streets.

Many of those marching for disarmament were also socialists, and in step with the peace movements, socialist parties in many NATO countries took up the call to oppose the deployment of Cruise and Pershing. The Labour parties in Holland and Britain promised their removal. Indeed, at the 1983 election, Labour pledged itself to remove all US nuclear forces from Britain. The Flemish Socialists in Belgium took a similar view, and the issue split the Francophone socialists. The West German SPD overturned the post-1959 defence consensus at its 1983 conference by overwhelmingly opposing the stationing of LRINF. Subsequent policy documents argued that their removal should be linked to the withdrawal of Soviet missiles deployed in East Germany and Czechoslovakia, and to a reduction of SS-20s to the 1979 level (not their elimination). Denmark was not directly affected by deployment, but public opinion there has traditionally been less convinced of a Soviet threat and the Social Democrats led a successful move in Parliament to stop the government from paying its share of infrastructure costs for deployment. The Norwegian Labour party also opposed deployment.

There was also friction over the notion of the Nuclear Weapons Free Zones, an idea popularized by the work of the Palme Commission and embraced by a number of socialist parties.

The ultimate manifestation of nuclearphobia was that of the British Labour Party in committing itself in 1983 not to go ahead with the Trident programme – the next generation of Britain's national deterrent.

However, it would be simplistic to conclude that throughout the NATO states, socialists were campaigning to throw out INF and denuclearize Europe, while the centre and right stolidly supported NATO orthodoxy. In France, the consensus remained solid for strategic imperatives accepted across the political spectrum. Germany was not to be seduced by the siren songs of reunification, neutralism and a central European destiny, and the French deterrent remained a vital "counter-value" weapon. Indeed, far from questioning the value of nuclear weapons, a Socialist Party paper in 1985 suggested extending the French deterrent eastwards to protect West Germany. President Mitterrand has been a keen proponent of the Franco-German joint brigade and the joint Defense Council.

A large degree of consensus was also maintained in Norway, where the Labour party made it clear that it wanted a Nordic Nuclear Free Zone only when it could be negotiated with NATO's approval, not declared unilaterally.

In countries where it seemed the old left-right consensus on defence was breaking down, the picture was often in reality rather more complex. In the Netherlands, a distinct strand of the ruling centre-right coalition opposed deployment, not least because of the influence of the Churches. In Denmark, the "opposition coalition" on defence policy has been led by the Social Democrats, but has relied on the support of the centre-left (the Left-Liberal Party) to wield decisive influence in the Folketing. However, the last election resulted in a diminished influence for the Social Democrats.

NATO now faces two major and closely linked tasks – to remain coherent and united in the face of further dramatic disarmament initiatives from Moscow, and to work out a strategy for the 1990s that is supported by a more self-confident European pillar and a stronger conventional component in its force mix. How will the socialist parties of Western Europe respond to these challenges?

Following the successful conclusion of the INF Treaty, there is *at the moment* a mood of wait-and-see among the left, encouraged by the luxury of opposition in much of central and northern Europe. Several socialist parties continue to espouse radical proposals for reshaping the way western Europe defends itself – proposals born of the

impasse which characterized East-West relations in the early 1980s and developed through inter-party for a such as SCANDILUX and EUROSUD in the Socialist International and the European Parliament. But in the immediate term, all eyes are on the future of superpower negotiations. As INF deployment divided so the missiles' dismantling has revived – for the time-being – the outlines of consensus. Their removal has dissolved one of the main bones of contention between the parties in West Germany, where differences between the CDU-led coalition and the SPD appear less than at any time in the past few years.

However, prospects for fresh tension within the Alliance are clear. Moscow continues to insist that all nuclear weapons can and must be eliminated, especially in Europe. The Soviet Union seems likely to portray NATO governments as the villain for their stress on linkage and the deterrent effect of the nuclear element. For example, a Soviet offer of the third zero, to rid central Europe of short-range nuclear weapons, could well revive discord between left and right in West Germany. Despite domestic pressure, Chancellor Kohl has held the NATO line (in public at any rate) that these weapons should be kept effective pending conventional arms cuts; and he has rejected the idea of a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone between East and West Germany, speaking instead of reduction and equal ceilings. But polls suggest more than 60 per cent of West Germans want a third zero, and the SPD has described short-range weapons as a threat to the very existence of the state. Thus far, the SPD has been careful to link its enthusiasm fir a Nuclear Weapons Free corridor to conventional parity in central Europe. Moscow will no doubt make strenuous efforts to weaken this linkage (much as it pressurized Bonn over the Pershing 1-As); and if its blandishments succeed the result will be damaging dissension in Germany over the path to the third zero.

