

European Troops Stir Congressional Debate

The size of the American military commitment in Europe is expected to be a subject of sharp debate when Congress takes up the annual defense appropriations bill.

At the center of the controversy will be an amendment promised by Sen. Stuart Symington, D-Mo., which would cut off funds for all but 50,000 of the approximately 337,000 American military personnel now committed to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

On April 19, Symington withdrew a similar amendment which he had proposed to the military procurement authorization bill with the understanding that he would re-introduce it when appropriations came up in July.

SENTIMENT for reducing American Forces in Europe, evident since the opening of the 90th Congress, has intensified with the Vietnam build-up and with increasing concern over the U.S. balance of payments. Proponents of the cutback cite signs of a growing East-West détente and the failure of other NATO countries to match the U.S. contribution as indications that the U.S. military presence in Europe greatly exceeds current needs.

A measure of support for reductions came May 17 from the administration when Secretary of Defense Clark M. Clifford told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that he had informed other NATO defense ministers they could "not expect the United States to maintain the level of troops that we now have in Europe."

Clifford's statement contrasted significantly with the April 26, 1967 statement of then Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara before an ad hoc Senate subcommittee set up to consider the question of NATO troop reduction.

At that time McNamara said "it would be particularly unfortunate" for the United States to make a "substantial reduction" in its NATO forces. "I think," McNamara added, "it would be misunderstood by the people of Western Europe and, as a matter of fact, the peoples of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union as well."

STILL BEING considered by the same Senate subcommittee are two resolutions expressing the sense of the Senate that the European NATO countries be urged to make greater contributions to the alliance and that U.S. forces in Europe be re-

deployed.

The two resolutions, introduced by Sen. Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.) and Jacob K. Javits (R-N.Y.), would, if accepted, amend a 1951 Senate resolution affirming the present NATO commitment. Both the 1951 resolution and the two pending ones are purely advisory rather than holding the force of law.

The Javits resolution has 12 co-sponsors, the Mansfield proposal 44. Fifty-three senators have co-sponsored one or the other.

Spokesmen for the ad hoc subcommittee told CQ that action on the resolutions was not expected before the end of the 90th Congress.

Since both resolutions will lapse if not acted on, proponents of reducing American forces in Europe are rallying behind the Symington amendment.

SOME OPPOSITION to the amendment may come from senators who, though they favor withdrawal, do not accept the magnitude of the withdrawal proposed by Symington.

Sen. Henry M. Jackson, D-Wash., an opponent of the amendment who accepts the idea of a small withdrawal, is chief proponent of the argument that the growing détente is a result of the troops' presence, and therefore a reason for keeping them there rather than withdrawing them.

According to the most recent unclassified figures available through the Defense Department, there were 337,000 U.S. troops in Europe as of Dec. 31, 1967: 212,000 Army; 39,000 Navy and Marine; 88,000 Air Force.

Army personnel are highly concentrated in West Germany. Air Force personnel are stationed primarily in Germany and England. Naval personnel are with the 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean while the majority of the Marines are either attached to the 6th Fleet or stationed at the Naval base at Rota, Spain.

THE VAST majority of U.S. troops stationed in Europe are in support of the U.S. commitment to NATO. As of Dec. 31, 1967, 245,000 of these were stationed in West Germany in support of NATO's Central European Command.

A small number of U.S. military personnel are stationed in Europe on non-NATO assignment. These are units such as attaché forces at the U.S. Embassies (Marines) and elements of the U.S. strategic communications command.

In addition to troops, there were in Europe as of Sept. 30, 1967 according to a Defense Department spokesman, 231,885 dependents of U.S. military personnel. A year before, there had been 246,915.

Though Sen. Mansfield denied any economic motives in introducing his resolution to bring home the troops from Europe, a number of Senators including Sen. Symington have pointed out the economic benefits of reducing the U.S. military payments deficit in Western Europe which from 1965 to 1967 averaged \$500 million.

If the combined sponsorship of the Mansfield and Javits resolutions were to assemble in support of the Symington amendment, the measure would carry the Senate.

The amendment, however, calls for more severe troop reductions than either of the resolutions.

In addition, some observers fear that recently increased

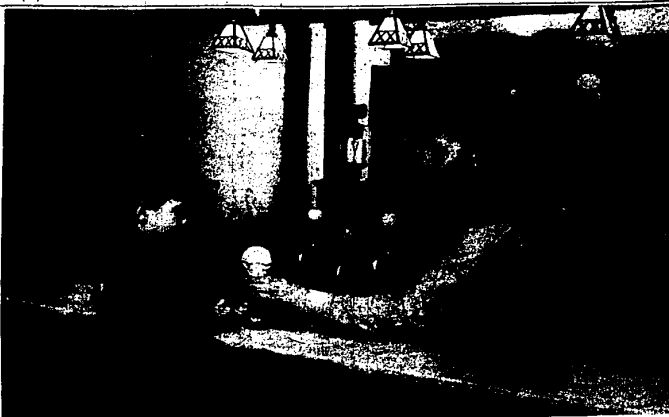
tensions over the West Berlin access question may have eroded support that might have existed earlier.

IN THE EVENT the amendment were accepted by the Senate, the House, which by tradition is more sympathetic to the military, would almost certainly challenge it in conference.

A possible challenge to the amendment could come in the Senate on constitutional grounds.

While the Constitution gives Congress the power to "raise and support armies," it has generally been considered the prerogative of the Chief Executive to make deployment decisions.

The Symington amendment which would limit troops in Europe to 50,000 men might be construed as legislating deployment—a function that might be considered beyond the power of Congress.



OLD OR NEW, the best part of any soda fountain is still the ice cream. That's what Barry Whall says, anyway, as he tries a concoction from the marble-topped soda fountain at the Detroit Historical Museum. The fountain, normally just for show,

is in the drug store on the museum's Turn-of-the-Century Street. The street reproduces a slice of Old Detroit, circa 1895-1905. Doing the serving here is Glenn Stille.

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