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**NATIONS
AND
NUCLEAR
WEAPONS**

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TWO SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE

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I. Introduction

THERE is the story of the British tourist in the Louvre, who stands still for twenty seconds, then turns briskly away, saying: "Well. Done the Mona Lisa!" This seems pretty much the British attitude at the moment to the whole defence-disarmament complex: the Right, including the Government say: "Well; got the British Deterrent"; and the Left, sometimes including the Shadow Cabinet, say, "Well; don't like the British deterrent"; and both sides turn away to more exhilarating topics.

Admiral Lewis Strauss, late Chairman of the American Atomic Energy Commission, is not a man from whom the British Left would expect to learn much. Keen cold warrior and arms racer, he was yet percipient enough to notice how the bombs came to be dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki: "events were . . . in the saddle, riding the decision-makers." "Events" are incomparably more powerfully armed now than they were in 1945, and if in a crisis they were again to take charge, decision-makers, and others, would have nothing much left even to look silly with.

So: *aux armes, citoyens!* At least in the sense of keeping track of what is happening to them and where they are pointing.

A few years ago the most immediate problem nuclear weapons seemed to present was the threat of Armageddon; now it is probably not, because the present governments of the two major nuclear powers understand pretty well the suicidal nature of nuclear war. Each is hoping somehow to impress on the other its own military irreducibility. Multi-megaton weapons are being constructed in the Soviet Union. Minuteman is going up in the United States at the rate of one a day. Marshall V. D. Sokolovsky in the course of an encomium on Soviet defence forces nevertheless admits (*Military Strategy*, Moscow, 1962) that nuclear weapons are superior to the means and methods of defence against them. Mr. McNamara says: "We are approaching an era when it will become increasingly improbable that either side could destroy a sufficiently large portion of the other's strategic nuclear force, either by surprise or otherwise, to preclude a

devastating retaliatory blow. This may result in mutual deterrence." (Statement to the House Armed Services Committee, January 30th, 1963.)

But under the weight of this system of mutual deterrence, both major alliances are showing cracks, are becoming fissiparous, and many of the pieces seem likely themselves to "go nuclear."¹ In the so-called Free World the process is not confined to Europe, is probably not remediable within current concepts, and almost certainly is not just the result of naughtiness or inappropriate ambitions on the part of some antediluvian politicians. It is a disease of the post-Hiroshima world, and although we survived the first, or brinkmanship, symptoms of the disease, we may not survive the secondary, or disseminated, symptoms. We will not help ourselves by believing propaganda about the inability of the European powers to support a nuclear defence policy, or the total coincidence of American, British, German, etc., strategic interests, or the impossibility of the United States ever returning to isolationism. Isolationism is already very nearly within American military capability, at least in the sense that the United States is ceasing to depend on the territory of its allies for its ability to deter attack on its own territory, or to threaten that of the Soviet Union. This is not to say or to imply that isolationism is within the political philosophy of the present administration.

Two cures are being suggested for the disease. One for the political symptoms, one for the military. The doctors de Gaulle and McNamara have so far tried to ignore each other's presence, and also the symptoms from which the other makes his diagnosis and which dictate his choice of treatment.

The Military Diagnosis

The military diagnosis and treatment run like this: the ever-growing technical complexity, deadliness, readiness, and cost, of the weapons systems of the major powers require the utmost centralised co-ordination if there is not to be, at best, intolerable waste and, at worst, intolerable risk. This has been pointed out by Mr. McNamara and his aides on many occasions, and his view has been on the whole accepted and understood by British Opposition strategists. The Western Deterrent, they say, consists of the capability of inflicting unacceptable retaliation at any level of threat, from guerrilla to inter-continental warfare, from bows and arrows to ICBMs with multi-megaton warheads. For this capability to be credible, its strategic nuclear force must be "a single integrated . . . force, responsive to

¹The reader who believes that nuclear weapons will long continue very difficult and very expensive to make is referred to Christoph Hohenemser, *The Nth Country Problem Today*, in S. Melman (Ed.) *Disarmament: Its Politics and Economics*, Daedalus 1962. The difficulty about means of delivery only arises with, as it were, big league powers. Small range means of delivery are readily available. The rumours that the U.S. might reconsider its undertaking to provide the French Government with aerial tankers for in-flight refuelling of its Mirage strategic bombers are likely to have political rather than military significance. The tanker is a specially-converted version of the Boeing 707, and the French would not be incapable of converting Air France's 707s.

a single chain of command, to be employed in a fully integrated manner against what is truly an indivisible target system." (Mr. McNamara, January 30th, 1963.) Moreover, "The U.S. has come to the conclusion that to the extent feasible, basic military strategy in a possible general nuclear war should be approached in much the same way that more conventional military operations have been regarded in the past. That is to say, principal military objectives in the event of a nuclear war stemming from a major attack on the Alliance, should be the destruction of the enemy's military forces, not of his civilian population." (Mr. McNamara, June 16th, 1962, at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.)

The ultimate decision in the Western Alliance cannot but be American; the British and French so-called independent deterrents should be at least completely integrated into the Alliance and preferably given up, the presumed consequent saving being devoted to rectifying deficiencies on the conventional side. Independent command of these limited nuclear capabilities would "deny the possibility of collective security arrangements" and the forces themselves "would be inefficiently produced, unsystematically targetted, and quite unpersuasive in Moscow." (Mr. W. W. Rostow at Ditchley, May 8, 1963.) Arrangements must of course be devised to make the system palatable to anachronistic political sentiments. The theory is beautifully rational, and within its limits perfectly coherent.

Political Considerations

Meanwhile, in this other world of reentrant political anachronisms symptoms and events are occurring which are unlikely to subside merely because they do not fit the military diagnosis or treatment. The two most recent are President de Gaulle's rejection of Britain's application to join the E.E.C. and the Canadian elections. Symptomatic conditions appear likely to break out in South-east Asia, including Australia; in South America; in the Middle East; in the Far East; and of course in Central Europe.