On a broader front, the Soviet Union is also sure to encourage thinking along the lines of Common Security. As this idea has been developed in the 1980s, a number of variants have emerged. In the West German SPD, where it was initially explored, it was envisaged as reducing to a minimum and then replacing altogether the role of nuclear deterrence in Europe through a defensive conventional structure and new confidence-building measures. This would replace current NATO doctrine which is regarded as over-reliant on nuclear weapons and insufficiently defensive in its posture. Besides being pursued in the West German SPD, it is an idea that has been welcomed by the Danish Social Democrats and the British Labour Party and others on the European Left – although it is by no means universally endorsed.

If seriously pursued, Common Security would seek to outlaw destabilizing tendencies inherent in the current strategic balance: the possibility that either side might be

tempted towards a doctrine of fighting a limited nuclear war or acquire a first strike capability. Strategic defences are therefore an unwelcome development, while a Comprehensive Nuclear Weapons Test Ban would be a safeguard against "break out".

Within Europe, the military confrontation would be relaxed by what Soviet theorists call a "reasonable sufficiency" in armed forces – that is, forces sufficient for defence but incapable of victory in an offensive war. This notion is accepted by many socialists in western Europe, who regarded warnings of a dangerous conventional imbalance as both exaggerated and irrelevant. They go on to propose "non-provocative" defence, with forces "incapable of mounting large-scale, trans-border operations". These forces would concentrate on area defence, using a large number of small, dispersed and concealed units equipped with precision-guided munitions, advanced sensor technology and static obstacles to slow the attacker down. According to a policy document of the British Labour Party, "Man-made barriers and obstacles have been reliably estimated to be capable of… increasing NATO's defensive capability by up to forty per cent". At the same time, heavy armour and strike aircraft would be regarded as provocative. In the 1987 election, the British Labour Party proposed withdrawing British Tornado squadrons based in Germany from their deep-strike role to ground support and interdiction. The Danish Social Democrats – perhaps the purest advocate of defensive defence – has proposed the removal of bombs (of any description) from the country's F-16s and greater stress on air-defence missiles.

The aim of Common Security in Europe is "a zone on either side, depleted of offensive forces but open both to defensive forces and to inspection by the opposing alliance, would clearly make it more difficult for either side to launch a surprise offensive". As such, it has been criticized by more "orthodox" analysts, who assert that a defensive posture must incorporate some capacity to counter-attack, using the mobile artillery, heavy armour and airpower that would be outlawed as escalatory by "non-provocative" defence. It is also clearly at odds with both current NATO policy and Follow-on-Forces Attack, NATO's plan for engaging first echelon Warsaw Pact forces while hitting reinforcements deep in eastern Europe.

Its critics also contend that Common Security would actually be destabilising unless faithfully implemented in tandem by both sides and the aim of eliminating nuclear deterrence in Europe is widely held to be infeasible. The Roth Committee's report on NATO into the 1990s believed that an evolution towards longer-range systems and away from battlefields systems is possible, but equally warns: "There is no such thing as absolute conventional deterrence… a stable nuclear component in the West's

deterrent posture ensure an element of military stability that conventional forces alone cannot provide".

Depending on the pace at which Common Security is pursued by the left, it need not expose intra-Alliance tensions. In April this year, the parliamentary party of the SPD in West Germany reiterated its view that FOFA was "offensive", but was careful to insist that reductions in battle tanks, combat aircraft (including nuclear-capable) and helicopters must be negotiated and not unilateral. On the other hand, it made plain its rejection of projects such as the Armored Combat Vehicle to succeed the Leopard II.

Whether new stresses appear within the Alliance will depend in no small way on the pace of disarmament and the tone of superpower relations. Socialists in western Europe will be demanding a positive approach from NATO or further nuclear arms reductions. In Britain, the Labour Party has already denounced the Conservative government's plan to acquire new Air-launched Cruise Missiles following the departure of GLCM. The Socialist group in the European Parliament has warned that the removal of Cruise and Pershing must not be "used as a pretext for modernizing those nuclear weapons that are not affected by the Treaty". Many on the left will also be pressing for the early progress in conventional arms talks which might bring Common Security that much nearer. In the meantime, it will argue for equipment regarded as "non-provocative" and against deep strike.

