Accepting Regional Zero

Nuclear Weapon Free Zones, U.S. Nonproliferation Policy and Global Security, 1957–1968

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Introduction

Although few observers realized it at the time, the late autumn of 1961 was a singular moment in the history of diplomatic efforts to stem nuclear proliferation. In the final months of that year, two draft United Nations (UN) General Assembly (GA) resolutions were proposed that embodied very different approaches to curbing the spread of nuclear weapons. The first, put forth by the Irish delegation led by Minister of External Affairs Frank Aiken, called for negotiations on a treaty that would require states possessing nuclear weapons to refrain from transferring the weapons (or the technology to make them) to states that did not possess nuclear arms. In turn, the non-nuclear weapons states would refrain from producing or acquiring such weapons. A second proposal, put forward by Swedish Foreign Minister Östen Undén, called for groups of states that did not possess nuclear weapons to pledge not to produce or acquire such weapons or to host them on their territory. On 4 December 1961 the Irish resolution was adopted unanimously, and the Swedish proposal was approved with numerous abstentions, including by the United States.[1] The fact that most states voted in favor of both resolutions suggests that they saw the two measures as complementary, but the large number of abstentions on the Swedish proposal indicates the extent of uncertainty about the approach advocated by Sweden.

The so-called Irish Resolution and Undén Plan represent two basic diplomatic strategies to prevent nuclear nonproliferation in the 1960s: international

1. Alva Myrdal, *The Game of Disarmament*, updated ed. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982), p. 167.

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and regional.[2] International approaches were designed to avoid the spread of nuclear weapons by creating universal regimes to which all states could adhere. This type of approach was reflected in the 1963 Limited Test Ban Treaty (LTBT), which prohibited the testing of nuclear weapons in the atmosphere, underwater, and in outer space. The influence of the Irish Resolution is even clearer in the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which required non-nuclear weapons states to promise not to acquire, test, or develop nuclear weapons, to abstain from testing and developing them, and to refrain from assisting others to develop them. At the same time, the NPT required nuclear weapons states to "pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament," a phrase committing them to the eventual elimination of all their nuclear weapons.

The regional approach to nonproliferation took a different tack. Recognizing that nuclear weapons, like other types of armaments, have a strong connection with regional security, this approach envisages the creation of nuclear weapon free zones (NWFZs), also sometimes referred to as "denuclearized zones," in which all states in a particular area renounce the possession and development of nuclear weapons, and also commit not to allow nuclear weapons belonging to other states to be stationed on their territory.[3] (During most of the period covered by this article, the term most commonly used was "nuclear free zone," or NFZ, but that term was soon supplanted by the more precise NWFZ, which in the 1970s was officially adopted by the UN. For the sake of clarity, NWFZ will be used throughout this article.) In addition to regional provisions, these proposals also had a global component, asking nuclear weapons states to respect the area's non-nuclear weapons status through various commitments, such as avoiding any testing, deployment, or use of nuclear weapons in the region.

On the whole, the international approach has been more influential in determining the course of global nonproliferation efforts. The NPT has long been seen as the cornerstone of the international nonproliferation regime and of U.S. nonproliferation policy.[4] Prior to 1990, only two treaties establishing

2. See William Epstein, "The Making of the Treaty of Tlatelolco," *History of International Law*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (2001), pp. 153–179.

3. NWFZs also exist in unpopulated areas, such as Antarctica, which is covered by the 1959 Antarctic Treaty, but this article is concerned solely with zones in populated areas.

4. Stuart Croft, *Strategies of Arms Control: A History and Typology* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1996), p. 53.

nuclear weapon free zones had been achieved, one in Latin America and the other in the South Pacific. Nevertheless, initiatives to create these zones had been under way in many parts of the world, particularly Africa and the Middle East, well before the end of the Cold War.[5] Since then, three more zones have been established, and another has gone into force, for a total of five regional nuclear weapons-free zones in effect as of 2015. Renewed interest also has arisen in a "weapons of mass destruction–free zone" (WMDFZ) in the Middle East, an idea that has repeatedly emerged in the context of the negotiations to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict and the controversy over the Iranian nuclear program.[6]

Reflecting the relative dominance of the international approach, most studies of the history of global nonproliferation initiatives and of U.S. non-proliferation policy have focused on international initiatives such as the LTBT and the NPT. Except for brief mentions, most histories of U.S. policy toward nuclear weapons ignore the many attempts to bring about NWFZs. Susanne Schrafstetter and Stephen Twigge, for instance, refer to the 1967 Treaty of Tlatelolco establishing a Latin American NWFZ (LANWFZ) as merely one of several "complementary" regional treaties to emerge during the Cold War.[7] Although a few works have discussed U.S. attitudes toward particular efforts to create regional NWFZs, no study up to now has considered whether the United States had a systematic policy toward such zones.[8] Attempts to explain U.S. policy on the matter have usually been facile. Some analysts simply

5. On the Treaty of Pelindaba in Africa, see Olu Adeniji, *The Treaty of Pelindaba on the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone* (Geneva: United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, 2002).

6. For general information on a WMDFZ in the Middle East, see Vilmos Cserveny et al., "Building a Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone in the Middle East: Global Non-Proliferation Regimes and Regional Experiences," Working Paper (Geneva: United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, 2004). On the issue within the context of Arab-Israeli negotiations, see, for example, Gerald M. Steinberg, "Middle East Arms Control and Regional Security," *Survival*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (January–February 1994), pp. 126–141; and Claudia Baumgart and Harald Muller, "A Nuclear Weapons–Free Zone in the Middle East: A Pie in the Sky?" *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (Winter 2004), pp. 45–58. For a more recent discussion that includes the Iranian nuclear program, see the September 2008 special issue of the journal *International Relations*.

7. Susanna Schrafstetter and Stephen Twigge, *Avoiding Armageddon: Europe, the United States, and the Struggle for Nuclear Nonproliferation, 1945–70* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004), p. 6.

8. James R. Ozinga, *The Rapacki Plan: The 1957 Proposal to Denuclearize Central Europe, and an Analysis of Its Rejection* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 1989). Malcolm Templeton's book *Standing Upright Here: New Zealand in the Nuclear Age, 1945–1990* (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2006) devotes significant attention to U.S. policy toward an NWFZ in the South Pacific. The most complete account of U.S. policy toward the development of a Latin American zone is Mónica Serrano, *Common Security in Latin America: The 1967 Treaty of Tlatelolco* (London: University of London, Institute of Latin American Studies, 1992).

speculate that U.S. policymakers were put off by the fact that proposals for NWFZs originated with the Communist bloc or nonaligned states.[9] Such explanations, though not implausible, are unconvincing because they neither account for how these zones fit into U.S. strategic calculations nor explain the continued U.S. hesitation about NWFZs even after some U.S. allies began to support such zones.

This article constitutes the first systematic examination of the development of U.S. policy toward NWFZs, situating it within the context of U.S. security interests and broader nuclear nonproliferation policy. The article focuses on the years 1957–1968, which correspond to two milestones in the history of NWFZs. In 1957 the Polish government proposed the Rapacki Plan, the first major initiative to create an NWFZ, and in 1968 the first NWFZ in an inhabited area, the 1968 Treaty of Tlatelolco in Latin America, was finalized, paving the way for it to take effect in April 1969. During those years, the United States had to develop positions on initiatives to create NWFZs in many areas of the world, including Europe, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and the South Pacific. Because this period also saw the negotiation and signature of the Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (LTBT) and the NPT, the article compares the apparent U.S. embrace of the international approach and relative lack of interest in the regional approach.

Each case of an NWFZ is in some ways unique, with varying degrees of U.S. influence on and insight into the negotiations process. However, this article shows that the U.S. government did not simply treat each case in isolation. Instead, NWFZs were frequently seen as a nonproliferation technique with its own logic. In the view of many U.S. policymakers, support for an NWFZ in one area had implications for the possibility of creating NWFZs in other areas. This suggests a general U.S. policy toward NWFZs rather than different policies toward separate NWFZ initiatives.

Many recent histories of U.S. nonproliferation policy have emphasized the broad continuity of policy during the Cold War. David Tal refers to the "nuclear disarmament dilemma," arguing that U.S. policymakers did not generally believe that nuclear disarmament was necessary but nevertheless felt forced to undertake negotiations toward this goal.[10] Shane Maddock asserts that the United States has followed a general policy of restricting the proliferation of nuclear weapons while at the same time maintaining its own nuclear

9. Templeton, *Standing Upright Here*, p. 253.

10. David Tal, *The American Nuclear Disarmament Dilemma, 1945–1963* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2008), p. xv.

superiority, a practice Maddock calls "nuclear apartheid."[11] These authors conclude that U.S. policymakers regarded the existing nuclear balance as generally favorable to their strategic goals and were relatively comfortable with the nuclear status quo. But this does not mean that U.S. officials perceived no threat from the USSR and other nuclear weapons states or from the potential spread of nuclear weapons. On the contrary, as some scholars have argued, nuclear tensions deeply affected superpower relations in complex ways, arguably contributing to the development of strategies of détente in the 1960s and early 1970s.[12] However, at least until the beginning of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks in 1969, the United States was intent on avoiding significant restrictions on key parts of its own nuclear arsenal.

I develop this general argument here by showing that during the eleven years from 1957 to 1968 the majority of U.S. policymakers viewed regional and international approaches to nuclear proliferation in largely the same way, focusing mainly on how such schemes would affect the goal of preserving U.S. strategic superiority. U.S. policymakers initially rejected nuclear weapons-free zones, for two major reasons. First, the earliest proposal for an NWFZ was intended for Europe, an area in which U.S. policymakers believed that a strong nuclear deterrent was essential to prevent Soviet aggression. Many U.S. policymakers believed that if they supported other NWFZs around the world, they might inadvertently bolster the case for an NWFZ in Europe. Hence, they opposed NWFZs in general. Second, U.S. officials saw NWFZs as a potential threat to elements of U.S. security strategy, particularly the privilege of transporting nuclear weapons around the world, known as "transit" rights, as well as the stationing of these weapons in many Third World countries. Over time, the U.S. position on at least the first matter became more flexible, reflecting an increasing concern within the U.S. government over the actual and potential spread of nuclear weapons throughout the world. As this perception changed, subsequent U.S. administrations came to realize that support for NWFZs in some areas did not necessarily mean the same approach would be adopted in other areas. However, U.S. policymakers still sought to preserve what they saw as essential elements of U.S. security strategy, particularly transit rights, in these regional arrangements, even if this meant the possibility of undermining the whole project.

11. Shane J. Maddock, *Nuclear Apartheid: The Quest for American Atomic Supremacy from World War II to the Present* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

12. See, for example, Andreas Wenger and Jeremi Suri, "At the Crossroads of Diplomatic and Social History: The Nuclear Revolution, Dissent and Détente," *Cold War History*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (2001), pp. 1–42.

