Secret

DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

WEEKLY SUMMARY

Special Report

De Gaulle's Concept of a United Europe

Secret

№ 45

13 January 1967
No. 0272/67B

Approved For Release 2006/11/11 : CIA-RDP79-00927A005600040003-6

Special Reports are supplements to the Current Intelligence Weeklies issued by the Office of Current Intelligence. The Special Reports are published separately to permit more comprehensive treatment of a subject. They are prepared by the Office of Current Intelligence, the Office of Research and Reports, or the Directorate of Science and Technology. Special Reports are coordinated as appropriate among the Directorates of CIA but, except for the normal substantive exchange with other agencies at the working level, have not been coordinated outside CIA unless specifically indicated.

WARNING

This document contains information affecting the national defense of the United States, within the meaning of Title 18, sections 793 and 794, of the US Code, as amended. Its transmission or revelation of its contents to or receipt by an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

DISSEMINATION CONTROLS

25X1

25X1

This document MUST NOT [redacted]
E[redacted]. If marked with specific dissemination controls in accordance with the provisions of DCID 1/7, the document must be handled within the framework of the limitation so imposed.

GROUP 1
EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC DOWNGRADING AND DECLASSIFICATION

DE GAULLE'S CONCEPT OF A UNITED EUROPE

In De Gaulle's view, Europe is well into the first phase of the three-stage evolution toward continental unity he has long propounded. The growth of the detente atmosphere in Europe is encouraging him to press on to the second step--entente--toward the third, cooperation "from the Atlantic to the Urals." De Gaulle hopes that the Germans' desire for unification and the Soviet Union's fear of a resurgent Germany will give France a role in bringing about a loose European-wide confederation in which Paris and Moscow will work together to keep Germany in check. In the union he envisages, each state would retain its sovereignty, but France's preponderance as the spokesman for Western Europe would be assured by its nuclear force.

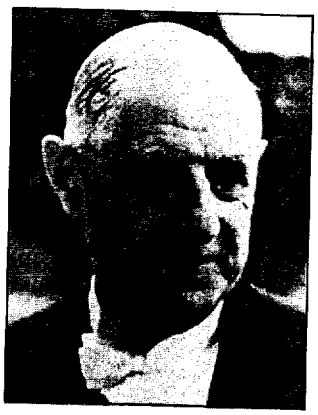
The Thesis

De Gaulle's European scheme embraces all the nations on the continent and, perhaps, Great Britain. As for the USSR, he rejects the view that Moscow's commitment to Communism excludes it from European politics. Economically, De Gaulle's Europe would be a free-trade area internally, but more tightly integrated regional groupings would not be ruled out. Politically, it would consist of sovereign states carrying on all the normal functions of independent political entities, although German ambitions would be kept in check. This Europe would be sufficiently united, however, to undertake joint ventures and would act as a loose confederation of states in matters affecting the continent as a whole.

Such a vision of Europe has figured prominently in De Gaulle's public statements, although he has been obscure about the precise form it would take and the means to achieve it. Well before his return to power in 1958, the general was speaking in this vein, specifying at one point that the first objective of French policy should be to bring about a "detente between the two opposing blocs."

He put more emphasis initially, however, on the need to develop a strong Western Europe. In part, this approach was dictated by his desire to ensure that France, by first securing a dominant role in Western Europe, would play a major role in any wider European context. Moreover, so long as Moscow seemed intent on perpetuating the cold war, the most fruitful policy was to concentrate on building a grouping which eventually would be capable of holding its own against the Eastern bloc. Thus in 1960,

DE GAULLE'S "EUROPE"



"...While we want... to unite into an organized Europe, we claim that it should be done on the basis of reality... the reality of states--and not by annihilating them in who knows what kind of integration..."

Charles de Gaulle, June 1963

"It is possible that an evolution may come about... which may allow us one day to establish, from the Atlantic to the Urals, a 'detente' and then... 'an entente' and... maybe one day a cooperation..."

Charles de Gaulle, September 1963

653621-67

CLASSIFIED MATERIAL ON REVERSE OF PAGE

De Gaulle spoke of a Western Europe which could establish "...from the Atlantic to the Urals some equilibrium [which] may perhaps one day enable the old Continent to bring a reconciliation between its two parts ...."