Imaginative though it may be, Common Security is surely an idea for the next century rather than this. It seems probable that unless arms control talks progress with undreamt-of speed, the need for modern conventional forces and at least some nuclear weapons to defend western Europe will be the need for a stronger European pillar and less reliance on US forces, whose global tasks will not diminish even if their budget does.

Despite the call of some neo-conservatives for US troops in western Europe to be brought home, an American presence – perhaps a small one – will remain in Europe for the foreseeable future. The political cost and security risk of withdrawing US troops far outweigh any financial gains that might accrue from a pull-out. Even so, the issue of burden-sharing will receive closer and closer scrutiny. How will Europe's socialists measure up?

Defence spending has become a central and potentially damaging issue to the Alliance. Americans have warned that European NATO must take on a greater portion of the burden; a feeling is abroad in Washington that European of all political shades are incapable of funding more than the minimum needed to prevent Congress pulling

the troops out. Indeed, the Roth Committee has warned: "The perception that risks and burdens are not being shared adequately can easily undermine political support for the Alliance". Real increases in defence outlays are needed if sustainability is to be improved and emerging technologies are to be harnessed.

By no means do Europe's socialists stand alone in the dock. By 1989, Ms Thatcher, for all her hawkishness, will have presided over three years of real cuts in defence spending. In West Germany, the government is administering a virtually static (in real terms) defence budget. By contrast, Norway's Labour government is one of only four in NATO which will raise defence spending in real terms this year, and PASOK in Greece have presided over one of the most rapid increases in defence spending anywhere in the Alliance. Elsewhere, however, some socialist parties have adhered to their tradition of putting social priorities foremost.

The warmer tone is superpower relations that began to build in the latter half of 1987 and culminated in the ratification of the INF treaty left the peace movements in the doldrums and soothed tempers within NATO. The re-election of right-of-centre governments in West Germany, Britain, the Netherlands and Denmark took the immediate political heat out of the defence issue. However, to Mr Gorbachev, the INF accord apparently marked a "first instalment" in a process that would utterly change the military landscape of Europe. NATO faces two major and closely-linked challenges – to establish a consensus in the face of further dramatic initiatives from Moscow, and to agree on a strategy for the 1990s that is supported by a more self-confident European pillar and a stronger conventional component in its force mix.

The task of maintaining consensus will not be easy. President Reagan and President-elect Bush, as well as Mrs Thatcher in Britain, have no ambitions beyond managing confrontation as best as possible. Mrs Thatcher has put it – as she so often does – most bluntly: "The Russian bear was easier to deal with when it looked more like a bear than it does now". While welcoming the unilateral cuts in Soviet conventional forces announced by Mr Gorbachev at the UN as an important step, she has said that much tough negotiating remains to be done "in view of the Soviet Union's present overwhelming superiority".

The Labour party in Britain has denounced such an approach as "mean-minded". Labour, like its Socialist colleagues in Denmark and West Germany, perceive on the distant horizon the "common European house" to which Mr Gorbachev looks forward. Many of the centre and centre-left no longer regard the Soviet Union as a clear and present danger to western Europe – a far cry from the immediate post-war situation

when Ernest Bevin, Foreign Secretary in Britain's Labour government and one of NATO's architects, accused Stalin of "promoting unsettlement all around". Instead, they see in Mr Gorbachev the best chance yet to establish a new security system in Europe, where the principle of "super-armament" is replaced by that of reasonable defence sufficiency". As Labour's present leader, Neil Kinnock, has put it, "While the military component of the East-West relationship will remain important for years to come, it can lose its primacy as the dominating determinant af all other relationships".

For Britain's Labour party the arguments are complicated by a common perception that its abrupt departure from the post-war defence consensus has cost it support at the last two elections. It is acknowledged by many senior party figures that the majority of voters remain unpersuaded by Labour's policy of unilateral nuclear disarmament, and are in favour of Britain retaining its national deterrent.

This year, as part of a comprehensive policy review, the leadership has sought to temper Labour's commitment to unilateralism. Neil Kinnock has argued that the new international environment is an opportunity for a new bargain, that there is "no longer any need to insist on a go-it-alone policy" and instead a chance to negotiate "something for something rather than something for nothing". At this autumn's party conference, Labour's national executive proposed that the party should seek "the total elimination of all nuclear weapons in the world, to be brought about by steps of unilateral, bilateral and multilateral nuclear disarmament". But this formula was rejected by the conference, which instead carried a resolution reaffirming the party's pledge to remove unconditionally all nuclear weapons and nuclear bases from British soil within the lifetime of a Labour government.