These conditions all concern the control of nuclear weapons, which is where the two categories of problems, military and political, meet. President de Gaulle made it quite clear in his press conference of January 14th that his objections to Britain joining the Common Market were not primarily economic. What actually passed between the American, British and French Governments during the autumn of 1962 will probably not be known for a long time. That there was gross and, in the event, unclarified confusion is obvious, and the three parties reached the new year announcing three separate and incompatible defence policies.

The rock on which the alliance nearly foundered was the problem of the control of nuclear weapons.

For several years, the Canadian Government had refused to allow Canadian troops or American troops on Canadian soil to be equipped in peacetime with nuclear warheads, even though the conventional efficiency of their defensive weapons might, as with the Bormarc missile, be substantially lower.¹ Disagreement on this matter came to a head between

¹ Nuclear-armed, they would presumably acquire not only greater efficiency but also a different, and higher, targeting priority to the Russians.

the American and Canadian Governments as an afterclap of the Cuban crisis. Mr. Diefenbaker's Government fell, he conducted a vigorously anti-American campaign and although he lost the election, the Liberals did not satisfactorily win it. On May 21st, Mr. Pearson's Government narrowly survived a motion of no confidence on its decision to accept nuclear weapons from the United States. One of those who voted for the Government was Mr. Diefenbaker's late Minister of Defence. Mr. Pearson, however, has decided against the multilateral force, and shows no sign of coming into line with American policy towards Cuba.

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Nothing is yet as clear as this in the other parts of the world mentioned above, but there are several places where military and political considerations seem set on a collision course.

The Australian Defence Issue

In Australia, there are indications that all parties are dissatisfied with the state of national defence, that the military build-up of Indonesia is found alarming, and that the American part in this is not felt to be entirely consonant with the behaviour of a trusty ally. Should China produce nuclear weapons, Australia is likely to become still more aware of the ways in which such of her interests in South-east Asia as are not aligned on the cold war do not coincide with those of the United States. The Australian Prime Minister, announcing increases of 18 per cent. in Australian defence expenditure in the next year, said on May 22nd, 1963: "We have made our review in the light of our treaty arrangements, but particularly in reference to the security of our own country and of the territories of Papua and New Guinea. We will defend these territories as if they were part of our mainland; there must be no mistaken ideas about that."

Should any degree of mutual nuclear deterrence between China and the United States arise, or even appear likely, there is no lasting reason why the Australians should not feel they are out on a strategic limb as far as the United States is concerned. If they do, they might seek to acquire a share in the control of United States weapons, a possibility which is already being discussed in the context of the North-west Cape Radio Station. (This station is understood to be similar to the naval station at Cutler, Maine, which controls Polaris submarines.) Alternatively, they might seek to build a nuclear trigger force of their own. Meanwhile, the Opposition has declared (May 16th, 1963) that although it would not denounce the agreement establishing the North-west Cape communications station, it would renegotiate it to ensure that the station was jointly controlled. Although the Australian Government already has the right to be consulted, "consultation," in the words of the American Ambassador, "does not carry with it any degree of control over the station or its use." The Australian Labour Party's view is that "no use should be made of Australian territory or of facilities upon Australian territory which automatically involve

Australia in war without the consent of its government." (Mr. Arthur Calwell, May 16th, 1963.)

The problem of the control of nuclear weapons is likely to arise rather soon. Should Australia decide she required nuclear weapons under her own control, she possesses a considerable lever on British and European governments in the proving grounds at Woomera. Means of delivery would not necessarily, in South-east Asia, pose the same kind of problem as they are thought to in Europe: it is not implausible to use converted long-range commercial aircraft.

Other Parts of the World

In South America the situation is very different, but here too the interpenetration of political and strategic is becoming obvious. In his January testimony, Mr. McNamara had a revealing passage in which he announced that "about one-half" of United States military assistance to South America went towards counter-insurgency forces and equipment, that is to say towards stabilising unstable governments. Whether there are good reasons for the instability of the governments, such as rectifiable popular discontent, is another matter. A para-colonial situation seems to be arising because South America is of prime strategic importance to the United States. At the time of the Cuban crisis, just before Mr. Kennedy's first speech, the Soviet radio made a couple of announcements to the effect that the United States was starting to construct missile sites in South America. Nothing more was heard of this. But although it was not true, American strategic interest in this area *is* likely to increase in the age of the global rocket;¹ European strategic interest is not. This may turn out to be a problem for the Western Alliance.

In the Middle East, there is an arms race between the U.A.R. and the Israelis. There is East-West rivalry. There is considerable Anglo-American financial and oil rivalry. At the time of the Kuwait incident the British Government may or may not have had it in mind to use its nuclear weapons if "necessary," but it is difficult to see that the task forces of a nuclear power can ever appear without carrying this threat, and the consequent risks of miscalculation and of escalation, with them. Just what is included in the Israeli nuclear power programme is not clear. Nor is it clear what is involved, either technically or financially in the Egyptian rocket programme.² There may in short be several nuclear trigger forces in the Middle East in the foreseeable future, without the Western Alliance as such having any single clear interest or policy or even reliable lever in the whole area.

During the meeting of the Japan-United States Security Committee last January, the Japanese press was giving maximum publicity to the fact that China would be ready to explode a nuclear device in the next year or so, and might be expected to build up a nuclear arsenal within some

¹ Defining this as a rocket capable of reaching any point on earth by the major as well as by the minor arc.

² Both Israel and Egypt have desert areas where they could carry out such tests as they might need.

ten years. The American administration already wishes the Japanese to take on more responsibility for their own defence. There have been reports that the Japanese Government were considering the purchase of Bomarc ground-to-air missiles: these are the ones already set up in Canada. Although there are American naval bases in Japan, nuclear weapons are not at present stored at them; when Polaris submarines start operating in Far Eastern waters it will be convenient for them to have certain facilities in these ports. However, Mr. Fred Korth, the American Secretary of the Navy, has said (May 9th) that the American Government would not give the Japanese Government any more information about safety measures in the submarines than had already been given to the press. It seems that the Japanese would like to know the details of the Holy Loch agreement, but that the U.S. Government is not willing to reveal them. This may strain the Alliance.

