

Post 11/11/66

3-Nation Troop Conference Ends

American, British and West German experts, seeking to break their impasse on sharing the cost burden of Allied troops based in Germany, were left dangling yesterday over the political uncertainties in Bonn.

At the end of a two-day conference here which, as planned, reached no decisions,

the trio of officials agreed to meet next in Bonn, on Nov. 25.

They also confirmed, in a brief, noncommittal communique, that they will submit an interim report to the mid-December meeting of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Council of Ministers. John J. McCloy, a Presidential consultant, heads the United States experts.

It is the hope on the American side that by then some stop-gap plan may emerge to head off a threatened cutback of British forces in Germany if no new formula to pay foreign exchange costs of those troops is agreed upon by year's end.

The United States is faced with a similar problem for its troops in Germany, but without the economic urgency confronting Britain. Germany has maintained that it cannot cover the full foreign ex-

change offset costs of these troops.

Designation yesterday of Kurt-Georg Kiesinger as the Christian Democratic candidate for Chancellor of West Germany raised hopes among United States officials that the political hiatus in Bonn will soon end.

But even so, there is no expectation that the fundamental strategy and financial problems of the whole NATO Alliance can be quickly resolved. As a consequence, experts on the American delegation are looking for some interim solution, with the hope Britain may be induced to stretch out its withdrawal timetable.

British Prime Minister Harold Wilson's announcement yesterday that Britain will make a new effort to enter the Common Market caused some American speculation that this turn of policy

might ease British pressure for a decision on the troop-financing question.

British sources, however, reiterated that the troop financing issue must be resolved by the end of the year, or else Britain must withdraw about a third of its 51,000 troops in Germany.

According to participants' discussions in the American-British-German talks produced unusually candid exchanges about differences over the use of nuclear vs. conventional forces. This issue has plagued NATO for years. American sources claimed there is now better understanding of the U.S. strategy of "flexible response" to deal with varying threats that NATO may face in Europe from Communist forces.

Experts joining in the policy study with McCloy, and assisted by tripartite working groups, are George Thomson of Britain and Karl Carstens of West Germany.