So there are only a few signs that even a modicum of consensus on defence can be restored in Britain in the near future. Indeed, while the Labour leadership acknowledges that its defence policy can be toughened up, it also has high hopes that the tide of international events will move swiftly in favour of its radical defence policy, marooning Mrs Thatcher as the only world leader reluctant to bargain on arms control. Labour argues and will undoubtedly continue to argue that "reasonable defence sufficiency" for Britain should not include a new generation of nuclear weapons – in the shape of Trident. It points to evidence that President Gorbachev's initiatives have struck a chord with public opinion. A recent survey found that 51 per cent in Britain Believe the Soviet Union wishes to be on friendly terms with the West; in 1981 the figure was 21 per cent.

A similar picture is emerging elsewhere in northern Europe. In West Germany, for example, a poll in October found that a third would like to see a unilateral withdrawal of American troops in the light of Mr Gorbachev's battery of disarmament proposals. Forty-four per cent believed that NATO and Warsaw Pact forces were of approximately equal strength; the compatable figure in 1981 was 24 per cent. Even among Chancellor Kohl's CDU and CSU supporters, there was a more favourable perception of Mr Gorbachev's foreign policy than of Mr Reagan's. Of more immediate import, many West Germans do not believe that reasonable sufficiency for NATO should entail the modernization of short-range nuclear weapons. Chancellor Kohl may remain loyal to the plan, but his Foreign Minister, Mr Hans Dietrich Genscher, is firmly opposed. He described Mr Gorbachev's unilateral cuts in conventional forces as a "personal vindication" of his view "that the Soviet General-Secretary is serious about a far-reaching change in East-West relations" and said that "progress will depend on a courageous use of opportunities and on discarding the faintheartedness that naturally prevails among many Western observers". In the words of one West German official, "It will simply not be possible to demand any move on modernization next year after this dramatic announcement by Gorbachev".

However, in France, the internal consensus on security remains strong, Socialists participate in the Coalition Government and hold the office of Defence Minister. The divergence between left and right in Norway has diminished, as it has in the Netherlands and even Denmark where a commission is sitting searching for the grounds of a new security consensus. The next section will explain the grounds for greater optimism in the Southern Region of the Alliance, an area which has presented NATO with severe political, economic and logistical problems.

SOUTHERN EUROPEAN SOCIALIST PARTIES AND NATO

This section deals with every Southern European country except France, much of those interests now reside in Central Europe. Our analysis centres on the members of NATO's Southern Region: Italy, Greece and Turkey. It also deals with the Iberian nations whose strategic location is of the Southern Region. During the last fifty years all of these states have experienced periods of authoritarian government, isolationism and instability. With the exception of the Movimento das Forças Armadas' (MFA) brief period in power, the dictatorial regimes of Southern Europe pursued policies inimical to socialism. Common experiences of repression did not produce a uniform response and it is arguable whether a clear distinction can be drawn between the socialist parties of

Northern and Southern Europe. The Italian and Portuguese socialist parties have consistently espoused support for NATO in contrast to unilateral positions adopted by the British and Dutch labour parties during the early 1980s. Nevertheless, it is inevitable that the attitudes of all Southern European socialist parties to NATO and relations with other western nations have been affected by their experiences under dictatorship. This has been made manifest by the anti-Americanism which has plagued NATO's Southern Region particularly with regard to base negotiations. It is our contention that the socialist parties of Southern Europe are now moving towards a greater defence consensus in favour of NATO and security issues in general but given the history of the region this trend could easily be reversed.

1974 marked a watershed in NATO's history as internal politics and intra-Alliance disputes threatened to disrupt its Southern Region. Following the Cyprus crisis, the Greek Prime Minister Constantine Karamanlis withdrew his country from the integrated military structure in protest at the Alliance's failure to intervene against Turkey. However, in response to the second intervention in North Cyprus the US Congress imposed an arms embargo against Turkey between February 1975 and September 1978. This led to a marked deterioration in relations between Washington and Ankara. Dissension was not confined to the Eastern Mediterranean as the seizure of power by the MFA sent tremors through the Alliance. Incoming US President Gerald Ford suggested that Portugal could be expelled from NATO as the influence of the Portuguese Communist Party (Partido Comunista Português – PCP) on the MFA government increased. For a short period Portugal ceased to participate in the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG) as contending factions battled for control. Similarly, the final years of Franco's regime were characterized by growing instability and the prospect of an uncertain future.