The Eisenhower Administration Rejects the NWFZ Concept

The first initiative for a regional NWFZ came in response to the nuclear arms standoff in Europe. Much of the tensions of the early Cold War focused on the status of Central Europe, particularly that of divided Germany, the main military line of confrontation between the Eastern and Western blocs. The increasing economic burden of U.S. troop deployments in Europe and the strain they placed on the U.S. military budget induced the Eisenhower administration to give ever greater emphasis to the U.S. strategic nuclear deterrent.[13] At the same time, other countries also began to rely on nuclear weapons as the most effective means of bolstering their military capabilities, enhancing their prestige, and increasing their diplomatic power. The Soviet Union detonated its first fission bomb in 1949, followed by a two-stage hydrogen bomb in 1954. Britain tested a nuclear weapon in October 1952. The United States deployed tactical nuclear weapons in occupied West Germany as early as 1953.[14] The administration also embraced a policy of "nuclear sharing," which would have made U.S. nuclear arms available to European allies in time of war.[15] By 1957, defense planners with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) were making clear that they intended to train West German soldiers in the use of tactical nuclear weapons, even if the warheads themselves would remain under U.S. control.[16]

In the mid-1950s, international public opinion began to force the Western and Eastern blocs to begin more serious discussions of agreements to limit nuclear arms. Many of the proposals from this period fell into the international category, such as a Soviet proposal for a universal ban on testing nuclear weapons. However, the two powers also began to consider the possibility of regional arms control measures that would affect only a more limited part of the globe. To counter Eisenhower's Open Skies proposal at the 1955 Geneva summit Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov introduced a plan that would have opened up the two Germanys and "all or some neighboring states" to inspections. At the London Disarmament Talks in 1956–1957, a Soviet

13. John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 146.

14. See Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (New York: Penguin, 2005), p. 248.

15. Marc Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement, 1945–1963* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), p. 146.

16. Mark N. Gose, "The New Germany and Nuclear Weapons," *Airpower Journal*, Special Edition (1996), p. 68.

proposal called for a regime of weapons inspections on a trial basis in Central Europe, including the two Germanys and neighboring states. As part of an unauthorized memorandum, later rejected and disavowed by the administration, Eisenhower's disarmament adviser Harold Stassen suggested creating a limited zone of inspection in Europe that would apply to both conventional and nuclear weapons. At the UN in August 1957, the Soviet envoy presented a paper that included a proposal to denuclearize both Germanys, to which the United States responded by proposing a wider zone of inspection without a denuclearized area.[17] Although the two sides did not reach agreement at this time, these examples demonstrate that they were at least considering options for a localized zone at the center of the European conflict that would exclude certain types of armaments, including nuclear weapons.

These maneuvers provided the context for the first NWFZ proposal. Addressing the UN on 2 October 1957, Polish Foreign Minister Adam Rapacki proposed that if East and West Germany agreed to forgo nuclear weapons, Poland would abstain from them as well. In a seemingly coordinated move, the Czechoslovak delegate announced that his country, too, would be willing to commit to this agreement. In this somewhat roundabout manner, the first proposal for a denuclearized zone was made, covering the territory of East and West Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. At least initially, the proposal apparently did not attract much high-level U.S. attention. The Eisenhower administration's archival records contain no indication that the administration discussed the plan at a high level after the initial debate at the UN.[18] Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and Rapacki considered the plan on 16 October during the latter's visit to Washington, DC. Rapacki explained that the German question was at the core of Polish foreign policy. Dulles remained noncommittal but did not explicitly reject the initiative.[19]

Soon, several other factors raised the profile of the NWFZ idea. In a series of widely broadcast lectures in the United Kingdom, former U.S. diplomat George Kennan presented arguments for "separating geographically" the nuclear forces and even the "armed forces" of the superpowers in "the heart of

17. On these initiatives, see Tal, *The American Nuclear Disarmament Dilemma*, pp. 82, 92, 106–107, 119.

18. I found no evidence of any memorandum or other document from October 1957 that discusses the Polish plan in the relevant archival collections at the Eisenhower Presidential Library. See, for example, Dwight David Eisenhower Library (DDEL), Whitman File, DDE Diary Series, Box 27–8 (folders on October 1957); and DDEL, Whitman File, Dulles-Herter Series, Box 9 (folders on October 1957).

19. "Memorandum of Conversation," 16 October 1957, in U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1955–1957, Vol. XXV, Item 271, p. 674 (hereinafter referred to as *FRUS*, with appropriate year and volume).

the continent." This would mean, in effect, the demilitarization of Central Europe.[20] Kennan's lectures drew more attention to Rapacki's proposal, though Kennan himself specifically called the plan unacceptable.[21] Moreover, the Soviet Union formally backed the Polish idea, presenting the idea of a Central European NWFZ to the United States as part of a letter from Prime Minister Nikolai Bulganin to Eisenhower on 10 December 1957.[22]

Although U.S. officials generally had little interest in these proposed security arrangements, two aspects did concern them. First, the proposals clearly had made an impact on public opinion. Combined with the increased public attention that the plan was receiving, at least some U.S. allies began to consider the merits of a nuclear-free zone in Central Europee. In a letter to President Eisenhower on 25 December, British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan observed that the Polish proposal "offers certain advantages," though he did not indicate what those might be. Discussing the Eastern bloc, Macmillan said it was "rather embarrassing that they . . . have, through the Polish proposals, proposed the nuclear demilitarization of large areas of Europe with—also in theory—control and inspection."[23] Whatever Macmillan may have thought of the proposal's security implications, he clearly saw that it had broad appeal, which in turn made the West seem as though it had few ideas to offer in response.

Second, the proposal offered the possibility of promoting what might have been an independent Polish foreign policy initiative. Historians still debate whether the plan was merely a Soviet initiative disguised as Polish or an independent Polish proposal. Some suspect that the Rapacki Plan may have been "an insidious attempt by the East to beat the West at its own game" of disarmament.[24] Others see it as a genuinely Polish proposal, launched

20. See George Kennan, "Lecture 3: The Problem of Eastern and Central Europe," *The Reith Lectures*, BBC Radio 4, 24 November 1957; and George Kennan, "Lecture 4: The Military Problem," *The Reith Lectures*, BBC Radio 4, 1 December 1957, available online at http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00h9lk5.

21. Piotr Wandycz, "Adam Rapacki and the Search for European Security," in *The Diplomats, 1939–1979*, ed. Gordon A. Craig and Francis L. Loewenheim (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 297–298; and Maddock, *Nuclear Apartheid*, p. 127.

22. See Bulganin to Eisenhower, 10 December 1957, in U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, *Background Documents on Germany, 1944–1959* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1959), pp. 220–226. See also Note, 14 February 1958, in *Background Documents on Germany*, pp. 239–242.

23. Macmillan to Eisenhower, 25 December 1957, in DDEL, Whitman File, International Series, Box 23, "Macmillan, President, Dec. 1, 1957–May 30, 1957 (1)"; and Macmillan to Eisenhower, 2 January 1958 in *FRUS*, 1958–1960, Vol. VII, Item 336. See also Tal, *The American Nuclear Disarmament Dilemma*, p. 122.

24. Albert Legault and Michel Fortmann, *A Diplomacy of Hope: Canada and Disarmament, 1945–1988* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's Press, 1992), p. 160.

merely in coordination with the Soviet Union.[25] If it was an independent proposal, a positive U.S. attitude might have encouraged Poland to pursue a more independent policy from the Soviet Union. According to some sources, Eisenhower and U.S. Ambassador to Poland Jacob Beam initially thought the proposal might have some advantages, presumably along these lines.[26] Beam later recalled that he was "half-persuaded that we might gain something by showing interest and probing possibilities for reducing conventional forces and instituting inspection and controls."[27] However, the majority view within the U.S. administration was expressed in a State Department analysis that saw the initiative as an evolution of Molotov's earlier plan presented in Geneva in October 1955, and thus as a Soviet proposal in disguise.[28]

Eisenhower's views are more difficult to decipher. Macmillan's letter of 25 December 1957indicates that he believed the Rapacki Plan had intrinsic merit, but Eisenhower seems to have focused on the public image problem that the proposal created for the United States. In the margin next to the prime minister's observation that the plan was "embarrassing," Eisenhower wrote "propaganda problem."[29] Evidently, Eisenhower thought Macmillan was worried merely about the public relations aspect of this issue, rather than any actual need to reach some agreement over Central Europe. In a separate set of comments, the president noted some possible advantages of the plan, but observed that "it would certainly be most difficult for SACEUR [Supreme Allied Commander Europe] to establish an area in which his troops were armed in one fashion and another area employing different weapons." He insisted that "my immediate reaction is that the disengagement theory," as Kennan's ideas were known, "should not be part of any new proposals that we might advance."[30] Thus, even if Eisenhower was attracted to some of these ideas, he was disinclined to pursue them for military-strategic reasons.

Other than Beam's suggestion that the Rapacki Plan could be a useful device for splitting Poland from the Soviet Union, the closest thing to sympathy for the Rapacki Plan within the U.S. government appears to be Stassen's interest in an inspection zone in Central Europe. In early 1958, the National Security

25. See Jacob D. Beam, *Multiple Exposure: An American Ambassador's Unique Perspective on East-West Issues* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1978), p. 94; and Wandycz, "Adam Rapacki and the Search for European Security," p. 289ff.

26. Maddock, *Nuclear Apartheid*, p. 127.

27. Beam, *Multiple Exposure*, p. 96.

28. Report, 3 January 1958, in Digital National Security Archive (DNSA), Item BC00055.

29. Macmillan to Eisenhower, 25 December 1957.

30. Memorandum, from Eisenhower to Dulles, 3 January 1958, in *The Presidential Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963), Doc. 508.

Council (NSC) met to consider three disarmament proposals put forward by Stassen: (1) the installation of inspection stations in the United States and USSR; (2) the establishment of an inspection zone in Central Europe and the western Soviet Union; and (3) an inspection zone in the Arctic Circle. With the exception of U.S. Ambassador to the UN Henry Cabot Lodge and (to some extent) the president himself, the NSC roundly condemned Stassen's proposals.[31] Following this meeting, in a letter to the president, Stassen noted that his call for an inspection zone in Central Europe, if accepted by the Soviet Union, "would facilitate prospects for the further successful negotiation of a reunited free Germany combined with a Central European zone without atomic weapons and with limited armed forces."[32] The aim, therefore, was clear. Stassen hoped to contribute to the creation of a broader denuclearized zone as part of a neutralized, peaceful Central Europe, even if this was not one of his immediate proposals.

The net reaction of the Eisenhower administration to the NWFZ concept was thus decidedly negative. In late January 1958, the State Department informed its diplomatic posts that the U.S. attitude toward the Polish proposal was "heavily negative" because, "despite surface attraction, it poses totally unacceptable risks." Not only would the plan undermine NATO's nuclear deterrent against the Soviet Union's "overwhelming conventional forces," but U.S. public opinion would not "tolerate [the] maintenance [of] significant U.S. forces in Germany without such weapons."[33] These security considerations were the decisive factor for U.S. policymakers.

Even so, the Polish government continued to push the idea of a denuclearized zone. On 14 February 1958, Rapacki sent a proposal that would become known as the First Rapacki Plan to the superpowers and European governments. The plan contained elements designed to address some Western fears, including commitments by the superpowers not to be the first to use nuclear weapons against countries in the zone, the creation of inspection arrangements, and a provision that would ostensibly allow West Germany to adhere to the agreement without recognizing East Germany.[34] The State Department requested that the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) undertake

31. Memorandum, "Discussions . . . ," 7 January 1958, in DDEL, Whitman File, NSC Series, Box 9, "350th Meeting of the NSC, Jan. 6, 1958."

