

Norstad Disputes Troop Pullout

By Bruce Nelson

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Gen. Lauris Norstad expressed his "strong disagreement" yesterday with Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara's proposal to withdraw some American forces from Europe in exchange for a reduction in the number of Soviet troops stationed in East Germany.

In testimony at a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on the NATO crisis, Norstad pointed out that Soviet troops could be moved back into Eastern Europe "overnight" while it would be much more difficult to quickly transport American forces across the Atlantic.

"Does anyone in his right mind believe that if we cut down our forces in Europe, that those troops are ever going back again?" the former NATO commander exclaimed. "Never!"

McNamara made his suggestion about the European troop reduction in response to a question by Sen. Robert F. Kennedy at a hearing held Wednesday by Sen. Henry M. Jackson's Government Operations subcommittee.

Norstad said that the United States would suffer a "clear loss" unless it found "some substitute" for European force reduction. He suggested that one possible substitute might be an inspection system which could detect military movement for several hundred miles on each side of the Iron Curtain. Norstad said that he had developed ideas for such a system while he served as Supreme Allied Commander in Europe from 1955 to 1962.

Norstad explained that his inspection plan could precede any disarmament proposals which were put into effect in Europe. He said that the European area to be covered by mobile ground and aerial inspection must be deep enough

Views of McNamara

to allow warning time, small enough to be manageable, and clearly definable in a geographic or political sense.

"An area of practicable limits might extend . . . from mid-Russia to the Atlantic," Norstad said. "In addition, some area of the United States could be involved if it were matched by a Soviet area of relatively equal size and importance."

Norstad said wryly that his proposal "had not met with a favorable reception from many governments, including our own, because nothing that is readily understood is of interest to the experts."

Norstad also took issue with

McNamara's assertion that French withdrawal from the NATO military structure will not disable the alliance.

"The withdrawal of France is not going to be disastrous," Norstad said. "But the withdrawal of France is going to disable NATO from a politi-

cal standpoint and certainly from a military standpoint."

Although Norstad said that he "didn't know of one constructive suggestion proposed by France" to improve the NATO alliance, he emphasized that he did not believe the French government should be

harshly treated for its withdrawal from the NATO military command.

He added that "we should not overlook the fact that even France, up to this time, has maintained full interest in the other than military aspects of NATO." Norstad also said that he had "no reservation" about

France's coming to the aid of the United States in case of attack.

Chairman J. William Fulbright (D-Ark.) said that he had undergone "quite a change in my attitude" about de Gaulle since he began preparations for the NATO hearings.