It was only in the post-1974 era that socialist parties in Greece, Portugal and Spain had the opportunity to function free from intimidation and their role in influencing government policy was initially limited. During the years of dictatorship the parties of the left were subject to the greatest repression and in a democratic age they were forced to rebuild their organization, finances and in some cases ideology. Andreas Papandreou's Panellinio Sosialistiko Kinima (PASOK) was formed in 1974 but at first PASOK could not compete with the advantages enjoyed by the governing New Democracy Party. The Portuguese Socialist Party (Partido Socialista – PS) founded in West Germany in April 1973 had to build from a base of less than 1, 000 members and faced better organized rivals. The PCP exerted a greater influence in the trade unions and political organizations whereas the PS was short of political activists and its level of

efficiency left something to be desired. Although the Spanish Socialist Party (Partido Socialista Obrero Español – PSOE) was one of the oldest in Europe its underground organization was destroyed by Franco and it was forced into exile. After the parliamentary elections of 1977 the PSOE ensured its position as the major force on the Spanish left but as with fellow Southern European socialist parties it remained in opposition. The Republican People's Party, founded by Ataturk, gradually assumed a left of centre orientation under Bulent Ecevit, taking power in December 1977 but this was an exception to the dominant trend of conservative government.

From a position of relative weakness engendered by reorganisation, socialism in Southern Europe underwent a remarkable transformation. Capitalising on latent class cleavages and dissatisfaction concerning levels of economic development, socialist parties headed most governments in the region by 1983. In the light of intra-Alliance tensions, the defence and foreign policies of these new regimes were closely scrutinized. The deployment of Cruise and Pershing missiles had provoked large scale demonstrations in many Western European countries. From NATO's perspective it was important that all the member states subscribed to the doctrine of flexible response and supported measures designed to counter a possible Soviet threat. In 1981, PASOK scored a crushing electoral victory and a year later the PSOE enjoyed an equally convincing triumph. The new Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou threatened to withdraw Greece from NATO and the EEC. His Spanish counterpart Felipe Gonzalez promised a referendum on the issue of NATO membership. During the early 1980s it seemed to some analysts that the problems facing NATO's Southern Region posed an even sterner challenge than that of the mid 1970s. Greece had returned to the integrated military structure in 1980 but continued rivalry with Turkey threatened to disrupt NATO's organization in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Turkish military coup of September 1980 also proved embarrassing for NATO in view of the Alliance's commitment to democratic values.

With a mandate for radical action fellow NATO members feared that the new PASOK administration would initiate major changes in Greek foreign and security policy. In 1981, Andreas Papandreou condemned the Turks as potential aggressors at a NATO Defence Planning Committee (DPC) meeting and Greece has refused to participate in Alliance exercises in the Eastern Mediterranean. The militarization of Aegean islands, the limits of the territorial sea, delimitation of the continental shelf and control of Aegean air space were all issues that threatened to exacerbate the level of Greek-Turkish tension. Papandreou's intention to nationalize the North Aegean Petroleum Company in 1987 almost resulted in the commencement of hostilities but the gravity of

the crisis forced a reappraisal of attitudes. The Davos mini-summit of 30th-31st January 1988 was warmly applauded by NATO as indicative of a new willingness to negotiate. Greco-Turkish détente has not produced many tangible benefits in terms of resolving the issue of Cyprus but it has reduced the prospect of further antagonism.

Despite PAKO's often stated objective of withdrawal from NATO this prospect appears increasingly remote. Papandreou has supported the concept of a nuclear weapon free zone in the Balkans, he signed a declaration of friendship and cooperation with Bulgaria and he called for a delay in the deployment of Cruise and Pershing missiles to allow further time for disarmament negotiations. These positions have angered some of Greece's NATO allies as has the denunciation of the United States as a major imperialist power. Nevertheless, it appears that the PASOK government has moderated its criticism of NATO and the United States. In 1983, a Defence and Economic Cooperation Agreement (DECA) was signed with the US over the status and future of Washington's military bases in Greece. The outcome of the current DECA negotiations remains unresolved but it seems probable that a new agreement will be signed with the possibility of Hellenikon base being closed as a "token gesture" to Greek public opinion.