Any explosion of a nuclear device by the Chinese would clearly have a very considerable effect, psychological and military, in the whole of the Far East and of South-east Asia: an anticipatory shifting of attitudes is already visible to the naked eye. If the Indian Government feels it is being let down by the Western Governments in the matter of military assistance (and American officials have called the sum recently requested "a mirage") will it be inclined to take up the options it has carefully left open and steer its nuclear power programme towards a military capability? This might have repercussions in Pakistan.

When the American Deputy Secretary of Defence, Mr. Roswell Gilpatric, was due to go to Spain last January to discuss the renegotiation of the arrangement whereby the United States occupies bases there, suggestions were put out by Madrid officials that a suitable future rent might include nuclear weapons on the grounds that conventional weapons had been devalued by the more modern armaments. Mr. Gilpatric cancelled his visit hurriedly.

Britain's Responsibility

Which brings us back to Europe, the chief prize and the main ring of Russian/American rivalry. Elsewhere, the question of *British* control of nuclear weapons is of secondary importance; we should merely note that the problems are growing and may not be ignored. In Europe, in the NATO cockpit, what we do about nuclear weapons is of primary importance. No matter what policy a British Government adopts, Europe cannot be restored to a condition of nuclear virginity. We could carry on as absent-mindedly as in the last few years while NATO disintegrates and nuclear weapons proliferate; we could shut our eyes and work for the establishment of Mr. McNamara's single chain of command and single target system; we could work for that sailor's nightmare, the multilateral force. But if our aims are assumed to include a more or less viable NATO alliance, which is almost certainly not politically compatible with Mr. McNamara's military Utopia, and also a relaxation of tensions between East and West, we had better start thinking about what is happening inside Europe and what kind of forces we are dealing with and hoping to influence. These forces are largely determined by military factors.

2. The Cracks in NATO

QUITE soon it will appear to be within the capability of the two major nuclear powers to limit a nuclear (or a major conventional) war to the European peninsula under the umbrella of their mutual deterrence. When, and as long as, this is so, European Governments will believe they must take it into account in their military planning, and some of them will seek to acquire nuclear forces that can escape the American veto. We are still living in a world of sovereign powers and it might well be in the interests of the Russian and American peoples that their Governments should attempt to limit a war in this way. The weapons systems now being developed could permit, as some of their predecessors have not permitted, an unmistakable pause between nuclear war in Europe and inter-continental war. Mr. Khrushchov has said that for various reasons the 100 megaton warhead is unsuitable for use in Europe; this establishes one Cis-Atlantic deterrent threshold. Another is perhaps foreshadowed in the hardpoint anti-missile system reported to be operational near Leningrad against medium range, but not intercontinental, ballistic missiles. Then there is the Mobile Medium Range Ballistic Missile; this has a range between Pershing and Polaris and presumably could carry a hydrogen warhead because the bomber it is intended to replace carries that. The MMRBM would be capable of intra-European counterforce use, but it would not be involved, as previous American missiles and strategic bombers of this range in Europe have been, in the immediate deterrence of an attack on America itself: the American missiles and bombers which were placed in Europe when an attack on America could only be deterred from Europe are being withdrawn, and the continental United States now depends on Minuteman and other ICBMs. Soviet use of their MMRBMs (of which there are thought to be some 700) would be deterred, not as at present by the danger of escalation to intercontinental war, but by a counterforce threat based on Western Europe. This would tend to accelerate decision making; it might also induce the Soviet Government to deploy these weapons in satellite rather than Soviet territory. If inter-enemy communication were as good as some American strategic theorists assume it can be, the message could be unambiguous; if MMRBMs only are used, the war is European; if Minuteman be used, it is intercontinental. Underlying all this is the fact, uncomfortably indigestible to the alliance, that what is strategic to Paris and Warsaw and London, is tactical to Moscow and Washington.

Their inconvenience does not make these possibilities more or less real: if the Labour Party were to neglect them, particularly in the light of the Conservatives warning that they will fight the next election on the independent deterrent, it would be that much less able either to win the election or to pursue a successful foreign policy after it.

So, where is Europe? It seems likely that in the long run West Germany may present a problem to the alliance far graver than that now posed by Gaullist France. Herr von Hassel in the debate on the defence budget in the Bundestag, while defending the idea of the multilateral surface force, proposed that at a certain stage the system of unanimous

decision be replaced by one of majority decision. He also stated that the Federal Government's demand for land-based medium range missiles would remain unaffected by the existence of that force.¹ Mixed manning for such missiles is implausible (the MMRBM will be compact enough to travel on secondary roads) so he may well have it in mind that they should be German manned. Germany is under no treaty obligation not to own the means of delivery of nuclear weapons, and already does so. One of the makers of the Federal Republic recently said that Germany's renunciation of nuclear weapons was made in the context of NATO and of NATO'S deterrent being credible. This by now is shorthand for a forward defence in Germany with nuclear weapons right up East. The present British Government has been rather sympathetic to this because our troops only have enough conventional weapons for a couple of day's fighting. The Americans dislike the forward nuclear strategy because they wish to maintain a "conventional option" as long as possible.

When General de Gaulle feels that the Russians and the Americans could shake hands across the radio-active corpse of Europe, he too has in mind that deterrence must work in the middle of Europe, not at the Atlantic or the Polish-Russian frontier. For this reason among others, General de Gaulle and his predecessor French Governments have followed the Attlee and subsequent British Governments in acquiring nuclear weapons in spite of, and in the face of, American disapproval. The reasons why hold more water perhaps in intra-alliance terms than in anti-Russian. This makes them, if not more serious, undoubtedly more immediate. France has had no more wish to be in a para-colonial situation *vis-à-vis* Washington, than in that of a satellite to Moscow.

British, French and German thought and feeling about all this has been no less logical or coherent than Mr. McNamara's; nor is it necessarily naughtier, as much of the British and American press seems to believe, or more partial than his. To admit that limited war in Europe is conceivable some time in the future and therefore to be taken into account is not to dispute the sincerity of the present American Administration, let alone its preponderant military capability. It is only to admit that the United States is a democracy and a sovereign state with interests of its own which subsequent administrations may interpret differently from this one. "National Interests" have been as much affected by the general speed-up in obsolescence as anything else has.