32. Stassen to Eisenhower, 14 January 1958, in DDEL, Whitman File, Administration Series, Box 35, "Harold Stassen, 1958."

33. Telegram, 21 January 1958, in *FRUS*, 1958–1960, Vol. X-I, Item 1.

34. The text of the proposal is available in U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, *United States Documents on Disarmament* [*DOD*], *1945–1959*, 1960, Vol. 2, pp. 944–948. See also Wandycz, "Adam Rapacki and the Search for European Security," pp. 301–302.

an official assessment of Rapacki's proposal. Unsurprisingly, the JCS opposed discussing the project with the Poles, in part because of its implications for the military balance in Europe, but also, at least according to the official history, "because focusing on this aspect might enable the Poles to enhance the apparent worth of their plan before world opinion."[35] In May 1958, at the State Department's behest, Ambassador Beam informed the Polish deputy foreign minister that although he felt the plan might have been worth pursuing, the administration opposed it on the grounds that it "would perpetuate the basic cause of tension in Europe by accepting the continuation of the division of Germany," while leaving the Soviet Union with overwhelming conventional superiority.[36] Thus, the argument that won the day was strategic: the plan would not resolve the core problem of Germany's division and would deprive the West of a crucial part of its deterrent force.

However, the Soviet bloc's efforts to promote a central European NWFZ did not end there. By the fall of 1958, the Polish government had developed a second plan that sought to address Western objections to the original idea. The new version involved a first stage in which the four countries would agree not to produce nuclear weapons and the superpowers would agree not to provide them, followed by a second stage in which levels of conventional forces in these countries would be frozen. The State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) considered the new plan a "major propaganda weapon" aimed at European audiences.[37] Because this version was never formally submitted to the United States, the administration did not offer a response.[38] However, U.S. officials still made clear that they would not accept such a plan. During a meeting in Washington, Dulles told Rapacki that "nuclear warfare can break out anywhere and that an attempt to make arrangements for only limited areas would not stop war." In fact, Dulles said to a seemingly shocked Rapacki, "an army equipped with nuclear weapons is less likely to start trouble than one that is not."[39] Such comments underscore the skepticism toward nuclear arms control that prevailed at the highest levels of the U.S. government.

Following this second Western rejection, an international crisis in November 1958 over the status of Berlin ended any chance of another immediate

35. Byron R. Fairchild and Walter S. Poole, *History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, Vol. 7: *The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy, 1957–1960* (Washington, DC: Office of Joint History, Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2000), p. 118.

36. Note, Beam to Winiewicz, 3 May 1958, in *DOD, 1945–1959*, Vol. II, p. 1023; and Beam, *Multiple Exposure*, pp. 96–97.

37. Memorandum, 6 November 1958, in *FRUS*, 1958–1960, Vol. X-I, Item 12.

38. Report, NSC 5808/1, 11 February 1959, in *FRUS*, 1958–1960, Vol. X–2, Item 64.

39. Memorandum, 6 October 1959, in *FRUS*, 1958–60, Vol. X–2, Item 86.

sequel, though the idea of a Central European NWFZ remained relevant. As Vladimir Zubok has noted, many scholars of the Berlin crisis have attributed the Soviet actions at least in part to a desire to prevent West Germany from acquiring nuclear weapons.[40] In negotiations to end the crisis, the Soviet Union sought commitments that the West Germans would not develop an independent nuclear force. Although most Western leaders rejected the proposal, Prime Minister Macmillan remained open to it. During a January 1959 trip to Moscow, Macmillan even discussed elements of a revised Rapacki Plan with the Soviet Union, infuriating West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer.[41] Eisenhower, Dulles, and other high U.S. officials saw Macmillan as "weak, not just militarily but morally as well."[42] By March, Macmillan had changed his tune, telling Eisenhower that when he had talked about a "zone of inspection," he had meant a general limitation on arms rather than a "great neutral no man's land which would constitute a dangerous vacuum under modern conditions of war." Instead, he was "trying to . . . quell the appeal of the Rapacki Plan which had caught the imagination of many unsophisticated people."[43]

Although the NWFZ idea had been conceived with respect to Europe, countries in other parts of the world soon began to consider whether such zones could be created in their regions. By the end of the 1950s, the so-called Third World had become increasingly concerned about nuclear proliferation. Two main factors drove this. First, some Western states began to test or deploy nuclear weapons in other regions around the world, angering the residents of these areas, who saw the testing as an environmental hazard, a security threat, and a violation of their sovereignty. Second, some states in the developing world were themselves contemplating the pursuit of nuclear weapons at the expense of their neighbors, who presumably could be targeted. These two factors sparked nascent movements for the establishment of NWFZs in various areas of the world.

The first region outside Europe to consider an NWFZ was Africa, where newly decolonized states used the issue of nuclear testing as a rallying cry against French policy on the continent.[44] In early 1958, French officials began to plan openly for tests of a nuclear explosive device in the territory of Algeria.

40. For a review of the literature, see Vladislav M. Zubok, *Khrushchev and the Berlin Crisis (1958–62)* (Washington, DC: Cold War International History Project, 1993), pp. 5–6.

41. Schrafstetter and Twigge, *Avoiding Armageddon*, p. 98.

42. Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, p. 266.

43. Memorandum of Conversation, 20 March 1959, in *FRUS*, 1958–1960, Vol. VII, Item 359.

44. See Colette Barbier, "L'Afrique face aux premières expérimentations nucléaires françaises," *Cahiers du Centre d'études d'histoire de la Défense*, Vol. 8 (1998), pp. 113–119ff.

In August 1959, Morocco asked the UNGA to discuss the question of nuclear testing in Africa, and three months later it introduced a resolution, which eventually passed, criticizing the French tests.[45] After the French nuclear test in Algeria on 13 February 1960, the first of four over the next year, African states called for a general ban on nuclear testing on their continent. On 1 November 1960, African nations put forward a proposal in the UNGA's First Committee outlawing nuclear attacks anywhere on the continent.[46] On 5 December, several African states presented a draft resolution calling for all states to refrain from testing, storing, or using nuclear weapons in Africa and to regard Africa as a "nuclear free zone."[47] This resolution was never voted on, but it set an important precedent.

Throughout this period, the United States quietly opposed the African initiatives. Publicly, U.S. representatives justified their position on scientific grounds. During the debates at the First Committee in November 1959, the U.S. representative at the UN announced that although the United States supported a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing, U.S. tests of weapons near Las Vegas, Nevada, indicated that French testing was safe and that African concerns were misplaced.[48] In private, the United States and Great Britain worried about alienating either the French or the developing world.[49] But after the African states proposed a ban on nuclear testing, the U.S. State Department informed its embassies that the United States opposed the idea because "there is no inspection provision" and because "its effect is to attack the Western nuclear deterrent without condemning or stemming Communist aggression through conventional armaments." U.S. officials also worried that a nuclear-free zone in Africa could pose problems for U.S. bases in Morocco and Libya, in addition to "setting a precedent for other regions of the world." This was probably a reference to Europe, where the United States wanted to prevent the Rapacki Plan from gaining support. However, the dispatch acknowledged that U.S. officials had not yet "fully explored" the issue.[50]

In both the European and African cases, the Eisenhower administration had been determined to resist NWFZ initiatives, believing that such zones

45. See Mervyn O'Driscoll, "Explosive Challenge: Diplomatic Triangles, the United Nations, and the Problem of French Nuclear Testing, 1959–1960," *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (Winter 2009), pp. 43–47.

46. U.N. Doc. A/C.1/L.254, 1 November 1960, in *DOD, 1960*, pp. 343–344.

47. Draft Resolution, A/C.1/L.264, 5 December 1960, in *DOD, 1960*, pp. 365–366.

48. "U.S. Remarks on Sahara," *The New York Times*, 10 November 1959, p. 10.

49. See O'Driscoll, "Explosive Challenge," pp. 31–32.

50. "U.S. Arms Policy for Africa," 25 November 1960, in *FRUS*, 1958–1960, Vol. XIV, Item 38.

would undermine the U.S. and allied defense posture. In Europe, the United States saw nuclear weapons as a key element of the military balance between East and West, which would be disrupted by an NWFZ. In Africa, nuclear weapons were not necessarily part of the balance of power, but the United States still wanted to preserve the possibility of transporting such weapons across African territory, while also striking a balance between relations with France and with the new African governments. Not until the Kennedy administration did U.S. officials begin to see merit in these initiatives.

Kennedy Moves toward Limited Acceptance of NWFZs

In the 1960s, the United States gradually developed a more positive attitude toward NWFZs. The Kennedy administration's commitment to arms control and nonproliferation has long been seen as greater than that of his predecessor, though several recent works have downplayed these differences.[51] As a senator, John F. Kennedy supported Adlai Stevenson's advocacy of a moratorium on nuclear weapons testing in 1956.[52] As president, Kennedy hoped to reinvigorate efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation that had faded in the last years of the Eisenhower administration. At least for a brief moment during the Cuban missile crisis, the Kennedy administration for the first time actively urged the creation of an NWFZ, though it would be done primarily with the goal of getting Soviet missiles out of Cuba. After the successful resolution of the crisis, U.S. enthusiasm for the concept dwindled along with the urgency of the situation.

Despite Kennedy's sympathy for nonproliferation, he had serious reservations about NWFZs, which stemmed directly from fears about the Rapacki Plan. Soon after he took office, the Berlin crisis that had calmed somewhat during the last year of the Eisenhower administration flared up again. As tensions cooled, the Polish government revived its proposal for an NWFZ, but the United States again rejected the plan, arguing that it did not address weapons in the Soviet Union and would upset the military balance.[53] The Kennedy administration continued to believe that the Soviet Union would insist upon an NWFZ or some other nonproliferation measure as a price for

51. See, for example, Tal, *The American Nuclear Disarmament Dilemma*, pp. 165, 169; and Maddock, *Nuclear Apartheid*, p. 145.

52. Maddock, *Nuclear Apartheid*, p. 146.

53. See *Department of State Bulletin*, 23 April 1962, pp. 664–665.

an agreement over Berlin.[54] This, in turn, made the administration skeptical about the NWFZ idea in general. Kennedy told a press conference in March 1962 that he doubted whether NWFZs would make a difference at a time when "you have a missile that can carry a bomb 5,000 miles."[55] In essence, his initial concerns were the same as those of the Eisenhower administration.

Thus, the Kennedy administration during its first year strongly opposed regional NWFZ initiatives around the world. Indeed, the administration was wary about endorsing *any* restrictions on nuclear proliferation. The first significant U.S. step toward addressing the issue of nuclear nonproliferation came at the UNGA in the fall of 1961, when the Irish and Swedish resolutions were proposed. The delegations from many NATO countries, including the United States, worried that a blanket commitment to nuclear nonproliferation would undermine the alliance's nuclear strategy, which sought to maintain the option of creating a so-called Multilateral Force (MLF) that would give NATO members access to nuclear weapons under U.S. control.[56] The United States came to support the Irish resolution only after gaining assurance that it would allow nuclear weapons sharing as long as the United States maintained formal "control" over the weapons.[57]

The U.S. government was strongly disinclined to support the Undén Plan, whose author explicitly cited the Rapacki Plan as a model for countries around the world.[58] State Department officials felt that a negative vote would be "in the best interests of the alliance" by averting a threat to NATO's nuclear arrangements and preventing the emergence of a "non-nuclear club," a concept that would work against U.S. interests.[59] Only after learning that some NATO members, including the Nordic countries and Canada, would not oppose the resolution, did the Kennedy administration decide to forgo a veto and simply abstain in order to avoid any public impression of disunity in the alliance.[60] Still, during the deliberations, the chief U.S. delegate to

54. Maddock, *Nuclear Apartheid*, p. 164.

55. "Transcript of the President's News Conference," *The New York Times*, 8 March 1962.

