

government's position, then it would pay for it at the polls. There were massive demonstrations in that election campaign that suggested that that might be so.

In any event, from the domestic political point of view, the whole issue of deployment was obviously highly sensitive for most of our European allies throughout that period. And it was sensitive to the point almost of obsession. That is, there were other difficult issues, which in other circumstances should have been tackled within NATO at the time, which really could not be tackled because people only had time and political energy and imagination to cope with the deployment business.

[HILL] That's quite fascinating. I've never heard that said before.

[TAYLOR] And for Canadians, I think, that while that was possible to understand intellectually, it was difficult to share emotionally, because the missiles were not being deployed on our territory, nor were we threatened directly by the SS-20s to which they were a response. The degree to which this issue agitated, say, Germany, is something that Canadians had to make a very considerable effort of imagination to appreciate. For Canadians at the time, I suppose if there was a comparable issue in terms of the public debate it aroused, it was the question of the testing of cruise missiles in Canada. That was in some ways our version at the time of the kind of debate that went on in some of the European countries.

In the end, the governments concerned stuck by the two-track decision, that is the negotiations failed, or appeared to fail, because the Soviets left the table, after we had evolved in the Alliance a perfectly acceptable offer. People sometimes forget this, that it was the West that offered the first zero of the zero-zero solution that is now being discussed: total elimination of this category of missile. It was the Soviets who, as I think they subsequently realized, made the mistake of walking away from the negotiations. Then successively the Germans, the British, the Italians, the Belgians and finally even the Dutch, who had very great difficulty also in domestic politics with the issue, proceeded with the deployment. At that stage, there were leaders in the Soviet Union, we thought, who were estimating that all they had to do was to stall the negotiations, and to play enough on domestic opinion in the West, and the Western governments determined to proceed with the two track decision would simply fall - public support would be withdrawn from them and the Soviets would have gotten away with it; that is, they would have left their SS-20s in place, and paid no price for having deployed them. Meanwhile in the West, governments would have come to power that would have refused the counter-deployment of ground-launched cruise missiles and Pershing IIs.

Well, that did not come about. It was a great demonstration of political solidarity and of the willingness of our allies to run very considerable political risks and bear very considerable political burdens.

[HILL] Was it also an example of effective consultative practices?

[TAYLOR] Yes, I think that it was. I think it required intense consultation throughout, and it also required the United States to understand the position of its allies, to forbear and be prepared to accept negotiating positions that took a while to hammer out sometimes, and represented the solution that the Allies were comfortable with. Again, since the alternative was never tried, one cannot demonstrate this, but I am not sure that on any of these issues the United States, left to itself, would really have answered the strategic dilemma in the way that the European allies and the Allies collectively decided it should be answered.