Alliance Strategy and the Labour Party

The defence policy recently adumbrated by some members of the Shadow Cabinet might have saved the world a great deal of trouble if it

¹The reader's attention is drawn to General Lemnitzer's speech to the W.E.U. Assembly in Paris (June 6th, 1963) in which he said that "our studies at SHAPE indicate that a mixture of configurations—surface ships, submarines, and land vehicles—would be the best solution to attaining the military capability which we require." He had said earlier in the same speech that "we at SHAPE [have not] been asked to comment upon the concept" of the multilateral force. This may account for the reports from Washington that the surface fleet and the force of MMRBMs land-based in Germany are being presented to the British Government as alternative (*The Times*, June 10th, 1963) and not as complementary as SHAPE would wish to see them.

had been adopted by the British Government just before our first H Test; just as it would probably have been well if the United States had adopted a policy of flexible response in 1945 when Robert Oppenheimer was first advocating it; or if the control aspects of the Quebec and Hyde Park agreements had not been discarded by Mr. Truman.¹

Nothing is easier than to be out of date in the nuclear age: to state, as Mr. Wilson is reported to have done in America this spring that "there are and should be only two nuclear powers in the world today" would be to hark back to a simpler age. That possibility escaped when the British V bombers became operational with their A bombs and will vanish over the horizon when the French nuclear force becomes operational later this year. (We may join Mr. Strachey in whistling ever so sweetly to it in the dark, but it will not return and we should not allow the sweetness of the tune to keep our spirits up.)

The Labour Party is understandably suffering from a lack of serious defence thinking since Scarborough. The last time it had a coherent and plausible policy, it was that of the "non-nuclear club"; it is a pity that this cannot be revamped for current use, but by now it is spilt milk. So probably is the nuclear-free zone in Central Europe. What then can we do?

The Horns of the Dilemma

First, we must continue to agree that nuclear war is so appalling a prospect that the conduct of even the threat of it must be "viewed as a single system" and must, as far as possible, be planned, integrated and indivisible. Militarily, the alliances must be centripetal. Next we must admit that the alliances are not at present politically geared to any such single system, and that centrifugal tendencies are at work, not only in Europe, but also in the Communist "bloc," in North America, in South-east Asia, and in the Far East. The horns of this dilemma are moving apart, and we cannot avoid trouble by clinging to one of them, because, to mix

¹These arrangements, which derived from Anglo-American wartime co-operation on nuclear weapons, were entered into by Mr. Churchill and Mr. Roosevelt. They were not popular with many of Roosevelt's advisers and, since the need for secrecy made it impossible for him to seek Senate ratification, they were binding only on his administration. The Quebec Agreement of 1943 envisaged certain limitations on British commercial use of atomic energy, and on American military use without British consent. The Hyde Park Aide-Memoire of 1944 (the American copy of which got lost until many years later) adumbrated "full co-operation after the defeat of Japan" for military and commercial purposes "unless and until terminated by joint agreement." In effect it was terminated unilaterally by Mr. Truman in April, 1946, partly under pressure from those same advisers who had disliked Roosevelt's policy in this matter and partly because it was assumed that the continuation of Anglo-American co-operation would somehow inhibit attempts to bring nuclear energy under international control. The first Nth power was thus the child of nationalist suspicion and of budding internationalism. Mr. Attlee was kind enough to lay the responsibility for the breakdown in co-operation on Congress which shortly afterwards passed the McMahon Act, and not on Mr. Truman. (*As it Happened*, London, 1954, p. 162.) However, Senator McMahon knew nothing of the Agreements when he steered his bill through Congress. Later Mr. Churchill accused Mr. Attlee of having abandoned the British veto in return for Marshall aid. In fact he seems to have had no choice in the matter.

metaphors, there is a little political Trojan horse inside the military horn, and a little military Trojan horse inside the political horn. Thus, Mr. McNamara posed four requirements for the safest possible conduct of the West's strategic deterrent. It should be "a single integrated strategic nuclear force, responsive to a single chain of command, to be employed in a fully integrated manner, against what is truly an indivisible target system." (January 30th, 1963.) The presence of that out-of-series word "truly" in the fourth clause should catch us up; is there "truly" any certainty that the NATO countries could agree upon a list of strategic priorities? Is it even conceivable that the entire system of "Free World" alliances, NATO, CENTO, SEATO, ANZUS, OAS should agree on such a list?

If the Cold War covered the whole spectrum of all the national interests of all the countries, some list *might* be botched up, but who imagines it does, or would wish it to? And yet is not the agreement of such a list precisely what the single deterrent system requires? That "truly" is a Trojan horse against which no number of McNamara computers can prevail.

The equivalent military Trojan horse in the political horn is more familiar. Whatever the degree of decentralisation within the alliances, whatever the number of small national nuclear forces, the possibility of confining and isolating an outbreak of nuclear war anywhere in the world is quite uncertain. The dangers of the Nth power spread are well known and "Le Monde des Patries" is even less plausible than "L'Europe des Patries" if the patries are nuclear-armed. General de Gaulle's Utopia is as devoid of hope for the world as Mr. McNamara's. Both are partial views carried beyond their relevance, and our first function must be to understand and, through sympathy, analysis and foresight, to help the world realise its oneness in the face of mass weapons, as we already propose doing in face of the other mass dangers, ignorance, disease, hunger, and fear. The two horns must be brought together again.

3. The changing nature of Deterrence

SO far, we have been considering extrapolations from events both political and military, and the problems that are arising out of this mixed and boggy area. Almost as important as the events are the theories which have been erected to interpret them and to aid in the extrapolations, principally the theory of deterrence and the Deterrent. Here, too, entropy is at work: much has happened in the last year or two.

A deterrent is still that which shall have turned out to have deterred. "If the deterrent is ever executed, it will have failed." This is to say, it is something which exists in the present, which people credit or not, yet the nature of which can only be established sometime henceforward. Yet it is difficult to say conclusively, even now, that "the deterrent has worked

so far": an historical *why* is more difficult to establish than an historical *what*. It is certain *that* the Russians have not launched an attack in Central Europe, but whether this is *because* of the Western deterrent cannot be completely certain. We cannot assume it was not because of it.