56. Tal, *The American Nuclear Disarmament Dilemma*, pp. 208–209; and Maddock, *Nuclear Apartheid*, pp. 172–173. On the reluctance of NATO members, see Telegram, Paris to New York, 12 October 1961, in U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Record Group (RG) 59, Central Files (CF) 1960–3, Box 1421, File 700.5611/10–261.

57. See Telegram, Paris TOPOL 499, 6 October 1961, in NARA, RG 59, CF 1960–3, Box 1421, File 700.5611/10–261.

58. See Statement, 17 November 1961, in *DOD, 1961*, pp. 632–634.

59. Telegram, 21 November 1961, in *FRUS*, 1961–1963, Vol. VII, Item 97.

60. Telegram, State 9817, 21 November 1961, in NARA, RG 59, CF 1960–3, Box 1422, File 700.5611/10–1861; and Telegram, POLTO 718, 28 November 1967, in NARA, RG 59, CF 1960–3, Box 1422, File 700.5611/10–1861. See also Myrdal, *The Game of Disarmament*, p. 167.

the UN maintained that although the United States shared the Undén Plan's objectives, the arrangements laid out in the plan were not the "best approach to this subject." The U.S. envoy stressed that the plan's "subject matter touches the very center of defensive arrangements in the crisis-ridden world today."[61]

U.S. policymaker opposed other efforts to create NWFZs, including in the Third World. In 1961 the African countries began publicly discussing a new initiative to create an NWFZ in their region. The U.S. Joint Chiefs opposed this, arguing in a memorandum to the secretary of defense that "any adoption of atom-free/arms control measures would simply cause the [Sino-Soviet] Bloc to intensify its political, economic and cultural efforts in attempting to make further gains on the African continent" and weakening U.S. military capabilities.[62] In November 1961, African states again proposed a resolution in the UN General Assembly First Committee that requested member-states to abstain from nuclear testing on African territory.[63] The U.S. delegation to the UN originally claimed it would not support the proposals because they would create an unverified zone and would undermine the right of countries to use nuclear weapons in self-defense.[64] In addition, the Kennedy administration was concerned because the resolution called for a prohibition on the transport of nuclear weapons through Africa. This resolution, UNGA 1652 (XVI), passed, but the United States and many other countries abstained.[65]

By early May 1962, U.S. officials were urging President Kennedy to accept the creation of NWFZs, at least in some areas. In a letter to the president calling for a test ban treaty, Ambassador Stevenson advocated reconsideration of the administration's erstwhile blanket opposition to NWFZs, arguing that the United States "should be able to distinguish between areas where nuclear defense is critically important to us and areas where it is not." He noted that the U.S. government had "suffered badly" at the UNGA in 1961 because it did not support the proposal for an African zone.[66] In response a few weeks later, Kennedy agreed that "if the countries in a given geographic area desire

61. Statement, 30 November 1961, in *DOD, 1961*, pp. 691–692.

62. Memorandum, from JCS to McNamara, 28 April 1961, in *FRUS*, 1961–1963, Vol. XXI, Item 191.

63. Resolution, 16th Session, A/C.1/L.291, 7 November 1961, in AccessUN. A coalition of African and Asian states submitted a second, identical resolution. See A/C.1/292, 7 November 1961, in AccessUN.

64. Statement of U.S. Representative to First Committee, 10 November 1951, in *DOD, 1961*, pp. 590–591. See also Telegram, USUN 7051, 15 November 1961, in NARA, RG 59, CF 1960–3, Box 507, File 321.1/10–1761.

65. UNGA Resolution 1652 (XVI), 24 November 1961, in AccessUN database.

66. Stevenson to Kennedy, 10 May 1962, in *FRUS*, 1961–1963, Vol. VII, Item 181.

to establish such a zone, the United States should respect their wishes."[67] However, British Ambassador to the United Nations Sir Patrick Dean urged Kennedy not to embrace NWFZs. Dean did not think support for such a zone in Africa was strong and pointed out that Nigeria would not support it if South Africa did not participate. Dean also said he had received a "personal letter" from Italian President Antonio Segni asking that the matter not be brought up because the Italian government would then have to support it in order to maintain Socialist support for the government.[68] Once again, U.S. officials had to decide between appealing to Third World sympathies and calming the concerns of U.S. allies. The Kennedy administration, like its predecessor, did not change its official position.

Not until the Cuban missile crisis did the United States actively support a specific NWFZ initiative. The notion of an NWFZ in Latin America did not originate during the crisis, but the crisis was the catalyst that made the concept possible.[69] The idea was first proposed by a Brazilian representative to the UN on 20 September 1962, several weeks before the United States and the world found out that the Soviet Union had secretly deployed nuclear weapons on Cuban territory, barely 90 miles from the U.S. coastline.[70] Although U.S. officials had been concerned about nuclear proliferation in Latin America in the 1950s and early 1960s, the United States did not react to the Brazilian proposal at the time it was made.[71]

During the Cuban missile crisis, some U.S. officials came to see a Latin American denuclearized zone as part of a possible solution to the standoff. To get rid of the missiles, many in the Kennedy administration believed they would have to concede something to Cuba or the Soviet Union, or perhaps to both.[72] Two potential options were the removal of U.S. Jupiter missiles from Turkey and Italy, and the designation of Latin America as an NWFZ.[73] High-level State Department officials urged Secretary of State Dean Rusk not to recognize any relationship between the missiles in Cuba and those in Turkey and Italy. Instead, he should discuss an NWFZ in Latin America if

67. Kennedy to Stevenson, 23 May 1962, in *FRUS*, 1961–1963, Vol. VII, Item 186.

68. Memorandum of Conversation, 14 May 1962, in *FRUS*, 1961–1963, Vol. VII, Item 182.

69. See, e.g., Adeniji, *The Treaty of Pelindaba*, p. 18.

70. "Big Four Talks on Nuclear Tests Are Urged by Brazilian at U.N.," *The New York Times*, 21 September 1962.

71. For information on U.S. attempts to block the development of a Brazilian nuclear program in the 1950s, see Serrano, *Common Security in Latin America*, pp. 13–14.

72. See Memorandum, "Arms Control Proposals Responsive to the Cuban Situation," 25 October 1962, in NARA, RG 59, CF 1960–3, Box 1423, File 700.5611/9–162.

73. Internal Paper, "Scenario," 26 October 1962, in DNSA, Item CC01376.

the United States negotiated at all.[74] However, U.S. support for the zone was to be contingent on Cuba's participation.[75] Other officials had doubts about even that idea. The JCS opposed offering an NWFZ because it would not "promptly remove the missiles" that were already in Cuba.[76] The INR bureau at the State Department warned that the Soviet Union could try to manipulate the negotiations over an NWFZ to keep the Soviet missiles in Cuba for some time.[77] In addition, the idea sparked fears among some U.S. allies in Europe that it would lead to support for such zones elsewhere. French Ambassador Hervé Alphand worried that U.S. support for an NWFZ in Latin America might give credence to plans for zones in Europe and Africa, which France opposed.[78] The crisis ended up being resolved not through an NWFZ but through a Soviet promise on 28 October to remove the missiles in Cuba in exchange for the unpublicized removal of the Jupiter missiles from Turkey within a few months.[79]

Even after this agreement, however, the United States initially continued to encourage the creation of a LANWFZ. Brazil introduced a resolution in the UNGA First Committee on 8 November, this time not containing any reference to the transport of weapons.[80] The Brazilian ambassador to the United States officially asked for U.S. support.[81] Although the resolution mentioned the African resolution of the previous year which the United States had declined to back, the Kennedy administration still supported it, seeing it as a way to verify the absence of nuclear weapons in Cuba, as well as to set a precedent for Africa to follow—a turnaround on that issue, as well.[82] However, the JCS still opposed the idea, citing the precedent that the zone would set

74. Tyler, Rostow, and Talbot to Secretary, Memorandum, "Cuba," 25 October 1962, in DNSA, Item CC01306. See also ACDA, Memorandum, "Denuclearized Zones as Related to the Cuban Situation," 25 October 1962, in DNSA, Item CC01288; and Memorandum, from Harriman to Undersecretary, 26 October 1962, in DNSA, Item CC01414.

75. Draft Cable, "Evaluation of Brazilian Denuclearization Proposal," 26 October 1962, in DNSA, Item CC01402.

76. Memorandum, from Joint Chiefs of Staff to Secretary of Defense, 26 October 1962, in DNSA, Item CC01433.

77. Hilsman to Secretary, Research Memorandum, 26 October 1962, in DNSA, Item CC01416.

78. Memcon, Foster and Alphand, "Denuclearized Zones," 30 October 1962, in *FRUS*, 1961–1963, Vol. VII, Item 240; and Telegram, 30 October 1962, in DNSA, Item CC1700.

79. See, e.g., Michael Dobbs, *One Minute to Midnight* (New York: Arrow Books, 2009), pp. 233–258, 307.

80. Draft Resolution, 8 November 1962, in DNSA, Item CC02100.

81. Memorandum, 7 November 1962, in DNSA, Item CC02067.

82. Memorandum, from Rusk to Kennedy, 10 November 1962, DNSA, Item CO02220; and Report to the File, "Post-Cuba Negotiations with USSR," 11 November 1962, in U.S. Department of State Electronic Reading Room.

for other areas (such as Europe), the opposition of U.S. allies, and the low likelihood of reaching acceptable verification arrangements.[83] Moreover, Cuba refused to support the resolution, arguing that any NWFZ should include a ban on nuclear weapons in Puerto Rico and the Panama Canal, as well as the elimination of the U.S. military base at Guantánamo.[84] The Soviet Union backed Cuba's position, arguing that it could not support a resolution that allowed the United States to keep bases in Latin America.[85] By the end of the month, the U.S. State Department had concluded that there was "no point in pushing this hard until there is some indication that Cuba will agree to become a part of it."[86] Thus, no resolution was passed at this time.

Despite the failure of the Brazilian resolution, efforts to create a Latin American NWFZ continued, as Mexico took the lead in developing the Brazilian proposal. In April 1963, five Latin American countries issued a statement calling for negotiations toward an NWFZ in their region, a first step that was followed by a series of conferences on a LANWFZ.[87] Already at this time, Latin American countries were beginning to inform the United States and other parties of their initiative. In early May 1963 a U.S. official told the Mexican ambassador that the United States "strongly favored" such zones but that this was a "preliminary" position and the zones should ideally include as many countries as possible and also include provisions for verification and inspection. In addition, the United States wanted the opportunity to "consider any language in [the] proposed agreement which might affect US rights [to] use [the] Panama Canal for [the] transit [of] nuclear weapons."[88] Behind the scenes, U.S. officials, even those who supported the idea of NWFZs, were much more cautious. For instance, Adlai Stevenson, while noting that NWFZ initiatives "could be as important as [the] ending of nuclear tests," thought it would be a mistake to support a zone in Latin America unless it included Cuba.[89]

83. Chairman's Talking Points for Meeting with the President, 16 November 1962, in NARA, JFK Assassination Records, Item #202–10001–10243.

