

Western defense topic of forum

by Gary Barker
Battalion Staff

When the former heads of state of the world's three most powerful Western nations meet tonight, it is unlikely they will discuss old friends or old days. Rather, they will discuss some of the most serious issues currently faced by the West—specifically, the proposed deployment of medium-ranged nuclear missiles and the currently stalemated talks related to their development.

In tonight's lecture, Former West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, Former British Prime Minister Edward Heath and Former President Gerald Ford will discuss the current economic state of the West and the military and defensive capabilities of Western Europe, said Patrick Woods, public relations consultant for the lecture series.

The forum, "The Future of the Western Alliance," is being sponsored by the MSC Endowed Lecture Series and will be moderated by NBC newsman Marvin Kalb.

Any discussion of the defense of Western Europe involves the United States through its link in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

The original treaty, signed in 1949, united Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, Portugal, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Canada and the United States in a pledge to assist each other in the case of aggression against any of the members. Greece and Turkey became members in 1951.

In 1955—only a few days before the Soviet Union and several Eastern European nations signed the Warsaw Pact, the communist military counter to NATO—West Germany became a formal member of NATO.

The underlying agreement of NATO is that the United States promised to use nuclear weapons to deter a Russian attack. However, in the last decade Western Europeans have become worried about the American deterrence, citing a growing number of Soviet land-based, intermediate-range missiles aimed at Western Europe.

Currently the United States has no medium-range missiles based in Europe. France and Britain have 162 medium-range nuclear missiles, but they are not

under NATO jurisdiction.

The Soviet Union now has 333 triple-warhead SS-20 missiles, with a range of 3,000 miles, and 280 older SS-4s and SS-5s, also medium-range.

West Germany and several other NATO members, concerned about the growing Soviet intermediate arsenal, asked the United States in 1977 for U.S. weapons to counter the imbalance. As a result, the Carter administration agreed in 1979 to deploy missiles in Europe by December 1983 while promising to conduct arms reductions talks at the same time.

Specifically, the United States promised to place 572 intermediate-range missiles on European soil. Of the 572 missiles, 108 are Pershing IIs bound for West Germany to replace the shorter-range Pershing Is that have been around since 1969; the other 464 missiles are Tomahawk ground-launched cruise missiles that are scheduled to be placed in Britain, Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands and West Germany.

But the proposed missile deployment has had its problems. Among them are technical difficulties, budget problems in Congress and political opposition in Western Europe, where a growing number of people favor a nuclear freeze.

Many political analysts see West Germany as the key to deployment, partly because it is closer to the Soviet Union and because other countries in Western Europe may be looking to West Germany to see if they agree to the full deployment.

Some analysts in the Reagan administration cited the re-election of West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl in March as a reason to believe that the West German people may be willing to accept the missiles. However, even with the outcome of that election, deployment will be a politically volatile issue.

But the United States and Western Europe are hoping they will never have to deploy the missiles—or all of them, anyway. In Geneva, Switzerland, the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces talks between the United States and the Soviet Union recently adjourned in a stalemate.

Reagan outlined for NATO a program called the "zero-option," in which the United

States would cancel the planned NATO missile deployment if the Soviets would agree to dismantle the missiles they already have in place.

But last week, just before the talks adjourned for a two-month recess, Reagan backed down from the extreme zero-option due to pressure from NATO leaders. Instead, he proposed an interim approach, suggesting that the two superpowers limit the number of medium-ranged missiles on both sides.

In a United Press International report last week, one U.S. official said that while the new proposal would not mention specific numbers, it would seek a verifiable plan to include equal numbers of U.S. and Soviet missiles. Under the plan, French and British missiles would not be counted, and the Soviets would not be allowed to move missiles from Europe to Asia.

United Press International reported that Reagan said Tuesday that if there is no agreement with the Kremlin leaders, the United States will go forward with plans to deploy the missiles in five European countries beginning in December.

Many NATO leaders applauded the interim proposal, saying that it was at least a small step in the direction of an agreement. But on Saturday, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko said the proposal was unacceptable and that the Soviet Union would propose counter-measures if any of the missiles are deployed.

In addition to defense problems, the lecture tonight also will focus on Western economic problems, including high unemployment in West Germany, as well as in the United States and Great Britain.

Heath told an audience at Rice University last week that the United States is too obsessed with the Soviet Union and should focus on European economic problems instead.

Tonight's program will start with an opening statement, lasting 10 to 15 minutes, from each of the three men. After the introduction questions will be presented. Members of the audience can submit questions before the program and give them to Kalb for screening.

The lecture will begin at 8 p.m. in Rudder Auditorium, and tickets are still available at the MSC Box Office.

Forum speakers

Gerald R. Ford
Gerald R. Ford, the 38th president of the United States, served 25 years in the U.S. House of Representatives.

He was nominated vice president Oct. 12, 1973, to succeed Spiro T. Agnew, who resigned. He succeeded to the presidency following the resignation of Richard M. Nixon and served from Aug. 3, 1974, to Jan. 20, 1977. He was defeated by Jimmy Carter in 1976.

Helmut Schmidt
Formerly chancellor of West Germany, Helmut Schmidt served eight years before he was ousted in 1982 when the Free Democrat Party gave its support to Helmut Kohl's Christian Democrats.

An economist, he served as joint minister of economics and finance, as finance minister and as defense minister. Schmidt was one of the founders of the Economic Summits, which began in

1975 to coordinate the policies of the major western states.

Edward Heath
Edward Heath became Britain's prime minister June 18, 1970 and served as prime minister for four years. His term saw major conflicts in northern Ireland and the first national coal miners strikes.

Heath was the driving force behind a larger British role in European affairs and counts among his greatest triumphs Britain's entry into the European Community in 1971.

Marvin Kalb
Marvin Kalb is the chief diplomatic correspondent for NBC News in Washington, D.C. In addition to covering Embassy Row as NBC's chief diplomatic correspondent, he is also the regular panelist on Meet the Press and anchor-man for NBC White Paper documentaries on foreign policy.

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Aston residents' food drive helps community

by Angel Stokes
Battalion Staff

Aston Hall residents ended their second canned food drive for the year on Friday and plan to deliver the proceeds to Twin City Mission in Bryan.

Aston Vice President Paul Cummings said Sunday that the canned food drive, held March 21 through April 1, netted two grocery sacks of canned goods, clothes and \$187 to buy more goods.

"The credit for the success of this project goes to the wing representatives and residents of Aston," Cummings said. Wing representatives went door-to-door asking residents for canned goods or money.

He said that with the money,

he and one of the residence hall advisers would buy more canned goods and then deliver them to the mission.

The dorm decided to sponsor the canned food drive again because the drive held in the fall was successful, Cummings said.

The canned food drive is one of several service projects that

Aston is involved in this semester. On April 30, Aston residents will take approximately 20 children from the local Headstart Program—a program for underprivileged children—to a local park to cook hot dogs. After the cook-out, the group will visit Pooh's Park—an amusement center in College Station.

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