What is a deterrent depends on the opinion held of it by the deterrer and the deterrend. Credibility is essential to it, but this is not quantifiable. It comprises constantly changing physical variables: Will it work? Is it safe on the ground? Will enough of it get through the defences? Will it be on target? Will the target contain what it is assumed to? Will it go off by mistake? What counter-blows and by-blows can it be expected to trigger? Credibility also comprises psychological variables. Under what circumstances, public or private, would decision maker A press the button? If he has several buttons, in what order? Would decision maker B respond in one of the predicted ways? Is the threat too looming, too frightening, for reason and discipline to prevail?

The deterrer can reduce the credibility of his own deterrent merely by believing that the deterrend is not impressed by it. Massive retaliation lost its leverage this way; so might nuclear weapons threatened against the Chinese. Credibility can be switched by evidence concerning mechanical failure: Mr. McNamara's recent harsh comments on the reliability of Minuteman as compared to Polaris reflected on the counterforce, but not on the retaliatory, aspects of the U.S. deterrent. Third parties are now attempting to reduce the credibility of the future French deterrent by pointing out, accurately but irrelevantly, that it will not have an American-type second strike counterforce capability. This is also said about the British V bomber force, and here confusion is more permissible because in its early days this force was ostensibly intended to threaten the core of Russia's economic life. In its independent British role, it is now a minimum deterrent, targeted, one must presume, almost exclusively on cities in Western Russia, and carrying an effective threat "only" to some tens of them. In its function of junior aide to SAC, it presumably has military targets, in accordance with current American strategy.

The changeover from counterforce to countercity in its independent role does not mean that the V bomber force has lost its capacity to deter. Not even American sources seem willing to declare categorically that a Russian first strike on French or British airfields (an event likely in Russian estimation to risk American retaliation), or the Russian air defences, could make it inconceivable that any bombers at all would get through. Until it is inconceivable, bombers carrying thermonuclear or large fission bombs will retain some significance in the general structure of deterrence. The expectation of a few Hiroshimas-worth of devastation on Moscow or Leningrad can hardly be as meaningless in Moscow as Mr. Rostow has suggested.

Minimum Deterrents: The British and French Forces

Still there is no question of the British or the French being able to use their independent forces to threaten the Soviet Union. These forces

could be useful only in a situation where the Soviet Union felt itself able to attempt blackmail because the United States was fully occupied elsewhere: in Latin America, for instance, in the Far East after China had become an atomic power, or even in domestic difficulties in the south. In such a situation, the destruction of this country, or of France, or of any other country equipped with some kind of irreducible minimum deterrent, would carry with it the return threat of appalling, even if limited, damage to Soviet cities. The minimum deterrent is not a sword of Damocles, it is a posthumous sting in the tail.

The French Government has stated openly that its nuclear bomber force will have only "demographic targets" and this clearly implies minimum deterrence. The British Government has indicated that minimum deterrence is also the current British independent strategic posture by the partial closing down of Capenhurst and by its choice of the nuclear submarine as future deterrentifer. Both France and Britain know well by now that an independent first strike could only bring down on them disaster; all they can independently do is to make it clear that they themselves cannot be destroyed with impunity. Their deterrents are not threats to the Soviet Union, only warnings. (I am not suggesting that the proliferation of minimum deterrents is safe or desirable. There is any way a lower threshold: small countries with small enemies cannot have minimum deterrents—even two or three twenty-kiloton weapons in Egyptian or Israeli hands would appear an intolerable threat to the other.)

This is not the aspect of limited national forces that makes Mr. McNamara apprehensive. The aspect he deplores—though he has been too discreet to say so about ours—is the trigger effect on American strategic forces that the British or French forces might have. The kind of situation in which this would work might arise during a conventional war in Europe, say, when France or Britain after suffering reverses considered a warning of escalation to nuclear war should be issued, in the shape of the nuclear bombardment of perhaps some airfields in Western Russia. This could be the point of no return and naturally enough no American would wish the decision to be anyone's but the President's. Perhaps most of us in the West would prefer this too, but it is not self-evident. If he is to be the sovereign of European destinies, it is gradually becoming clear to his advisers that he had better become a constitutional monarch, acting in accordance with properly established guide lines, lest a host of small countries attempt to take his rightful decisions for him. Although the British and French deterrents cannot be more than a warning to the Soviet Union, they can if war should break out be a threat to the United States.

The American Counterforce Capability

Only the American deterrent stands in a posture of threat to the Soviet Union. It is now being constructed and deployed in accordance with the doctrine enunciated by Mr. McNamara a year ago at Ann Arbor, a doctrine which includes what is now known as a second strike counterforce capability. This requires a force strong enough to absorb a first strike by the enemy, and then to retaliate against targets of military

importance (missile launching sites, airfields, submarine bases, transport nexuses, perhaps military production centres, and so on), while still holding in reserve an ultimate threat to the enemy's cities. In this way, the holocaust can in theory be separated from the mere outbreak of nuclear war by identifiable steps, at each of which there is a chance that reason may prevail and the worst be avoided. The doctrine has also been called "no-cities," on the assumption that reason would prevail.

Minimum deterrence depends on the probability of a few bombs or warheads getting through to a well-known immovable target. Counterforce depends on the ability of the force to sterilise the military system of the adversary. This requires: a three or four to one preponderance of very accurate weapons, very accurate intelligence of the whereabouts of military targets, and great speed of reaction so as to hit the enemy's weapons before he has used them ("to catch the birds in the nest before they have flown"). This need for all haste can provide temptation to pre-empt—to hit the enemy before he hits you. Counterforce in this way becomes positively threatening: if the system is strong enough to retaliate *after* a blow, it cannot but be stronger still *before* a blow. The doctrine (and its offspring theory of "Limited Strategic War") also requires the other side to "play the game" (not to retaliate at once on American cities) and for cool reason and good communications to prevail throughout.