84. See Statement, Lechuga, 16 November 1962, in *DOD, 1962*, pp. 1057–1058.

85. Memorandum, 30 November 1962, in DNSA, Item CU01294.

86. Cable, 16 November 1976, in DNSA, Item CU01156.

87. See Epstein, "The Making of the Treaty of Tlatelolco," p. 158ff. The conferences were held throughout the remainder of 1963.

88. State 1878, 2 May 1963, in John F. Kennedy Library (JFKL), National Security Files (NSF), Departments and Agencies, Box 257, Folder: ACDA Disarmament Cables, 5/63–6/63.

89. New York 4060, 6 May 1963, in JFKL, NSF, Departments and Agencies, Box 257, Folder: ACDA Disarmament Cables, 5/63–6/63.

Although the United States encouraged the Latin American initiative, numerous proposals for NWFZs were made around the same time concerning areas where the United States did not want such a zone. One example was the South Pacific, which included Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands. In March 1962, after failing to reach agreement with the Soviet Union over a comprehensive test ban treaty, President Kennedy announced that the United States would soon resume atmospheric nuclear testing at its Pacific Ocean testing grounds.[90] Later that year, in response to this renewed testing, the Australian Labor Party (at the time in opposition) proposed an NWFZ in the South Pacific region.[91] However, the ruling governments in Australia and New Zealand rejected the idea. Proposals made in early 1963 concerned areas that were even worse from the U.S. perspective. In May 1963, Finnish President Urho Kekkonen called for the creation of an NWFZ in the Scandinavian countries, echoing the Undén Plan of 1961. As Jüssi Hanhimäki has written, "Washington scorned" the idea.[92] That same month, the Soviet Union proposed an NWFZ in the Mediterranean, including Italy, which the United States also quickly rejected.[93] From the U.S. perspective, Moscow was trying to chip away at the continent's periphery, having failed to bring about a zone in the heart of Europe.

The increasing frequency of these proposals, as well as their expanding geographical range, challenged the United States to come up with a more consistent position on the NWFZ concept. Vetoing the possibility of NWFZs in Central Europe and Scandinavia was relatively easy, but dismissing proposals for other areas was more difficult. Moreover, an increasing number of people within the U.S. government saw potential advantages in creating such zones. For instance, during the Cuban missile crisis, the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) had seen the benefits of these zones in areas such as the Middle East, where it thought that an NWFZ could "have a real stabilizing effect" on the geopolitical situation.[94] In addition, because NWFZs were popular among neutral countries, U.S. support for the idea could help

90. James E. Goodby, "The Limited Test Ban Negotiations, 1954–63: How a Negotiator Viewed the Proceedings," *International Negotiation*, Vol. 10 (2005), pp. 393–394.

91. Georges Fischer, "La zone dénucléarisée du Pacifique Sud," *Annuaire français de droit international*, Vol. 31 (1985), p. 28.

92. On this proposal and the U.S. rejection, see Jüssi Hanhimäki, *Scandinavia and the United States: An Insecure Friendship* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1997), p. 114.

93. Note from the United States to the Soviet Union, 24 June 1963, in *DOD, 1963*, 187–193, pp. 242–243.

94. ACDA, "Denuclearized Zones as Related to the Cuban Situation," 25 October 1962, in DNSA, Item CC01288.

to curry favor with them. On the other hand, some worried that support for NWFZs in one area could indirectly strengthen the case for such zones in areas in which the United States did not want them. In many cases, U.S. allies also pressed the United States not to support such zones for precisely this reason. At a June 1963 meeting of the ANZUS alliance—Australia, New Zealand, and the United States—Australian officials told their U.S. counterparts that perceived U.S. support for NWFZs in Africa and Latin America had created difficulties for their government in the South Pacific.[95] The risk of a "contagion" effect seemed to be present.

Over the summer of 1963, the United States began to develop a more formal policy on NWFZs, building on its preliminary position on the Latin American initiative. In June, ACDA circulated a set of detailed talking points on "denuclearized zones," noting that such zones could be useful in some circumstances. The key question was whether nuclear weapons already formed an integral part of the security arrangements of a state or group of states. Where this *was not* the case, a denuclearized zone might be useful, but where it *was* the case, the opposite was likely to be true. The ACDA document also stressed the importance of the zone of coverage. In some areas, the failure of a country to participate "might render a proposed arrangement ineffective." In addition, the document noted that there must be ample provision for verification, including inspection arrangements. However, "in areas such as Europe, the Far East, and bordering areas, it is evident that the concept of the denuclearized zone does not offer a meaningful, workable approach."[96] The ACDA document did not mention provisions for the transit of nuclear weapons, but it otherwise closely presaged the U.S. official position that emerged later. Although the document offered talking points for U.S. diplomats to use in their contacts with their counterparts abroad, it was not intended as a policy paper and gave no indication whether the United States was officially encouraging the creation of such zones or under what circumstances it might consider doing so.

From this point onward, U.S. policymakers had to decide whether they should encourage the formation of denuclearized zones. In early June 1963, an interagency working group on nuclear nonproliferation took up the issue, arguing that the "apparently increasing interest" in NWFZs was a good reason to pursue nonproliferation efforts more broadly. Although the working group did not necessarily consider NWFZs a realistic solution to arms control issues,

95. Templeton, *Standing Upright Here*, p. 258.

96. Airgram, 5 June 1963, in NARA, RG 59, CF 1963, Box 3711, DEF 18–9 2/1/63.

calling it "as much 'escapist' as 'neutralist,'" the group did suggest that the United States issue a broad statement favoring the NWFZ concept. However, the officials on the group had not cleared their positions with their respective departments, and the representative from the Department of Defense (DoD) noted that the military was likely to object.[97] Still, in July, the United States publicly stated that it believed a nuclear-free zone in Africa would be useful if it were verified by inspections.[98]

One short-term factor that may have limited U.S. enthusiasm for NWFZs was the salience of other nonproliferation initiatives, particularly a limited ban on the testing of nuclear weapons. As part of a negotiating mandate with the Soviet Union toward what became the LTBT, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Averell Harriman was authorized to discuss superpower measures to support efforts to create NWFZs in Latin America and Africa.[99] However, Harriman does not appear to have done so. On 18 July, he reported that he intended to play down non-dissemination issues (including, presumably, NWFZs), insofar as Nikita Khrushchev and Andrei Gromyko did not seem interested in discussing them.[100] After Harriman's negotiations culminated in the signature of the LTBT in August 1963, the NWFZ issue was back on the table.

At the UNGA meeting in the fall of 1963, NWFZs were once again a central object of discussion. As the meeting approached, both Latin American and African countries put forward draft resolutions on NWFZs in their respective areas. On 14 October, Australian officials requested that the United States lay out its position on the issue. On 25 October, the State Department instructed U.S. representatives to note that they supported NWFZs so long as the arrangements did not upset the military balance, included sufficient verification, and were proposed by states in the area. In an acknowledgement of the concerns of Australia and other U.S. allies, the statement specified that zones in Europe, Asia, and "the Pacific" would be "detrimental to world peace."[101] This text, included in the U.S. statement to the UNGA First Committee on 29 October, was the first public expression of a comprehensive U.S. position

97. Paper, Byroade to Director, "Report of Working Group No. 4 to the Subcommittee of Deputies," Annex B, "Nuclear Containment and Non-proliferation," 13 June 1963, in NARA, RG 59, Deputy Ass. Sec. for Politico-Military Affairs, Records Relating to Disarmament and Arms Control, 1961–6, (RRDAC), Box 1.

98. "Atom-Free Zone," *The Guardian*, 25 July 1963, p. 4.

99. Instructions for Harriman, 10 July 1963, in *FRUS*, 1961–1963, Vol. VII, Item 319.

100. Telegram, 18 July 1963, in *FRUS*, 1961–1963, Vol. VII, Item 331.

101. Telegram, State 14584, 25 October 1963, in NARA, RG 59, CF 1963, Box 3711, DEF 18–9 2/1/63.

on NWFZs.[102] It was the Kennedy administration's final contribution to the development of a policy on these zones.

The Johnson Administration: Implementing Limited Acceptance

When Lyndon Johnson assumed the U.S. presidency in November 1963, his administration inherited a plethora of arms control initiatives, including negotiations toward a nonproliferation treaty, reductions in uranium production, a treaty on outer space, and strategic arms limitations.[103] His overall legacy in regard to nonproliferation remains a topic of dispute. Although some credit the Johnson administration for undertaking negotiations with the Soviet Union and other countries that led to the NPT, others see this treaty as a mere codification of the existing nuclear inequalities around the world that did not prevent further nuclear proliferation.[104] During its five years in office, the Johnson administration put into practice the policy of limited acceptance of the LANWFZ initiative, offering cautious support. However, key figures within the administration were unwilling to give more vocal support to the LANWFZ or other NWFZ initiatives, for the same reasons that officials within the Kennedy administration had opposed doing so.

Although the State Department had already announced a U.S. position on NWFZs, the various agencies of the U.S. government, as well as the military, were far from united in their appraisal of the concept. In response to the LANWFZ initiative, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara asked the JCS to convey their assessment of NWFZs. In early November 1963, the JCS concluded that no matter where such zones were located, they would have a long-term strategic impact "to the disadvantage of the United States relative to the Soviet Union." In part, this stemmed from what the Joint Chiefs called the "basically different strategic postures and objectives of the two nations." The Soviet Union relied primarily on nuclear bases within its own territory, which would not be affected by the zones. The United States, by contrast, had a global nuclear posture. The JCS assumed that if a Latin American zone

102. See Statement by the U.S. Representative, 29 October 1963, in *DOD, 1963*, pp. 553–554.

103. For a discussion of these issues, see Hal Brands, "Progress Unseen: U.S. Arms Control Policy and the Origins of Détente, 1963–1968," *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (2006), pp. 253–285.

104. For example, Francis Gavin and Hal Brands credit Johnson for his achievement of the NPT, whereas Shane Maddock quotes a "jaded proponent" as calling the treaty a "worthless triumph." Francis J. Gavin, "Blasts from the Past: Proliferation Lessons from the 1960s," *International Security*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (2004), pp. 101–102; Brands, "Progress Unseen," p. 254; and Maddock, *Nuclear Apartheid*, p. 252.

came into effect the United States would have to give up transport rights in the Panama Canal and elsewhere in the region and deployment rights in Guantánamo. The Joint Chiefs also worried that if "adequate verification and inspection procedures" were implemented, they would affect the United States more than the Soviet Union by exposing U.S. institutions to Soviet intelligence. The United States, the chiefs concluded, should reject the LANWFZ initiative under any circumstances, unless it was part of a more global agreement with the Soviet Union.[105] This was perhaps the most explicit expression yet issued of the strategic rationales for the U.S. aversion to NWFZs.