Throughout his two terms in office, Prime Minister Papandreou has been constrained by internal and external pressures. His anti-American pronouncements are largely regarded as a device to placate the Greek left in the absence of decisive action on the US bases. Greece is one of the major beneficiaries of US security assistance and Papandreou is aware that he cannot afford to completely alienate the Americans. The influential Greek lobby in Congress has been instrumental in maintaining disproportionately high levels of aid to Greece but their tolerance could be exhausted. Athens also realised that reductions in US assistance to Greece would benefit Turkey. Papandreou has exploited the strong anti-American sentiments among most of the Greek population, a legacy of US support for the Colonel's regime. With elections scheduled for 1989 and PASOK embroiled in financial scandals and economic difficulties some analysts believe that Papandreou will revert to his former overtly nationalistic approach.

In many respects PASOK is the party of Andreas Papandreou and it remains to be seen whether it can exist after his departure. Even if PASOK are successful in the 1989 elections Papandreou's health problems could force him into retirement. Under Papandreou, PASOK has been described not only as a socialist party but also as a radical populist movement more akin to Latin American parties. PASOK has managed to project an image which appealed to a wide ranging constituency and it often defies

conventional classification. Given these factors it is difficult to predict the future course of PASOK's defense and foreign policy. However, in the light of political and economic realities, PASOK are likely to pursue a rather more accommodating attitude towards NATO if they remain in power. Despite the rhetoric the differences between PASOK and New Democracy appear to be diminishing although it is rather premature to talk of a defence consensus.

At one period it seemed that NATO's newest member would leave the Alliance after only four years. Spain joined NATO on 30th May 1982 under the conservative Union of the Democratic Centre administration but the landslide victory of the PSOE ushered in the first purely socialist government in Spanish history. Gonzalez swiftly froze Spanish integration into NATO's military structure, a decision formalized at an Atlantic Council meeting in December 1982, but he did not call for an immediate referendum. In contrast to PASOK the new PSOE administration was far less critical of the US. Gonzalez argued that the US, had "shown flexibility" on INF questions and introduced positive proposals at the Geneva arms reduction talks. It was soon evident that Gonzalez recognized the importance of continued NATO membership. Spanish entry into the EEC was the major goal of PSOE foreign policy and withdrawal from NATO would have curtailed their chances of accession into the Community. In 1985, the Deputy Prime Minister Alfonso Guerra argued that any delay in accession to the EEC could lead to a revision of NATO policy. Spain was highly dependent on the importation of western technology and economic assistance, therefore NATO membership was perceived to be a means of strengthening links with potential benefactors. The Prime Minister also argued that the problems of North Africa and Gibraltar could be handled more effectively within the context of NATO.

Gonzalez only succeeded in convincing the PSOE of his position after a fierce debate. The thirtieth congress of the PSOE in December 1984 divided those who supported government policy and members who rejected NATO membership. Gonzalez managed to win a majority of delegates over to his position but he could not avoid the referendum issue. In 1983 and 1984 anti-nuclear forces in Spain conducted large demonstrations against NATO INF deployments. Considerable sections of Spanish public opinion saw the Alliance as US dominated, a damaging perception given the mistrust of Americans stemming from their support for Franco. Gonzalez also faced the problem that Spain was entering a new era after generations of political and military isolation from the West. Therefore, Gonzalez attempted to turn the referendum campaign into a vote of confidence in his government. The referendum became an issue of whether Spain should remain in NATO on the basis of certain principles

articulated by the PSOE administration. Gonzalez appealed to the broadest possible constituency and on March 12th 1986 his efforts proved successful. Almost 53 per cent votes were cast in favour and 40 per cent against.

The result was greeted with great relief throughout NATO especially when pre-referendum opinion polls had predicted a majority against continued Alliance membership. However, a yes vote was gained at a price. Prior to the referendum Gonzalez confirmed that Spain would not join the integrated military structure and the prohibition against the deployment, storage or entry into Spain of nuclear weapons would be maintained. The PSOE government also maintained that they would work to progressively reduce the US military presence in Spain. After protracted negotiations the Reagan administration reluctantly agreed to the withdrawal of the Air Force's 401st Tactical Fighter Wing at Torrejon. The 72 F-16 aircraft housed at Torrejon were considered to be crucial in the event of any requirement to rapidly reinforce the Eastern Mediterranean. Torrejon also served as a major reinforcement, staging and logistic airlift base for US military personnel. On January 15th 1988, the two governments issued a joint statement confirming that the new bases agreement would have an initial term of eight years and that the withdrawal of the 401st Tactical Fighter Wing would take place within three years of the effective date of the new agreement. Notwithstanding US disappointment at the outcome of the negotiations, if Gonzalez had failed to honour pledges made during the referendum his own position could have been fatally undermined. NATO sought to portray the agreement as a positive example of two allies overcoming a difficult problem, highlighting Spain's commitment to the Alliance.