The possibility of the latter was put in its place by Sir Solly Zuckerman in his article "Judgment and Control in Modern Warfare" (*Foreign Affairs*, January, 1962) and the development by the Russians of 100 megaton warheads for their ICBMs suggests that they would not be interested in "playing the game." Indeed it seems possible that they decided to build these weapons precisely to circumvent the counterforce threat: if their missiles are in danger of being taken out on the ground (and it is generally agreed in the West that the Russians do not have even a first strike counterforce capability which would allow them to attack the United States with any hope of disarming her) those that remain, however few they may be, must be capable of inflicting damage unacceptable even to those Americans who believe a war could be "won" in which tens of millions of Americans were killed. It is an attempt perhaps to make the Soviet deterrent credible even to Herman Kahn and Albert Wohlstetter. The development by the Soviet Union of submarine-borne missiles, which are currently almost invulnerable, has any way outdated the possibility of counterforce. (The comparatively short range of Polaris-type missiles is not an important disadvantage: the United States is most heavily populated round its seaboard.)

The Side Effects of American Strategic Preponderance

The pursuit of a second strike counterforce capability by the U.S. has several side-effects, mostly destabilising. Because it takes several missiles, even rather accurate ones like Minuteman, to take out a land-based military target (which is usually small compared to a city, and perhaps movable) for every such missile the Russians build, the Americans need to build three or four. Minuteman is now going up at the rate of

one a day, and this will go on until there are, according to some reports, 1,350 of them. Meanwhile, the Russians study to give their missiles vast warheads, or to put them invulnerably under the sea. The doctrine whips on the arms race and then becomes a vicious spiral: "The value of another billion dollars spent for Defence also depends on changes in the world situation and the military effort undertaken by our antagonists. A large increase in the Soviet defence budget for example, could substantially increase the value of an additional increment to our own defence budget." (Mr. McNamara, January 30th, 1963.)¹ It also whips up the need for intelligence, and it does not seem unreasonable to connect the Russian backstepping on inspection in the Test Ban talks in 1961, with the technological break through that allowed the last Administration to order Minuteman in such large numbers. And yet that order itself derived in part at least from bad, or inadequate, or misinterpreted, or confusing, intelligence about the prospect of the Missile Gap in the early 'sixties.

In this same Statement of January 30th, Mr. McNamara describes what is involved in building up a counterforce capability. "One of the major uncertainties is, of course, the size and character of our opponent's strategic forces and defensive systems—now, and more importantly, in the future. Because of the long leadtimes in making these weapons systems operational, we must plan our forces well in advance of the time when we will need them and, indeed, we now project our programmes at least five years ahead of the current budget year. For the same reason we must also project our estimates of the enemy's forces at least five years into the future, and for some purposes even beyond. These long range projections of enemy capabilities are, of course, highly conjectural, particularly since they deal with a period beyond the production and deployment decisions which our opponents themselves may not yet have made." The Red Queen could not have put it better. The Russians presumably find out what they are being expected to do, and then throw out the calculations by doing something else—not building bombers, but going in for missiles, not building great numbers of missiles, but huge warheads, and a vast fleet of submarines. . . . The *Comparative Estimates of Strategic Strength* issued by the Institute of Strategic Studies last November gave the figures of 450-500 for American ICBMs and 75+ for Soviet ICBMs in early 1963; and although the Missile Gap was debunked two years ago, the orders for Minuteman have only been enlarged.

The experience of Cuba suggested that the American people and Congress are not aware of their by now normal condition of vulnerability. All these factors (the enhancement of the fruits of espionage, the accelerating entropy of the arms race, the increase in split-second decisions, the towering accumulation of threatening weapons and the momentum of the interests vested in them), these are all destabilising, both to East-West relations, and within America's alliances. They also make nonsense of the Administration's concurrent efforts for disarmament.

¹ The development by the West of a missile-bearing surface fleet and of MMRBMs land-based in Germany might well enhance the value of Soviet submarines and MMRBMs.

4. British Attitudes

British thinkers have long been at a disadvantage in that the best and the most professional thought to be published in this field has been American, that American money has often financed them themselves and that American information is available when British is not. Presumably this is because, while American strategy has for some years been based on the idea of an explicit threat of calculable retaliation, British deterrence has been a veritable celtic twilight of ambiguity. The result has been that, although we were the first non-super power to have nuclear weapons, we made no attempt to dent the false and dangerous American assumption that the world of nuclear weapons is simply bipolar.¹ We have left that to the French, with the result that the alliance nearly capsized.

A certain waffling tact on the part of the British Government and exemplary behaviour since Suez presumably hid the fact that it has had a catalytic finger on the trigger of the American deterrent for many years. After all, we have supported the risk of being involved in American adventures; there is no fundamental injustice in them supporting the risk of being involved in ours. Nothing has been rubbed in. This tacit logic evidently ceased to apply when the Nth power became de Gaulle's France: a man systematically suspicious of the America which in his view had tried to cut the link between historical, and liberated, France, and a country with an unpleasantly large communist party. And yet the more poignant American propaganda against the French nuclear force became, the more justified the French appeared to be in their snide remarks that now the Americans too were endangered by Russian rockets, they can no longer provide a credible deterrent to a Russian attack: after all, if the Americans intended to press their trigger, the merely catalytic trigger could have no importance. The slanging match has been ludicrous, and dangerous to the extent that Germany, the apparent pivot of the argument, has had her previously mild appetite for nuclear weapons perhaps irresistably whetted.

There seems to be no reason for thinking that the problems posed by nuclear weapons will be overcome by anything except disarmament. However, as nuclear weapons will last until we get disarmament, problems about the control of them now and in the immediate future must, even if they cannot be solved, at least be defused. NATO presents the most urgent.

If the so-called "inter-allied" regrouping of nuclear forces put in train at Ottawa leads to greater mutual understanding among the allies, to that extent it is good. But because it is unlikely ever to get beyond being a declaratory gesture, a kind of alliance rubber stamp on American decisions, it will not solve or defuse.