McNamara disagreed somewhat with the JCS, and as in other cases of arms control policy, he made these differences clear.[106] In a letter to Rusk, McNamara noted that although the JCS memorandum had contained "sound policy recommendations," he believed that the United States could support such zones in certain circumstances; specifically, when they

> form a part of the existing balance of power in the area; the initiative comes from the area concerned and all or most of the countries participate, particularly those whose refusal might render the arrangement ineffective; adequate verification and inspection procedures are established; essential U.S. transit rights are preserved and naval ship movements are not restricted nor their traditional sovereignty affected.[107]

However, if a zone was "proclaimed unilaterally by a group of states" and did "not preserve essential U.S. security interests," the United States should oppose it. Referring to the African initiative, he recommended that the United States develop a tacit understanding with some African countries about these circumstances. He also called for a senior State Department official, such as U. Alexis Johnson, to oversee an interdepartmental dialogue on the issue.[108] In response, Rusk asked ACDA to conduct a review of McNamara's comments, which would then be followed by a political review led by Johnson.[109]

These debates over NWFZs took place within the context of a broader reevaluation of U.S. nonproliferation policy. By early January 1964, the

105. Memorandum, from JCS to McNamara, 1 November 1963, in NARA, RG 59, CF 1963, Box 3703, DEF 18 2/1/63 UN.

106. On other cases of disagreement between McNamara and the JCS over arms control issues, see Brands, "Progress Unseen," p. 285.

107. Memorandum, from McNamara to Rusk, 2 December 1963, in NARA, RG 59, CF 1963, Box 3703, DEF 18 2/1/63 UN.

108. Ibid.

109. Note, Rusk to Foster, 5 December 1963, in NARA, RG 59, CF 1963, Box 3703, DEF 18 2/1/63 UN.

Johnson administration was working on an internal paper that would outline priorities for measures to promote "nuclear containment" (nonproliferation) and arms reductions at the upcoming meeting of the UN Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee (ENDC). On 14 January, National Security Adviser McGeorge Bundy, ACDA Deputy Director Adrian "Butch" Fisher, and NSC staffer Spurgeon Keeny proposed that officials discuss ten types of nonproliferation measures, including creating "basic principles for nuclear-free zones," at an upcoming Committee of Principals meeting.[110] At this meeting, which took place on 18 January, Johnson asked whether support for the items in the paper was unanimous. Fisher responded that all agencies agreed on the agenda, except for the point concerning NWFZs, to which the JCS objected. However, Fisher told the president he wanted to present ACDA's point of view on the issue. Johnson said he would hear him out but would need Fisher to explain to Congress why the JCS did not agree to the entire program.[111] With that, Fisher agreed to delete the section referring to NWFZs.[112] In addition to the Joint Chiefs, there was some "strong opposition within the State Department" to the NWFZ concept.[113] For the time being, efforts to promote NWFZs were not integrated into the broader U.S. approach to nonproliferation.

Although the administration had decided not to push NWFZs at the ENDC, the internal debate over what attitude to take toward the existing initiatives had not yet been settled. ACDA's internal assessment of NWFZs, completed on 27 January, still recommended that "in any discussion of NWFZs at the ENDC," the U.S. representatives should state that NWFZs were valuable in nonproliferation and "preventing or turning down regional arms races," but they should "oppose any ENDC consideration of specific zones for particular areas," particularly "in the absence of a request from all of the states concerned."[114] On 8 February, Deputy Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs U. Alexis Johnson sent out a memorandum in reaction to McNamara's letter of 2 December that took a much dimmer view of NWFZs, prompting

110. Memorandum, from Bundy to McNamara, 14 January 1964, in *FRUS*, 1964–1968, Vol. XI, Item 2.

111. Glenn T. Seaborg and Benjamin S. Loeb, *Stemming the Tide: Arms Control in the Johnson Years* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1987), pp. 11–13. Seaborg cites "Adrian Fisher, Interview No. 1," pp. 32–33, in Lyndon Baines Johnson Library, Oral History Interviews.

112. Notes of Meeting, 18 January 1964, in *FRUS*, 1964–1968, Vol. XI, Item 4.

113. Memorandum, from Keeny to Bundy, 3 February 1964, in *FRUS*, 1964–1968, Vol. XI, Item 5.

114. ACDA, "Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee, DMP#20, US Disarmament Measures Paper #20: Nuclear Free Zones," n.d., in NARA, RG 59, RRDAC, Box 7, "DEF (12), DEF-18–9 1962–1964: Demilitarized & Nuclear Free Zones."

several officials to complain that it was too negative.[115] Still, the actual differences between the pro- and anti-NWFZ positions within the administration should not be overstated. Even Fisher of ACDA felt that the U.S. position should be "doing nothing to stimulate action on NWFZ ideas that might otherwise remain dormant."[116] Deputy Undersecretary Johnson's final recommendation to Rusk was that the United States not "stimulate action toward the creation of nuclear free zones in Latin America or Africa at this time" because of concerns about transit rights and, in the case of a LANWFZ, Cuban participation. However, the United States should not oppose the creation of these zones as long as the necessary criteria were met. Johnson recommended that Rusk approve a draft letter to McNamara that discouraged support for the zones.[117]

Proposals for NWFZs seemed to keep coming, however, forcing the United States to refine its policies and tactics. U.S. officials remained firmly opposed to such zones in Europe, rejecting out of hand two new Polish initiatives launched in December 1963 and December 1964.[118] However, support for NWFZs in parts of the Third World, particularly Africa, was more difficult to ignore. In the summer of 1964, members of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) began to consider a draft resolution for the denuclearization of Africa, which had first been discussed at a foreign ministers' meeting in Lagos.[119] U.S. officials sensed that some key African countries were not committed to the proposal. The U.S. embassy in Cairo thought that Egypt would delay any meaningful progress on the issue until the problem of a potential Israeli nuclear weapons program was addressed.[120] South Africa was not even an OAU member and thus would almost certainly not have participated in any such initiative at the time. However, the popularity of the idea among African delegates suggested that the countries would move forward on a resolution, regardless of whether it would actually be implemented.

115. This document is not currently available in the archives, but its content can be inferred from Memorandum, from Fisher to Johnson, "Nuclear Free Zones: Comments on Draft Memorandum and Letter," 14 February 1964, in NARA, RG 59, RRDAC, Box 7, "DEF (12), DEF-18–9 1962–1964: Demilitarized & Nuclear Free Zones"; and Memorandum, from A. Johnson to Rusk, 11 March 1964, in NARA, RG 59, Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, Office of Inter-American Security Affairs, Box 2, DEF 18–9 LANWFZ.

116. Memorandum, from Fisher to Johnson, "Nuclear Free Zones: Comments on Draft Memorandum and Letter," 14 February 1964.

117. Memorandum, from A. Johnson to Rusk, 11 March 1964NWFZ.

118. Telegram, CA-6266, ACDA, 30 December 1964, in NARA, RG 59, CF 1964–66, Box 1603, DEF 18–9, 8/7/64–12/17/66.

119. Telegram, Geneva TODIS 1488, 29 June 1964, in NARA, RG 59, CF 1964–66, Box 1604, DEF AFR.

120. Telegram, Cairo 3787, 6 June 1964, in in NARA, RG 59, CF 1964–66, Box 1604, DEF AFR.

Even if the creation of an African NWFZ seemed far off, the United States continued to be hesitant about the African initiative for many of the same reasons as before. In addition to the precedent it would set for Europe and other areas, U.S. officials remained concerned that such a zone would prohibit the transit of nuclear weapons and interfere with other U.S. defense arrangements.[121] In early July, the U.S. government undertook a campaign to convince certain African governments either to modify the draft resolution's prohibition on transit and lack of arrangements for verification and inspection or to postpone the resolution altogether.[122] The United States approached Britain and France to ask for assistance in slowing down the resolution, but both refused, on the grounds that they would simply antagonize the African states.[123]

The proposal as it subsequently evolved was not exactly a call for an NWFZ in Africa. On 21 July, the OAU member-states passed a resolution declaring that they were "ready to undertake, through an international agreement to be concluded under United Nations auspices, not to manufacture or control atomic weapons" and calling on all states "to respect the denuclearization of the continent of Africa."[124] The resolution did not directly discuss the transit of nuclear weapons, though it invoked UN Resolution 1652 of 1961, which had called for a ban on the transit of nuclear weapons in Africa. The OAU resolution did not call for inspection arrangements. The Africa Bureau of the State Department suspected that the OAU resolution was a "holding action" for a possible regional NWFZ, which presumably many were not yet ready to adopt. The bureau also warned against actions to influence the OAU's attitude, which could backfire.[125]

As the UNGA session approached that fall, the African states requested that an item on the denuclearization of Africa be added to the UNGA's agenda, which obliged the United States to develop a position on the issue. The strategy that U.S. officials advocated depended on how they interpreted the July

121. Johnson to McNaughton, 19 June 1964, in NARA, RG 59, CF 1964–66, Box 1604, DEF AFR.

122. The countries included Morocco, Libya, Tunisia, Mauritania, Liberia, Rwanda, Nigeria, Senegal, Ethiopia, and Madagascar. See Telegram, State 1095, 20 August 1964, in NARA, RG 59, CF 1964–66, Box 1810, POL 3; and Memorandum for Bundy, "Status of Efforts to Influence Action on Draft Convention for African Nuclear Free Zone," 14 July 1964, in NARA, RG 59, CF 1964–66, Box 1810, POL 3.

123. See Telegram, Paris 199, 10 July 1964, in NARA, RG, CF 1964–66, Box 1810, POL 3; State Department Telegram 4819, 9 July 1964, in NARA, RG, CF 1964–66, Box 1810, POL 3; and Memorandum of Conversation, Faber, Freund, 9 July 1964, in NARA, RG, CF 1964–66, Box 1810, POL 3.

124. Declaration, 21 July 1964, in *DOD, 1964*, p. 294.

125. Memo, "Comments on the ACDA Paper of August 14 on Non-Proliferation," 25 August 1964, in NARA, RG 59, RRDAC, Box 9, DEF (14-A) 18–10-Non-proliferation: Thompson Committee.

OAU resolution. Some, such as ACDA Director William Foster, believed that the OAU resolution most closely resembled the international approach taken in the 1961 Irish resolution, and that the African resolution should be promoted as part of an effort toward a nonproliferation treaty.[126] Acting Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Llewellyn Thompson sent a memorandum on behalf of himself and what he called "interested officers in the Department" that expressed "grave reservations" about this idea, warning that the OAU resolution contained "an implied ban on transit of nuclear weapons" and demanded "an international conference on non-proliferation."[127] The chair of a special interdepartmental committee on nuclear nonproliferation, Thompson was what one scholar calls "a persistent and vocal critic of multilateral nonproliferation efforts," including NWFZs.[128] However, the committee as a whole seemed to agree that "that the United States should support [the] application of the OAU Resolution to Africa alone, if that is the intent of the sponsors as expressed at the UNGA." If the African states called for a global conference on nonproliferation, the United States had a variety of tactics to deflect the issue to the ENDC, over which U.S. officials believed they had more control.[129] Apparently, however, the OAU was unable to muster enough votes to get the item on the agenda at this time, relieving the United States of this dilemma.

