

capable artillery, short-range ballistic missiles, airborne nuclear bombs and missiles, and anti-submarine weapons. As for the allies, their forces have received nuclear warheads for use with their own delivery vehicles. These nuclear warheads remain the property of the United States and they are provided under cooperation programmes and bilateral agreements between the United States and the host country.²

The cooperation programmes outline the way in which nuclear weapons will be used in the event of a conflict. The nuclear warhead belongs to the United States, while the launcher usually belongs to the country where the warhead is deployed. Both parties must agree before the missiles can be launched. This dual-key system defines each country's responsibilities and allows either of them to exercise a veto. When the launcher belongs to the United States, however, the host country no longer has any veto.

The United States introduced nuclear weapons into Europe in three stages. Between 1955 and 1958 the *Honest John*, *Sergeant* and *Nike-Hercules* missiles were all deployed in Europe as were nuclear-capable artillery and atomic land-mines. During the mid-sixties the *Pershing IA* missiles were installed in West Germany and nuclear-capable aircraft such as the F-4, F-104 and F-111 became operational. Finally, since the beginning of the eighties these planes are gradually being replaced by the *Tornado*, F-15 and F-16. The first missiles have been dismantled and replaced by the *Hawk* and the *Patriot*, which are armed with conventional charges. The artillery is being modernized and the atomic land-mines have been removed. One also must not forget to mention the deployment of 572 *Pershing II* and cruise missiles which began in 1983. All these will shortly be withdrawn in accordance with Euromissile agreement of 8 December 1987.

Those allies which station US nuclear weapons are Greece, Turkey, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, Great Britain and the Netherlands. According to the latest estimates they are host to about 4,600 nuclear arms of which one-third are under the dual-key system. All this huge arsenal is under the command of the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe (SACEUR) and is managed in accordance with the Plan for Nuclear Operations.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE NUCLEAR PLANNING GROUP

It was only after numerous discussions and demands on the part of their allies that the United States finally

accepted the idea of forming a Nuclear Planning Group within NATO. In fact it was not until 1967 that the Atlantic alliance officially established the NPG, at the same time that it accepted the new nuclear policy of "flexible response." The NPG was the product of a long maturing process in US nuclear strategy and reflected the need for the US to consult and inform those European and Canadian allies which were accepting the deployment of nuclear weapons in their territory.*

During the three years that the Korean War was going on the members of NATO gave some thought to the defence of Europe. The Lisbon meeting had set objectives for conventional defence which proved impossible to meet, and from 1954 onwards NATO had decided to arm itself with nuclear weapons in order to confront the Soviet threat. At the same time the US introduced the doctrine of "massive retaliation" to deter an attack on Europe. President Dwight Eisenhower and his Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, assured the allies that, in the event of conflict with either the Soviet Union or China, the United States would not confine the war to conventional weapons, but would use all the means at its disposal (including nuclear weapons if necessary) to repulse aggression, no matter where in the world it occurred. As far as the European theatre was concerned this commitment would allow "the NATO forces to use atomic weapons in the event of any significant attack, even if the latter involved only conventional weapons."³

Until the early sixties it was relatively easy for the military to profess this doctrine of massive retaliation and for the politicians to support it. Until then the United States had enjoyed overwhelming superiority in nuclear weapons, and it had developed a worldwide network of alliances which enabled it to keep the Soviet Bloc contained. Moreover, the Soviet Union had barely any means of attacking the United States directly. This strategic situation, and all the policies and doctrines founded on it, changed the moment that Moscow acquired intercontinental ballistic missiles. Now the United States was no longer impregnable. Americans began to ask themselves if they were ready to sacrifice New York for the sake of defending London and Berlin. "Faced with the alternative of all or nothing, the United States would risk choosing nothing for fear of the consequences of choosing all."⁴ Slowly, strategy changed. On each side of the Atlantic both the military and the politicians realized that the old doctrine was no longer either tenable or credible. In France, General

* Since 1984 Canada no longer possesses nuclear weapons of any kind.