The multilateral or mixed manned force into which the American Government hopes to absorb European nuclear ambitions is a very different

¹ The best theoretical analysis I know of the problem of alliances in the nuclear age is the Australian A. L. Burns' article, in Knorr and Read's *Limited Strategic War* (Pall Mall Press, 1962).

matter. It is at present a confused and confusing project. So far it has at least had one good result—eliciting from M. Couve de Murville the assurance that the French Government has no intention of backing a Franco-German nuclear force; this bugaboo out of the way, it should be possible for the scheme to be considered on its own merits, and not as a ploy in the game of downing de Gaulle.

Whether it can be politically sound, depends on answers to many questions; if that unknown country, Erhard's Germany, has nuclear ambitions and contributes 40 per cent. of the finance, is it likely to be satisfied with a finger on the pen which traces the guidelines to American decisions? Is it sound to encourage this least satisfied and perhaps least stable member of the alliance to acquire by proximity the taste for nuclear weapons? If the scheme is described as militarily sound whose are the criteria? those of an American Administration which chose submarines for its own force? those of the British Government which asked for the removal of the vulnerable Thor missiles? those of a German Government which is hoping for land-based missiles on its territory even if the multilateral force comes off? If the scheme goes forward what certainty is there that Congress will accept the legislation necessary to prevent there being two classes of NATO sailors—Americans who approach the missiles and the rest, who may not? Or is the British Government counting on congressional recalcitrance to allow it to jump in with an offer of British warheads with only a British veto on them? Or a Franco-British veto, thus perhaps to resurrect last year's dumb-bell? And what kind of deterrent posture is the force to adopt—minimum or counterforce? And what kind of attitude shall we all take when the other alliances come up with proposals for multilateral Pacific or SEATO forces? And what effect will it have on relations with the Soviet Union? And, above all, how does it fit in with disarmament and the kind of world we want to see?

Britain's decision can in fact determine this matter of the multilateral force. On present showing it appears that the political dangers and disadvantages outweigh the far from immediate risks of Germany disowning her treaty obligations to build nuclear weapons alone. Moreover, Admiral Rickover's peremptory rejection of the Administration's first scheme for mixed manning in assigned American nuclear submarines seemed to tally better with what is known about naval training than the subsequent displays of enthusiasm by American top brass.

Britain's decision should almost certainly be against the current panicky proposal. If the Conservative Government has not already killed or transformed the idea before the election, Labour should.

5. A Disarmament and Defence Policy

IN this welter of day-to-day events and long headlines, of rancour and myth and optimistic gimmicks, can the Labour Party really hope to discern any all-weather principles on which to base a positive defence policy?

Defence has always had as one of its methods the disarming of the enemy. Sometimes attack itself has been the best defence (if your enemy is dead or wounded, you could be safe) but in general Mr. McNamara was right when he equated his Ann Arbor doctrine with that of past "conventional military operations"; the righteous Christian soldier has sought rather to disarm his enemy and while he is a prisoner convert him than to kill him outright. The counterforce strategy based on Minuteman would indeed seek to disarm the Soviet Union, and Mr. Alain Enthoven, one of Mr. McNamara's assistants, has felt able to say at Loyola University that "in terms of the moral criteria of the traditional Christian doctrine, I think it is fair to say that we have made considerable progress." (February 10th, 1963.) But in fact the disarmament of the Soviet Union by counterforce action is not now workable: the odd 100 megaton weapon and the Polaris-type submarine fleet would survive to destroy the U.S. as the U.S. would destroy the Soviet Union. Counterforce is as dead as massive retaliation, but rather longer a-dying. By now it is even bad deterrence: of the deterrent postures, only minimum deterrence still holds water.

And yet the object of counterforce, the disarmament of the Soviet Union, the removal of a physical threat deemed intolerable, remains the only intelligent defence policy. But it can probably be achieved by no other means than by a general disarmament treaty: defence and disarmament are now the same thing.

Our principle and our overriding policy must be the achievement of a treaty of general and comprehensive disarmament under international control and with adequate peace keeping machinery. This will be vastly difficult and slow, but it is not a dead end. The solutions so far offered to the questions of military and political control which nuclear weapons pose are never more than exacerbated variations of the original difficulty. The further we go, the worse the problems.

Yet, because disarmament cannot but take many years to achieve we need intermediate policies which are geared to it and conduce to it. We must ensure that NATO remains effective but unprovocative. We must ensure that British forces do not have to rely on nuclear weapons, which means adequate conventional weapons in Germany, and no nuclear weapons in British naval and other task forces. We must provide ourselves with rather more money and more personnel and more information for disarmament, so that our negotiators, our members of parliament, our journalists and commentators depend rather less than they do now on American sources and criteria and evaluations. Unless we do this, Western positions at Geneva will continue rigidly straight jacketed. Particularly, we must do all we can—and it is probably rather a lot—to discourage

the American Government from trying to maintain a second strike counterforce posture. This is at once destabilising, self-deceiving, a built-in spur to the arms race, and an absolute impediment to disarmament.

We do not know—and presumably the British Government even with personnel in Omaha will not know—just what kind of strategy the Pentagon has in mind if ever a war should occur. It is nevertheless in our interest, and in that of the whole world, for us to make sure if we can that some of the kinds of strategy which have been at least unofficially envisaged in the U.S. should not be adopted. The Good Ally tells Home Truths. Our V Bomber force, because of its separate existence in the Western Deterrent, is a guarantee that that deterrent cannot be used to arrange any kind of anti-European trade-off between the United States and the Soviet Union. (However far this is from the intentions of the Kennedy Administration, military advice must deal with capabilities, not with intentions.) The British force is also a brake on counterforce as well as on the related theories of Limited Strategic War: if the British Government have the capability, as they now have, of “not playing the game,” or “spoiling” a counterforce or a “teaching” attack, this can only help strengthen the more reasonable elements in the American Administration who would in any case be chary of any such action.¹

Which brings us to the conditions under which the next Labour Government should relinquish independent control of the V Bomber force. This control, I believe, should be relinquished, and only relinquished, into that western minimum deterrent force which should be achieved during the first and second stages of a disarmament treaty. Our possession of the V bomber force at present is a mitigation of what most Americans certainly do not see, but the Russians do see, as the most threatening force in the world. It must be our business to persuade the Americans to adopt a more pacific type of deterrence and a more wily and more amenable attitude to disarmament.