Other pressures were forcing the United States to reconsider its broader approach to nonproliferation. In October 1964, Communist China tested a nuclear weapon for the first time, spurring the United States to reevaluate its nonproliferation policy, including policy toward NWFZs. President Johnson formed the Special Task Force on Nuclear Proliferation, also called the Gilpatric Committee.[130] In a paper that was apparently heavily influenced by Thompson, the State Department argued that despite the enthusiasm for NWFZs around the world, the strategic benefit of such zones was minimal and the risks were

126. Draft Position Paper, 14 August 1964, in *FRUS*, 1964–1968, Vol. XI, Item 44.

127. Memorandum, from Thompson to Rusk, 25 August 1964, in *FRUS*, 1964–1968, Vol. XI, Item 46.

128. Maddock, *Nuclear Apartheid*, p. 238.

129. Memorandum, "Strategy and Tactics on Agreements in the Field of Non-Proliferation," 10 October 1964, in NARA, RG 59, RRDAC, Box 9, "DEF (14-A) 18–10-Non-proliferation: Thompson Committee"; Memorandum, "Working Paper on Tactics for the 19th General Assembly," 10 October 1964, in NARA, RG 59, RRDAC, Box 9, "DEF (14-A) 18–10-Non-proliferation: Thompson Committee"; and Paper, "Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons," 30 October 1964, in NARA, RG 59, RRDAC, Box 9, "DEF (14-A) 18–10-Non-proliferation: Thompson Committee."

130. See, Hal Brands, "Rethinking Nonproliferation: LBJ, the Gilpatric Committee, and U.S. National Security Policy," *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (2006), p. 90; Gavin, "Blasts from the Past," pp. 101–102; and Maddock, *Nuclear Apartheid*, pp. 237–244. See also Memorandum, "National Security Action Memorandum No. 320," 25 November 1964, in DNSA, Item NP01049.

great. Instead of supporting projects to create NWFZs, the paper proposed that the United States announce it had no intention to station nuclear weapons on the territory of Africa, Latin America, the Arab states, or Israel.[131] In a meeting with the committee, however, Rusk stated that the department was favorably inclined toward zones in Latin America and Africa, assuming that U.S. transit rights were guaranteed, but that the department opposed zones in other areas.[132] When the Gilpatric Committee submitted its report to President Johnson on 21 January 1965, the document encouraged the administration to help bring about NWFZs in Latin America and Africa, including Egypt and Israel if possible, even if this required modifying the U.S. position on transit and other issues "to the maximum extent consistent with demonstrable United States security needs."[133] In the short term, the president did little to act on the committee's recommendations. The committee sent the president a draft National Security Memorandum that included its recommendation on NWFZs, but this was never approved.[134]

Even after the Gilpatric Committee's report was issued, Thompson's interdepartmental committee continued to consider the issue of NWFZs closely. By this time, more U.S. officials had adopted the view that the United States should take a public position in support of NWFZs. In February 1965, Vice President Hubert Humphrey praised the idea of NWFZs in a speech at the Pacem in Terris conference, held at the UN headquarters in New York. However, Thompson and others at the State Department seemed intent on avoiding moves that might lead to the public enunciation of a position on the subject. After a meeting in February 1965, Thompson sent his committee two drafts of a position paper on NWFZs, one covering Latin America, the Near East, and Africa, and the other focusing on Latin America alone. In the latter, Thompson noted that a March meeting of Latin American countries on NWFZs in Mexico City could provide an opportunity to issue a statement on the subject. He asked for comments on several questions by mid-February.[135] The responses were overwhelmingly positive, urging that a limited statement along the lines

131. Memorandum, 11 December 1964, in DNSA, Item NP01075. See also Memorandum, from Thompson to Secretary, "Talking Points for Meeting with the Gilpatric Committee," 7 January 1965, in NARA, RG 59, RRDAC, Box 11, Def-18–10—Non-proliferation—Gilpatric Committee 1964.

132. Memorandum, 7 January 1965, in *FRUS*, 1964–1968, Vol. XI, Item 59.

133. Report, Committee on Nuclear Proliferation, 21 January 1965, in DNSA, Item NP01104.

134. Draft National Security Action Memorandum, Prevention of Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, n.d. [1964], in DNSA, Item NP01103.

135. Memorandum, Thompson to Members of the Committee on Non-proliferation, "Possible US Public Statements on Denuclearization of Certain Areas," 15 February 1965, in NARA, RG 59, RRDAC, Box 9, "5."

of the draft on Latin America be made. The one exception to this was the officer from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) who warned that U.S. support for a Latin American zone with its own verification arrangements could indirectly threaten the practice of U.S. overflights of Cuba.[136] Before a draft was agreed on, however, the Latin American conference had come and gone.

Although the State Department did not issue a public statement on the initiative, U.S. diplomats discreetly provided support to the LANWFZ initiative. A major rift had developed between Mexico, whose Ambassador to Brazil Alfonso García Robles was a major proponent of the treaty, and Brazil's new military government, which had taken power in 1964 and was no longer enthusiastic about a Latin American NWFZ. In late March 1965, the Brazilian ambassador to the UN, José Sette Câmara, told U.S. Ambassador Lincoln Gordon in Rio de Janeiro that the previous government's goal in proposing the zone had been largely "internal demagogy related to independent foreign policy and third-force position." The new Brazilian government, he said, believed that such an initiative would not be a "realistic contribution to world peace." However, to avoid an overt reversal of Brazil's public stance. Sette Câmara suggested that the best way to derail the project would be to encounter "insuperable difficulties in [the] cooperation [of] nuclear powers."[137] He apparently was hoping that the United States would help him to kill the initiative. In response, the State Department instructed the embassy to tell Sette Câmara that although the United States welcomed his frankness, the U.S. government actually favored a zone if issues such as transport could be addressed satisfactorily.[138] The U.S. position alone would probably not have changed the Brazilians' attitude, but this expression of U.S. support must have prompted them to return to the negotiating table.

Nonetheless, the United States was still disinclined to push the NWFZ concept too hard. After the 1965 Mexico City Conference, Thompson moved to prevent any public statements on the issue of NWFZs. In preparation for a principals' meeting on 22 April, Foster of ACDA proposed that the meeting adopt a broader nonproliferation agenda than it had previously. He recommended that the United States attempt to "stimulate" an African NWFZ and be ready to adopt broader-ranging compromises in pursuit of a LANWFZ,

136. Memorandum, Office of the Deputy Director (Intelligence) of the CIA to Thompson, 24 February 1965, in NARA, RG 59, RRDAC, Box 9, "5."

137. Telegram, Rio de Janeiro 2009, 29 March 1965, in NARA, RG 59, CF 1964–66, Box 1655, DEF 18–9 LA 1/1/65.

138. Telegram, State 1347, 30 March 1965, in NARA, RG 59, CF 1964–66, Box 1655, DEF 18–9 LA 1/1/65.

such as modifying its position on transit rights and accepting a zone without Cuba.[139] Thompson was dismayed by this proposal and warned Rusk that Foster had "pulled a surprise" by broadening the agenda.[140] In a hastily scheduled deputies' meeting, ACDA's suggestion was apparently derailed. The agenda for the principals' meeting on 22 April was drafted without the NWFZ topic.[141] Foster, in the meantime, urged Rusk to approve a statement on a LANWFZ that had been put together by Thompson's committee, as well as a similar statement on Africa and the Middle East.[142] However, Thompson sent Rusk a decision memorandum noting that he and the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs preferred to hold the LANWFZ statement until "an appropriate time in the course of consideration of such zones by the Latin American nations." Thompson also wanted to hold the statement on Africa and the Middle East "until there were some developments in that area [to] which it could usefully be pegged." Even though the department's African and Near Eastern Bureaus had approved the statements, Rusk agreed with Thompson that the statement should be postponed.[143] Once again, Thompson delayed a U.S. statement on NWFZs, even though ACDA and various officials at the State Department were supportive of issuing the statement.

From the summer of 1965, the United States followed the LANWFZ deliberations closely and offered input frequently. The Johnson administration appointed an observer to attend the LANWFZ commission's second preparatory conference at the end of August and early September. Following this meeting, Latin American countries appointed a team of three representatives, including Mexico's García Robles and Brazil's Sette Câmara, to send to the UNGA meeting that fall, and asked that an official U.S. representative be appointed to discuss the issues with them. ACDA Director Foster was chosen to do so. On 26 October, the preparatory commission requested that the United States provide a letter stating its position on a potential LANWFZ.

By now, the U.S. position on Cuba's participation had begun to soften. At the time, Brazil was insisting that all states in the region, including Cuba,

139. Memorandum, ACDA, "Meeting of the Committee of Principals, Thursday, April 22, 1965," 15 April 1965, in NARA, RG 59, RRDAC, Box 9, "5."

140. Memorandum, Thompson to Secretary, "Principals' Meeting on Non-proliferation," 17 April 1965, in NARA, RG 59, RRDAC, Box 9, "5."

141. Ibid.

142. Memorandum, "Confidential: Draft US Statement on Nuclear-Free Zones for Use in UNDC," n.d. [April 1965], in NARA, RG 59, RRDAC, Box 7, "DEF (12), DEF-18–9 1965: Demilitarized & Nuclear Free Zones."

143. Thompson to Secretary, "US Statement on Nuclear Free Zones in the UNDC," 22 April 1965, in NARA, RG 59, RRDAC, Box 7, "DEF (12), DEF-18–9 1965: Demilitarized & Nuclear Free Zones."

join the treaty, whereas Mexico did not want to require this. In September, ACDA recommended that the United States continue to urge the participation of Cuba but not to insist on it, because the creation of the zone by other states would in turn put pressure on Cuba, and "the zone would generally be valuable in halting nuclear proliferation." Rusk approved this position on 10 November.[144] On 11 November, Foster met with García Robles and Sette Câmara at the latter's request and informed them that the United States anticipated (and thus accepted) that the NWFZ would include the Panama Canal Zone and, if Cuba were included, Guantánamo as well. Still, Foster insisted, the zone could not include Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.[145] The JCS opposed Foster's statement, which had apparently not been cleared by the Department of Defense. However, McNamara said he did not want to "give Castro an excuse for failing to participate," and he therefore supported including Guantánamo if Cuba did take part.[146]

In the meantime, during the UNGA session, OAU countries presented a draft resolution on an African NWFZ. Some African states campaigned for an international conference on the denuclearization of Africa, which they hoped would help force Portugal and South Africa to accept the denuclearization of the continent. Epstein told a U.S. representative that he had received permission from the UN Secretary General to talk the African states out of this and urge them to try to put together a regional meeting as the Latin Americans had.[147] The final resolution, passed on 3 December 1965 with the support of the United States, fits this model more closely. Its text expressed hope that the African states would initiate studies on the denuclearization of Africa, and it called on the Secretary General to aid them as needed.[148] From then on, movement toward an African nuclear weapons free zone essentially stopped. The largest African states such as the UAR and Nigeria, who were concerned about the nuclear programs of Israel and South Africa, had little enthusiasm for such a move.