Although remaining outside the integrated military structure the Spanish are participants in the NPG, the DPC and every other NATO organization. Resisting the temptation to become a "footnote nation" the Spanish have demonstrated considerable loyalty to Alliance decisions. They are enthusiastic participants in organizations such as the Independent European Programme Group, the Conference of National Armaments Directors and the NATO Industrial Advisory Group which foster collaborative ventures and the development of a modern procurement policy. The realisation of the long cherished goals of EEC membership in January 1986 and WEU membership in November 1988 have further strengthened Spanish bonds with the West. Prior to the WEU accession the PSOE government accepted an undertaking to defend any WEU state attacked by an outside aggressor and a political commitment to a defence strategy based on a balance of nuclear and conventional forces. These significant concessions may well herald a process of closer cooperation between Spain and

NATO. A return to the integrated military structure is not an immediate prospect but with a divided opposition Gonzalez is not subject to the same electoral pressures as Papandreou. Under his pragmatic leadership the PSOE are lamost certain to pursue a strategy based on internationalism and European integration which bodes well for NATO.

Since the return of democracy the PS has always been a force for moderation in Portuguese politics. Only the PCP is opposed to NATO and the pro-Atlanticist orientation of all the other major parties has remained unchallenged. This is partly due to the turbulent events of the mid 1970s and the inherent conservatism of the northern regions of Portugal. Furthermore, between 1976 and 1985 Portugal was ruled by a succession of coalition governments which encouraged policies of moderation and compromise. In July 1987, the conservative Social Democratic Party under Cavaco Silva won an overall majority with 50.2 per cent of the vote. The PS only received 22.2 per cent of the vote as it battled to restore its image damaged by the 1983 austerity measures. Nevertheless, the PS continues to follow moderate policies including support for NATO despite the fact that it is now languishing in opposition. In 1986, Victor Constâncio left his job as chairman of the Bank of Portugal to become the new party leader. He reaffirmed the pro-NATO policy of Mário Soares but was faced with a whole series of organizational and financial problems. After Constâncio's election the party split into two factions with one section favouring Jaime Gama but the PS was not a party riven by bitter ideological differences. Even Constâncio's resignation in 1988 was probably more the result of alleged interference by Soares and the low rating of the PS in opinion polls. The PS may move towards a greater European orientation and they are opposed to excessive pro-Americanism. However, if the PS returned to government its defence and foreign policies would not greatly differ from those of the Social Democrats. They are theoretically committed to a harder line on the levels of US security assistance in return for the use of military facilities in the Azores but whether this would be translated into action in government is questionable.

The Italian Socialist Party (Partido Socialista Italiano – PSI) differs from its Southern European sister parties in the sense that it remains a minor power of the left. This is partly related to its experiences under Mussolini and the inability to resolve the dilemma of whether to pursue radical action or moderate reform. By 1948, control of the trade union movement had switched to the Communists as the PSI was plagued by internal dissension. Between 1947 and 1950 the PSI lost 400, 000 members, half its strength, in protest at the party's pro-Soviet and anti-American position. The turning point for the PSI's fortunes arrived in 1959 when Pietro Nenni managed to win a clear

majority in favour of autonomy from the Communist Party (Partido Comunista Italiano – PCI) and acceptance of NATO. The Socialist party thus only became eligible for any substancial role in government when it abandoned its neutralist attitudes. A revision of the PSI's defence policy enabled them to join a coalition government in 1963. After years in the wilderness the PCI accepted the need for Italian membership of NATO in 1977, a decision primarily based on political considerations.

The influence of defence issues on internal politics was exemplified by the proposed deployment of Cruise missiles in Italy. The Christian Democratic Party favoured deployment but the PSI's support of the decision isolated the PCI and proved an important factor in the final approval of the missile programme. By 1983, the PSI leader Bettino Craxi headed a new coalition government, a fact not unconnected with his party's willingness to support controversial NATO decisions. With the PCI permanently excluded from government, the PSI have been able to exert a political influence disproportionate to their share of the vote. The PSI are not uncritical supporters of NATO as evinced by the Achille Lauro episode but their pro-Atlanticist orientation has been instrumental in helping to establish an Italian defence consensus.