Even as "little Europe" flourished in the form of the economic community (EEC), De Gaulle held to his grander dream, although he was not yet ready to move toward it. However, once the Soviet Union and its East European allies began to turn a warmer face to the West, France started to pursue an active policy of bridge-building typified in De Gaulle's and Kosygin's exchange of visits last year. The significance of De Gaulle's three-stage approach to his dream--from detente, to entente, to cooperation--then became more apparent.

The essence of this policy had been set forth in 1960, when De Gaulle called for increased trade, cultural exchanges and visits as steps toward a European-wide detente. Entente was to be achieved through a specific degree of controlled disarmament --including the US--while cooperation was to be an organized effort in such areas as aid to underdeveloped countries and collaboration in scientific research. The ultimate objective of cooperation, he maintained, was "an imposing confederation" of all the European states.

The Timing

De Gaulle has carefully avoided setting a timetable for the completion of his scheme. This was evident in the subjunctive mood of his most quoted statement on the subject, in June 1963: "It is possible that an evolution may come about...which may allow us one day to establish, from the Atlantic to the Urals, a 'detente' and then maybe 'an entente' and, who knows, later on, maybe one day, a cooperation...."

Such studied vagueness seems to indicate he then believed his goal was more distant than he now thinks to be the case. The major development which permitted him to firm up his timetable was the worsening split between the USSR and China. De Gaulle had long predicted that Chinese expansionism would force Moscow to turn back to the West for help, but the depth of the Sino-Soviet split and the rapidity with which it developed seem to have provided him unexpected opportunities.

A series of diplomatic visits which began in 1964 made his intent clear. By the end of 1966, France had sent cabinet-level delegations to every Eastern European country--except Albania and East Germany--and had succeeded in broadening its cultural, economic, and technical ties with each of them. A high point to date is De Gaulle's exchange of visits with Kosygin.

De Gaulle also sees his room for maneuver in Europe enlarged by what he regards as American preoccupation elsewhere. He took the increasing US commitment in Vietnam to mean that Washington could do little more than follow a status quo policy in the NATO area. This made it easier to act on his long-planned decision to withdraw from NATO--an organization which he believed subordinated French independence and perpetuated the cold war. He was confident that he could take full advantage of any opportunities to further his European goals without sacrificing the American nuclear umbrella.

By his Eastern European and anti-NATO moves as well as by a number of other spectacular undertakings--such as his campaign to end the dollar's primacy in international finance--De Gaulle has sought to reduce the US role in Europe. He considers the elimination of US "hegemony" equally as vital to the realization of his dream of a "European Europe" as the receptivity of the East to his overtures.

Other pressures heightened De Gaulle's interest in pushing further along the detente path he had begun to explore in 1964. He was determined to block the movement toward supranationalism evident in the EEC Commission proposals advanced in 1965 as part of a "package" on rules for financing the common agricultural policy. By holding out the prospect of a broader Europe capable of dealing with such contentious problems as the German one, he could counter those who charged him with negativism and obstructionism in the building of Europe.

Moreover, the hint of a changing outlook in West Germany has sharpened his desire to bring about a detente. He hopes that Bonn's reawakened interest in bilateral arrangements with France, which the Germans had backed away from shortly after the 1963 Franco-German Treaty of Friendship was signed, will give him the chance to play off Bonn and Moscow against each other. Paris welcomes the friendly noises coming from the new government in Bonn and will listen with interest to Chancellor Kiesinger and Foreign Minister Brandt during their 13-14 January visit to Paris. French Foreign Ministry officials have indicated, however, that they do not foresee any early, concrete steps toward a closer relationship.

Over the long run, Paris still sees stronger ties with Germany as a means of moving closer to its goal of becoming the spokesman for all Western Europe. The UK's renewed interest in accession to the EEC implies a threat to French ascendency in Western Europe and De Gaulle can be expected to press for a closer French-German relationship in order to reduce the chance that Bonn might turn to London as an alternative to Paris.