Nevertheless, the UN debate over the African resolution provided an opportunity for the United States to devise a more comprehensive policy toward NWFZs. Addressing the UNGA's First Committee on 1 December, Foster listed the conditions for U.S. support of such initiatives. In addition to

144. Memorandum, Fisher to Rusk, 29 September 1965, in *FRUS*, 1964–1968, Vol. XI, Item 96.

145. Telegram, USUN 1926, 11 November 1965, in NARA, RG 59, CF 1964–66, Box 1655, DEF 18–9 LA 7/1/65.

146. McNamara to Foster, 2 December 1965, in *FRUS*, 1964–1968, Vol. 11, Item 103.

147. Telegram, USUN 1829, 5 November 1965, in NARA, RG 59, CF 1964–66, Box 1655, DEF 18–9 LA 7/1/65.

148. General Assembly Resolution 2033 (XX), 3 December 1965, in *DOD, 1965*, pp. 624–626.

the initiative coming from the states of the region, the U.S. requirements for supporting an NWFZ included:

(a) that the denuclearized zone should preferably include all States in the area, especially any whose failure to participate might render the agreement ineffective or meaningless; (b) that no State or group of States should derive military advantage from the creation of the zone; and (c) provision be made for an adequate verification, which would include procedures for following up on alleged violations in order to give reasonable assurance of compliance both to States included in the zone and to those outside the zone that have undertaken to respect it.[149]

The Africa resolution, he said, met these criteria, and the United States could therefore support it.[150] Crucially, Foster's address at the UNGA First Committee maintained only that the zone should "preferably" include all relevant states, a reflection of the softened U.S. position on Cuba's participation in the LANWFZ. The new phrasing was nearly identical to the conditions that had defined the U.S. position in 1963, expressed more succinctly. As was the case with Foster's statement in November, there is no evidence that the Defense Department and JCS approved the speech. Still, the African resolution passed on 3 December with U.S. support.[151]

After the 1965 UNGA session—and for the remainder of Johnson's term in office—the LANWFZ initiative necessitated action by U.S. policymakers. When the United States presented its draft letter to the three-person negotiating team for review, the Latin Americans were divided. Sette Câmara told Foster that the U.S. position on Cuba was "important," but García Robles called the letter a "setback to 1963." Foster said they wished to help maintain the pressure on Cuba, but García Robles insisted that any such pressure would encourage Cuba to resist and try to undermine the whole effort. He suggested instead that the United States specifically state that the issue of Cuban participation would not be decisive. He also complained about the letter's phrasing on verification, which called for more extensive measures than the Latin American countries were contemplating.[152] In response to these complaints, U.S. officials changed the language on verification, but not their position on Cuba.[153] The

149. Statement, 1 December 1965, in DOD, 1965, pp. 597–599.

150. Ibid.

151. UNGA Resolution 2033 (XX), 3 December 1965, in AccessUN.

152. Telegram, USUN 2548, 7 December 1965, in NARA, RG 59, CF 1964–66, Box 1655, DEF 18–9 LA 7/1/65.

153. Telegram, USUN 2587, 8 December 1965, in NARA, RG 59, CF 1964–66, Box 1655, DEF 18–9 LA 7/1/65. The actual letter was sent on 10 December. Foster to García Robles, 10 December 1965, in *FRUS*, 1964–1968, Vol. XI, Item 105.

Latin American negotiators expressed appreciation for the U.S. changes, and Sette Câmara said he thought it would meet the needs of the committee.[154]

Following this presentation, the United States mostly distanced itself from the negotiations in Latin America. In May 1966, the Latin American countries reached agreement on most of the elements of an NWFZ treaty. Cuba's participation, however, constituted one of the remaining obstacles. During the drafting process, the question of when the treaty would come into force depended on the status of Cuba. Two main options were put forward in a draft treaty: either that it would come into force after any two states had signed, or that it would enter into force only after all states, including Cuba, had signed. In a letter describing the U.S. position, the U.S. ambassador to Mexico merely noted that this was "in the first instance the decision of the states of the region."[155] On three other issues, however, the United States did express an opinion.[156] First, the ambassador reaffirmed the long-standing U.S. argument that Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, both territories under U.S. control, should be exempted from the treaty zone. Second, the United States expressed hesitation about the need to pledge not to use nuclear weapons against states in the treaty zone, and deferred taking a position until the final text was ready for scrutiny. Finally, the United States asked for a restrictive definition of peaceful nuclear explosives (PNEs) in the treaty. At the time, many scientists believed that small nuclear explosive devices might have civilian uses, such as excavating earth. However, the difference between technology used for weapons and peaceful purposes was non-existent. In August 1966, the United States argued in a letter to the commission that the draft treaty language should be changed to prohibit the parties from developing PNEs.[157]

In February 1967, the Latin American countries finally reached agreement on a treaty.[158] The final treaty text did include the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico in the zone of coverage, contrary to U.S. wishes. On the participation of states, a compromise was reached whereby the treaty would enter into force only after all states of the region had signed and ratified it but that any party to the treaty could waive these criteria and allow it to enter into force without

154. Telegram, USUN 2588, 8 December 1965, in NARA, RG 59, CF 1964–66, Box 1655, DEF 18–9 LA 7/1/65.

155. Freeman to García Robles, 29 August 1966, in *DOD, 1966*, pp. 622–628.

156. On these issues, see also Memorandum from Rusk to Johnson, "US Adherence to Protocol to Treaty Creating Latin American Nuclear Free Zone," 12 February 1968, in *FRUS*, 1964–1968, XI, Item 226.

157. Quoted in Davis R. Robinson, "The Treaty of Tlatelolco and the United States: A Latin American Nuclear Free Zone," *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 64, No. 2 (1970), p. 289.

158. Henry Giniger, "21 Latin Nations End A-Pact Task," *The New York Times*, 12 February 1967.

the party's ratification. Thus, the treaty could take effect even without Cuban participation. Concerning PNEs, the final language of the treaty is ambiguous. Article 18 explicitly allows PNEs, including "devices similar to those used in nuclear weapons."[159] On the other hand, Article 5 defines nuclear weapons as "any device which is capable of releasing nuclear energy in an uncontrolled manner and which has a group of characteristics that are appropriate for use for warlike purposes," which would basically include any conceivable PNE. Thus, according to some interpretations, the treaty would allow peaceful nuclear explosions to take place only if they were conducted by the nuclear states on behalf of the states in the area.[160] Although this was much looser than the language of the NPT, which in Article 2 prohibits non-nuclear states from manufacturing any type of nuclear explosive device, this did not prevent the United States from accepting the LANWFZ treaty.

For the United States, the successful conclusion of the LANWFZ treaty posed the question of whether to support the two additional protocols to be signed by nuclear-weapons states. Additional Protocol I required the parties to apply the provisions of the treaty to territories under their control in the region. This meant that the United States would have to agree not to station nuclear weapons in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and the Panama Canal Zone. Additional Protocol II required states to commit not to use nuclear weapons against states in the treaty zone. In October 1967, Johnson told Mexican President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz that the United States would sign the second additional protocol but not the first.[161] In an interpretive statement, the United States also reserved the right to use nuclear weapons if attacked by a nuclear-armed ally of a treaty signatory. This was a clear reference to potential Soviet nuclear attacks on behalf of Cuba. The United States interpreted the treaty as allowing peaceful nuclear explosions by nuclear weapons states, though not by the parties to the treaty themselves.[162] Vice President Humphrey, who since his time in the Senate had been a proponent of a Latin American NWFZ, flew to Mexico on 31 March 1968 to sign Additional Protocol II.[163] His visit marked

159. Treaty of Tlatelolco, text available at http://disarmament.un.org/treaties/t/tlatelolco/text.

160. Robinson, "The Treaty of Tlatelolco and the United States," p. 289.

161. Memorandum, "Latin American Nuclear Weapons Free Zone," 9 November 1967, in DNSA, Item NP01223.

162. Memorandum, Rusk to Johnson, 12 February 1968, in *FRUS*, 1964–1968, Vol. XI, Item 226.

163. "Nuclear Treaty Signing," *The New York Times*, 31 March 1968. On Humphrey's earlier support for NWFZs, see "Humphrey Presses for Latin Atom Ban," *The New York Times*, 4 November 1962, p. 10; and "Humphrey Urges Latin Atom Ban: Suggests U.S. Might Back Regional Arms Control," *The New York Times*, 11 October 1964, p. 7.

the culmination of the change in the U.S. position on regional nonproliferation efforts that had begun after the Cuban missile crisis five-and-a-half years earlier.

Conclusions

U.S. policy toward NWFZs underwent an important transformation during the presidencies of Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson. Whereas the Eisenhower administration strongly resisted the concept, the U.S. government by the late 1960s was broadly convinced that zones in Latin America, Africa, and even the Middle East would serve U.S. strategic interests. This policy was ultimately a cautious, reactive one, recognizing that the zones posed both advantages and disadvantages from the U.S. perspective. Although NWFZs reduced the risk of nuclear proliferation, they simultaneously challenged U.S. global nuclear strategy by potentially placing restrictions on the stationing of nuclear weapons on the territory of U.S. allies around the world and the transport of nuclear weapons across third-party states. As a result, the United States developed a flexible set of criteria to evaluate NWFZ proposals, elements of which survive to this day.

This new position reflected an evolution of the overall U.S. view on the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Whereas in the 1950s nuclear proliferation was accepted as a natural and perhaps unavoidable occurrence, events in the early and mid-1960s, such as the Cuban missile crisis and the Chinese test of a nuclear weapon, had underscored the dangers that the uncontrolled spread of nuclear weapons could pose. Along with international measures such as the LTBT and the NPT, the United States offered at least mildly encouraged the development of NWFZs in some areas of the world. The Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson administrations could have done more to encourage NWFZs, but they also could have done less. Indeed, successfully promoting NWFZs would have required taking steps beyond mere statements of support for these initiatives. In Africa the United States would have had to adopt a more stringent nonproliferation policy toward South Africa, and in the Middle East an NWFZ would have required stronger efforts to discourage the Israeli nuclear program. As a result, it is reductive to consider NWFZs entirely in isolation from other foreign policy issues.

As was the case with broader nuclear nonproliferation policy, U.S. policy toward NWFZs put most of the burden of sacrifice on the non-nuclear weapons states. The NPT requires non-nuclear weapons states to abstain from seeking these arms in exchange for a vague promise that nuclear weapons states will abandon their nukes at some unspecified point in the future. NWFZs are

implicitly unequal commitments, requiring states in specific regions to renounce nuclear weapons, while merely asking nuclear weapons states to forgo the privilege of storing weapons on the non-nuclear states' territory and, in some cases, transporting the nuclear weapons through their territory and waters. Even so, during the period under study, the United States often deemed these conditions too onerous to merit its support, for fear that they might erode U.S. nuclear retaliatory capabilities. Thus, U.S. policy can be seen as stemming from the higher priority given to security policy over nonproliferation interests.

Throughout the remainder of the Cold War, the legacy of NWFZs was mixed. Although the LANWFZ initiative was successful, it did not solve the region's nuclear problems. Cuba remained outside the treaty, and both Brazil and Argentina continued secret work on nuclear weapons programs well into the 1970s. The treaty was not ratified by all the region's countries until well after the end of the Cold War. The only other NWFZ success during the Cold War, the 1985 South Pacific NWFZ, was strongly opposed by the United States. Only after the Cold War ended and the strategic calculus of the United States began to change could Regional Zero be achieved on a broader basis.

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