

The Nuclear Facts of Life

Washington

American nuclear warheads are stored in more than 100 special ammunition sites in Western Europe under heavy guard, floodlit at night, with some weapons always loaded for atomic blasts, a Senate staff reported Saturday.

The attempt to make public the nuclear facts of life at the threshold of potential US-Soviet nuclear war in Europe, emerged in Swiss-cheese format, massively censored.

Despite tantalizingly heavy deletions, however, the report is the fullest accounting so far officially cleared on the pervasive military, diplomatic and psychological implications resulting from the presence of about 7000 American nuclear weapons maintained in Europe for defense of the Atlantic Alliance.

About 11-censored pages on nuclear weaponry survived in a 27-page report on U.S. security issues in Europe, made public by the Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee on security agreements and commitments abroad. It is based on a three-week study in Europe in September by staff members James G. Lowenstein and Richard M. Moose.

In issuing the report, subcommittee chairman Stuart Symington (Dem.-Mo.) said, "the relationship of the United States with its European allies is presently under greater stress than at any time in the recent past." He recalled that on October 25 the world suddenly found U.S. nuclear forces in Europe and throughout the world "placed on alert in response to Soviet moves in the Middle east — apparently with little notice to our allies."

Symington said neither this committee, nor the public, ever before has been given "any comprehensive picture of our nuclear deployments in Europe..." Despite heavy censorship, he said, the current report significantly helps break down "arbitrary barriers to information" in the past.

The published account shows:

- A 7000 figure on U.S. nuclear warheads in Eu-

Crackdown in BART Lot Today

A drive against illegal parking will start today in BART's Daly City parking lot.

BART police have been instructed to issue \$5 citations to motorists who obstruct the use of the lot by parking in red zones, in entrance ways or near fire plugs.

Europe, first used by former Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara in 1966, has varied up and down since, but is still the best public approximation available. The original figure covered only land-based tactical nuclear warheads in Europe, excluding warheads for bombers of the U.S. Strategic Air Command or warheads carried aboard ships at sea.

- As of July 31, land-based nuclear warheads were "stored at over 100 special ammunition sites" in Western Europe. One third of them are for use by American forces, and two-thirds for allied forces, but all "are kept in the custody of the U.S. . ."

- In a typical North Atlantic Treaty Organization storage site, the warheads are in storage igloos or in maintenance and assembly buildings. "The site is surrounded by a double perimeter fence which is floodlit at night." U.S. forces control entry to the store-houses, with the outer perimeter guarded by the user nation.

- "Some weapons, both American and Foreign, with nuclear warheads are kept loaded at all times on quick reaction alert (or 'QRA,' as they are known.)" The number of aircraft, missiles and Polaris and Poseidon missile-firing submarines on armed alert depends on the force level being maintained.

- At a site the Senate staff members visited, they asked whether the U.S. officers controlling release of allied planes armed with nu-

clear weapons "could prevent the allied pilot from dropping his nuclear bomb once his plane was airborne." The answer was censored from the report. (Other sources yesterday indicated that if necessary in emergency, such a plane could be ordered shot down.)

Although the U.S. first initiated the stockpiling of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe in 1957, it was not until 1967 that the U.S. "agreed to inform countries of the details of the nuclear weapons stockpiled in their territory or stockpiled elsewhere for the use of their forces."

Atomic demolition munitions (ADNs), to be used to block valleys, mountain passes, or other entry points to allied territory in Europe, are handed by teams of five or six men.

West Germany, whose public is highly sensitive to the use of such explosives since controversy over them broke out a decade ago, permits no "prechambering" of holes to implant ADMs. But European nations have "chambers for conventional explosives" that can be used for atomic munitions, although they would result in greater fallout because they are shallower than special ADM chambers.

As previously known, in NATO there are "over 2000 U.S. and other NATO forward-based nuclear capable aircraft." NATO countries also have, in addition to such aircraft, Honest John missiles, Pershing missiles, and 155-mm. and eight-inch howitzers that can fire nuclear shells!

What the report underscored by its disclosures is what is widely known in Europe but realized by relatively few Americans, to a great degree, Europeans are hostages to American decisions for their defense, which means they are also hostage to the vagaries of American politics which determine who will make the decisions in the White House.

This is a major reason why the Watergate scandals, while they registered late in

European consciousness, have become a continuing sensation there.

The Senate report stated that basic NATO strategy for both conventional and nuclear warfare is set forth in a document known colloquially by its serial number as "14%3," dated Jan. 16, 1968. This establishes the doctrine of "nuclear deterrence, forward defense and flexible response," informally accepted several years earlier and substituting for a strategy based on massive nuclear retaliation. The Kennedy administration first initiated the strategy shift.

If "deterrence" fails to prevent war, the present doctrine holds out three levels of military responses.

They are defined in the report as first, "direct defense — that is, defeating the enemy on the level at which he chooses to fight, a concept which includes the use of such available nuclear weapons as may be authorized either on a pre-planned or case-by-case basis."

Second is "deliberate escalation which seeks to defeat the aggressor by deliberately raising, but where possible controlling, the scope and intensity of combat, making the cost and risk disproportionate to the aggressors' objectives and the threat of nuclear response progressively more imminent."

"The third kind of military response," the report relates, "is general nuclear response — that is, massive nuclear strikes against the total nuclear threat, other military targets and urban industrial targets. General nuclear response is considered to be the ultimate deterrent and, if used, the ultimate military response."

But a general nuclear response under NATO strategy, the report emphasizes, can only be undertaken in conjunction with the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff plan for the widespread synchronized use of U.S. nuclear weapons. This doubly emphasizes U.S. control of NATO's ultimate strategy.

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