Since 1952, when Turkey joined NATO, defence is not an issue which has excited great controversy even during periods of democratic government. Despite the fact that it suffered under several military regimes which had tacit US approval, the moderate Turkish left has never questioned the country's membership of NATO. Soviet territorial ambitions in Turkey after the Second World War helped to establish a pro-Alliance consensus. This has been strengthened by the modernization of the Syrian armed forces and their claims on Hatay province. Turkey also has common borders with Greece, Bulgaria, Iran and Iraq and is engaged in a long-running battle with Kurdish terrorists Therefore, NATO membership is regarded as an essential component of Turkish security. In the general elections of 1987 all the major parties maintained a consensus on defence and the leading left-of-centre grouping, the Social Democratic Populist Party, is almost certain to continue this tradition.

In a post-INF era with a greater reliance on conventional weapons, the military capabilities of all Southern Region countries will become increasingly important. Without greater economic assistance these states will be unable to develop their own defence industries. Given Gorbachev's recent proposals at the United Nations a lessening of Superpower rivalry it will be harder for governments to convince their publics of the need to increase defence expenditure. Nevertheless, from a political perspective NATO must be heartened by the improvement in relations with Southern

European countries. This has been assisted by political and economic integration but it is also related to the changing attitudes of a number of socialist parties in the region.

THE POLITICAL SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

It would be foolish to forecast the chances for socialist parties in elections four, three or even two years hence, or the sort of defence policies they will then be presenting to the voters. Much will depend on who is doing what in the White House, whether Mr Gorbachev has consolidated his position, whether START is concluded and what progress there is in conventional arms reductions. Much will depend too on the world economic situation. There are signs the political dominance of the centre and right in much of central and northern Europe may be waning.

But as of now, one can at least guess that defence and security issues are likely to feature prominently at the next election in West Germany and Britain, possibly again in Denmark, and in the Netherlands, Greece and Spain. In West Germany, the direction of the SPD policy will be influenced by the health of the ailing Greens, whose radical anti-nuclear policies in the last 1983 election won it more than five per cent of the vote. In Britain, the Labour Party's fortunes depend to a very real degree on how it deals with the defence issue, which caused the party considerable grief at the last two elections (and continues to cause grief now). Indeed, polling evidence in 1987showed that about a quarter of those considering a vote for Labour were put off by its commitment to unilateralism, and some 40 per cent of Labour's own supporters believed that nuclear weapons helped preserve the peace in Europe. The party now faces a long haul in reconciling the fierce commitment of its activists to non-nuclear defence with the broader public's hostility to unilateralism. Pleasing one without offending the other is a daunting task, but pleasing the electorate on the defence issue may be necessary if the party is to have any chance of overcoming Mrs Thatcher's large majority at the next election.

CONCLUSION

NATO's most immediate task is to win the hearts and minds of its citizenry. In particular, the rumbling discord in Germany over short-range weapons represents a challenge to NATO policy-makers that is potentially as serious as that they confronted during the bitter disagreements over INF deployment. Manfred Worner has acknowledged that the Alliance must be more effective in publicising its own arms control initiatives. After all, many of the themes now emanating from Moscow owe more

to the intellectual contributions of Will Brandt and Egon Bahr than to Krushchev and Lenin.

Of course, we must not lose sight of the fact that the Warsaw Pact retains a significant superiority over the Alliance in conventional forces, and NATO's proposals for halving such forces represent both a realistic negotiating position and a suitably prompt response to Mr Gorbachev's UN speech. Nevertheless, many in Europe are captivated by the sheer pace of the first Soviet leader prepared to take considerable political risks in order to lower tensions between East and West. In response, NATO should be pondering unilateral initiatives of its own – perhaps getting rid of its nuclear artillery in a blaze of publicity similar to that which will undoubtedly accompany the withdrawal of Soviet units from East Germany and Czechoslovakia. It is only through such bold steps – steps which do not compromise our security but which help the Alliance regain the moral high ground – that consensus, the fragile concord among different organs of the body, can be preserved. It may be preserved in those countries where that basic agreement on security survived the traumas of the last decade, and re-established where it had been lost.