The inspected transitional minimum deterrent is in origin an American idea. It was explained unofficially to the Russians in the winter of 1960, and reappeared in Mr. Gromyko's speech to the General Assembly of the United Nations on September 21st last year. He then said: “Taking into consideration the attitudes of the Western powers, the Soviet Government agrees that in abolishing the means of delivering nuclear weapons during the first stage, exception shall be made of a strictly limited and agreed number of global (inter-continental) missiles, anti-missile missiles, and anti-aircraft defence ground-to-air missiles which are, respectively, only at the disposal of the USSR and the United States. In this way there would remain for some time means of defence in the event of anyone deciding, as some Western personalities fear, to break the treaty and conceal missiles or military aircraft.” In March this year Mr. Tsarapkin said: “The Soviet

¹ There is no doubt that Mr. Attlee found considerable local support when he went to Washington in 1950 after Mr. Truman had announced that the Administration was considering allowing the use of nuclear weapons across the Yalu river. Mr. Attlee's no doubt temperate plain-speaking helped save the American people from a disaster beside which the follies of Suez pale.

Union accepts the establishment of control over the remaining missiles directly at the launching sites." (March 27th.) The subject is now to be discussed bilaterally between Mr. Steele and Mr. Tsarapkin in Geneva. It should also be wholeheartedly welcomed and elaborated by this British Government and the next.

Part of the Russian case is that the missiles, etc., which this transitional deterrent would comprise should be in the U.S. and the Soviet Union only. If it is clearly transitional, that is, clearly a step to the pre-arranged goal of general disarmament, this might well be acceptable to European powers. When the disarmament process enters that phase, whether early as the Soviets propose or later, as present Western positions require, that is the moment for the V bombers to be turned into express freighters and for the British bombs to be dismantled and the bits distributed for whatever constructive purposes they are good for.

Until then, let us remember that in the next few years we shall remain a thousand times as strong as France in terms of military bang, and several thousand times as strong as Germany. There is no reason to suppose that changing that ratio will hasten the day when those who are a hundred times as strong as us agree to engage in the process which will bring all powers into greater equality and greater safety.

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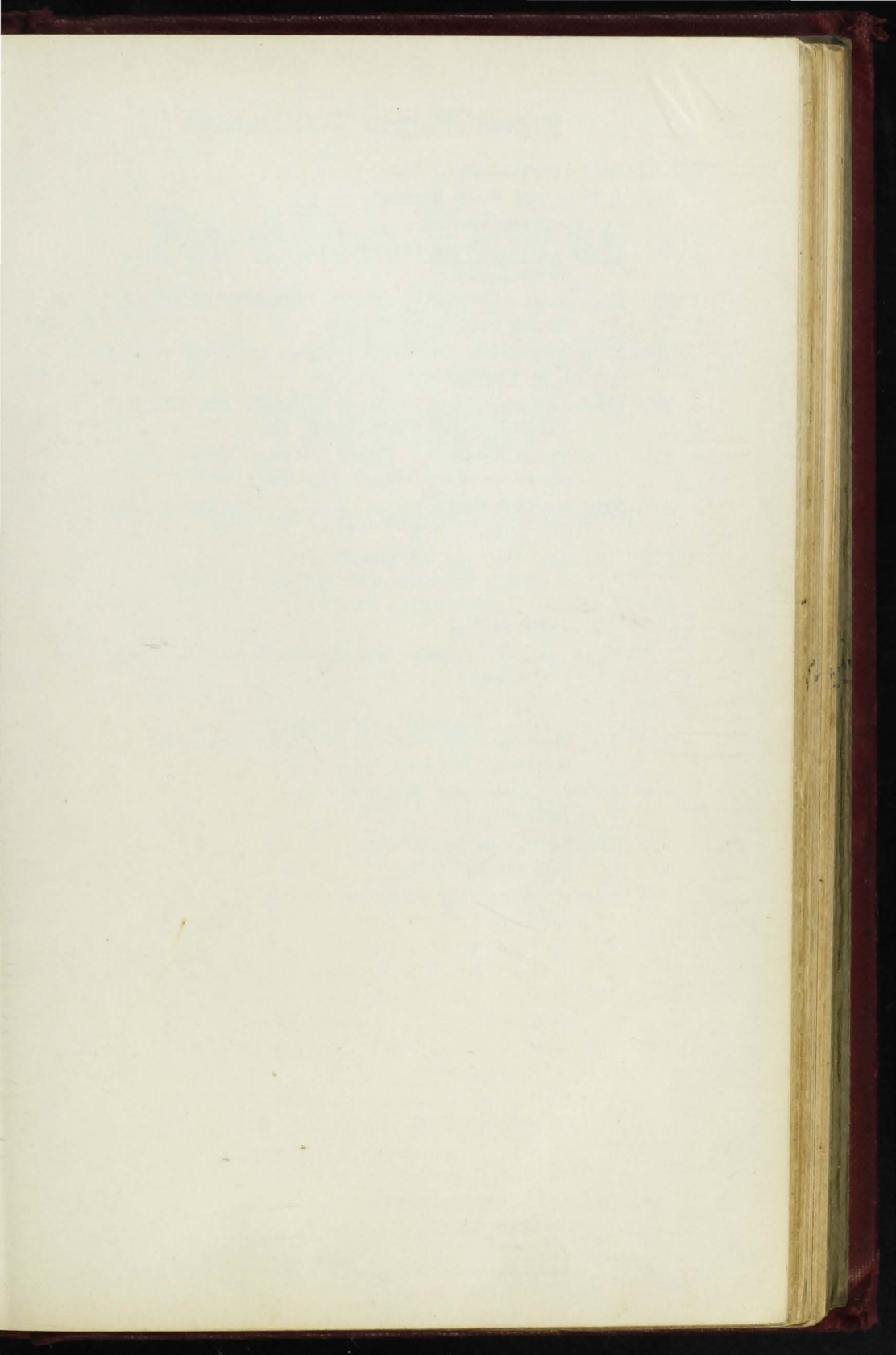
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