

Any Size U.S. Pullout Is Opposed by Erhard

BONN, June 26 (AP)—Chancellor Erhard strongly opposes any substantial withdrawal of U.S. forces from West Germany for any reason, even a possible troop-reduction arrangement with the Soviet Union.

Explaining his stand in an informal talk, Erhard said his defense experts tell him: "These troops are necessary if we don't want to respond to every possible aggression with the full use of nuclear weapons."

Apart from increasing the risk of nuclear war, the Chancellor argued, U.S. troop withdrawals — which have been

much discussed in Washington in recent weeks—would shake the German people's sense of security and imperil the whole forward strategy of defending West Germany on its eastern frontiers.

In a clash of views with Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara, Erhard also deplored the linking of German arms expenditures in the United States with the size of American forces here. He said this gave a smell of business to what should be a partnership of allies in the defense of the West.

Without mentioning McNamara directly, Erhard said Germany intends to do everything possible to offset the dollar drain. But he declared Germany must not buy arms it doesn't need and called for the offset purchase agreement to be modified to allow purchase of peaceful space equipment as well as weapons.

Erhard agreed there is a new appearance of political flexibility in both Western Europe and Communist Eastern Europe. But he warned against exaggerated hopes for early settlement of such fundamental European problems as the division of Germany.