

ambiguity afforded the system some deterrent value, Carnovale did not think that this was a good basis for deterrence. Seventh, the European system has a high degree of operational complexity because a multitude of actors play roles in its day-to-day management. The European defence system is also constantly evolving, and even if there were total agreement on objectives it would still be difficult to keep constant track of all aspects of the system. Eighth, for geographical reasons, European weapons are mainly concentrated in a small number of sites. Even when mobile, they are highly vulnerable to Soviet targetting.

He believed that there were four reasons why the European command and control system was basically uncontrollable. First, nuclear matters are difficult for experts, let alone relatively transient politicians, to understand, and this is compounded by the fact that European politicians have a high rate of turnover: Italy, for example, has had forty prime ministers since World War Two. Second, it would be impossible to foresee all of the contingencies which European command systems might have to face. Given their vulnerability and short reaction times, much would have to be left to spontaneously-devised solutions. Third, the collective control of forces by NATO creates problems. If each NATO member has a trigger, then no one finger is on the safety catch. Conversely, if even one country has a safety catch, then no one really controls the trigger. There is no middle way. Fourth, strategists must decide at what level to attack the Soviet command system. Current NATO policy does not call for attacking the Kremlin, but for attacking lower levels of Soviet command. This would cause a problem, for there is no perfect level at which to target the Soviet command system that would both impair military capability and still leave a leadership with which to negotiate. Administrative, physical and informational controls had been in place in Europe for forty years and had evolved to high levels of sophistication, but nonetheless the aforementioned problems still remained intractable.

While Bruce Blair had argued for a safe, survivable, flexible command system, with tight negative and positive control, Carnovale argued that, from a European perspective, this solution would not be satisfactory. He agreed that such a system was desirable in peacetime, but suggested that it was not so attractive during a crisis. He was concerned lest survivable command made nuclear war thinkable from an American perspective, because it would enable the United States to survive conventional or limited nuclear war in Europe.

Carnovale proposed as an alternative that NATO should publicly announce a threshold which, if it were passed by the Soviets, would release a countervalue strike. He advocated automating the system and eliminating conventional weapons. These measures, he argued, would put in place a system which would have catastrophic consequences if it were to fail, but which would be extremely unlikely to do so.