The Special Problem: Germany

The German problem is central to De Gaulle's thinking on Europe and his moves to improve East-West relations. His efforts to establish a detente which will

make possible a joint attempt by all Europeans--Western and Eastern alike--to come to grips with a divided Germany stems not just from the obvious fact that the USSR is a key factor in any settlement. It derives also from De Gaulle's fear that Germany, if not given some measure of satisfaction that Western Europe is working toward German reunification, will seek cooperation with the Russians to retrieve its former position.

De Gaulle hopes that the Russians' fear of a resurgent Germany will lead them to cooperate in seeking a solution to the German problem. Moreover, the general takes it for granted that the Russians are as eager as France to check the growth of US-German ties which might bring Bonn closer to a voice in control over nuclear weapons.

De Gaulle has never set forth clearly his idea for a German solution, but it seems fairly clear that uppermost in his mind is the traditional French fear of the military and political preponderance exercised by a united Germany. [redacted] he has frequently expressed doubt that German reunification can be achieved soon and has said, in fact, that this would not be possible for another generation. He has stated publicly that Germany must accept the Oder-Neisse line as the permanent boundary between East Germany and Poland and [redacted] made clear his opposition to German access to nuclear weapons. In a press conference in February 1965 De Gaulle said:

25X1

25X1

25X1

"...It must be recognized everywhere, and first of all by Germany, that any settlement of which it would be the subject would necessarily involve an understanding with respect to its boundaries and its armaments through agreement with all its neighbors, those of the East and those of the West."

There have been various hints that De Gaulle's plan for Germany is not reunification in a federal state but some form of confederation between the two parts of Germany with a neutralized status for both sectors of Berlin. With his deep sense of history, the general is influenced by the fragility of political unity in Germany's past. [redacted] recalled on occasion that West Germany itself is divided into separate states, each with a considerable degree of autonomy.

25X1

De Gaulle continues to pay lip service to the need for eventual German reunification and, despite Moscow's urging, has consistently refused to recognize East Germany. Whether his eventual goal is reunification or confederation, De Gaulle is working for a relaxation of tensions in Europe which will permit free movement between the two parts of Germany. In one speech De Gaulle called for "the two separated sections ...to multiply ties and relations between themselves in all practical fields. Transport, communications, economic activity, literature, science, the arts, the goings and comings of people... would be the subject of arrangements which would bring the Germans within."

The Role of the USSR

The role that De Gaulle would have the USSR play in his Europe of the future is not entirely clear. Both France and the USSR are eager to keep Germany in check. De Gaulle envisages an informal bilateral understanding with Russia under which Moscow would not usurp France's role in Western Europe or speak for Western Europe on a global scale. Paris and Moscow, the two continental nuclear powers, would be the spokesmen respectively for Western and Eastern Europe. Each would have a separate sphere of influence, yet the two spheres would overlap where Germany is concerned and on other issues where a continent-wide voice is called for.

De Gaulle, above all, wants to ensure that France is free to pursue whatever course of action it deems necessary. Thus, whatever working relationship evolves between the two powers, it will fall short of any alliance committing France to the USSR. Having taken France out of the Western alliance, De Gaulle will avoid entangling himself in another. He seems convinced that the Russians will seek Western European support when and if the threat from China is intensified.

De Gaulle probably sees the recent spate of French-Russian exchanges and the growing cooperation in scientific, technical, and economic fields as significant milestones in the process of detente in Europe. French officials were particularly pleased by the establishment of an institutional framework for economic and technical cooperation during Kosygin's visit and by Moscow's willingness to engage in what the French considered a more genuine political dialogue than heretofore. Although the two countries differ on the key issues of European security and Germany, De Gaulle is in no hurry for political change on the German question.

The Long-Range Goal

De Gaulle's vision for Europe must be viewed in the broad context of his dream of renewed grandeur for France. His overriding objective is to restore France to a position of the first rank in international affairs. Since this cannot be done on the basis of the economic and military potential of France alone, he aspires to impose French leadership on Europe--directly on Western Europe and indirectly on a broader grouping.

De Gaulle believes he now is well along on the first phase of his detente, entente, and cooperation formula. The goal is not likely to change, but his tactics will be flexible. [redacted] 25X1

Secret

Secret