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### **A Snapshot in Time: Washington DC in 1963.**

On Labor Day, 1963, I arrived in Washington for my new assignment, heading the North American office of the Atlantic Institute. The post of director general of the Institute had not been filled when I left Paris; my appointment to Washington had been agreed earlier by Lodge, when still DG, and General Lauris Norstad, then chairman of the Atlantic Council's board.

Lodge's vacated position was first offered to General Alfred Gruenther, a marvelous soldier who had been Eisenhower's chief of staff at NATO and later Supreme Allied Commander Europe himself. He refused and instead became head of the American Red Cross. I got to know Gruenther well and admired him a great deal. It was said that at NATO parade-reviews, Gruenther, as SACEUR, would greet each contingent in its own native language—including Portuguese, Greek, and Turkish—a rare and valuable sensibility.

Ambassador Walter (Red) Dowling was appointed the new director general of the Atlantic Institute at the end of October 1963; he and I met in Washington and developed a good working relationship. I was uncomfortable, however,

with my own replacement in Paris and became even more uncomfortable with most of my new associates in Washington. My replacement as A.I. executive officer in Paris was a less able, retired U.S. ambassador, with no background, nor even stomach, for the job—which was to act as chief of staff and energizer, as I had done. In a couple of years he would be replaced by a gifted and able young academic, Gregory Flynn, who proved excellent at understudying a succession of directors general. But until Flynn's advent and that of Ambassador John Tuthill (who replaced Dowling in 1966), and until relations between the Institute and the Atlantic Council of the United States (ACUS) had been rendered more or less stable, the entire enterprise—American and European—was on rocky ground.

General Norstad, chairman of the Atlantic Council and former SACEUR, kept a loose and more or less unholy alliance on the ACUS board of directors (involving Europe-firsters, Atlantic federalists, and pragmatists) from boiling over. The board represented these and other trends in current thinking about foreign affairs. There were always too many directors (more than 40 to start with, and 125 by the time I became president in 1983). Most were distinguished figures in their own right and each expected to be listened to. Some were former cabinet officers; many were retired ambassadors, with some business people and a few academics. About the only thing they all could agree to was that the Atlantic Alliance was a matter of paramount importance to the United States. How the future of Atlantic relations should play out was continually a subject of debate—sometimes rancorous and often inconclusive. My job, in part, was to keep these controversies from affecting the work of the Institute in Paris and to develop a distinct and useful A.I. program in the United States.

This difficult and unwieldy ACUS amalgam did not deter Richard Wallace, who had headed ACUS as director general since its inception in 1961. Nor did it deter a small clique of board members and volunteers in the office from pressing continually for adoption of policies and programs

that would point ACUS in the direction of Clarence Streit's dream: a strong federation of Atlantic democracies.

The immediate goal of the "federalists" on the Atlantic Council Board and staff was to prod the Kennedy administration to follow through on the principal resolution of the Atlantic Convention of January 1962. This meeting had been authorized by a Resolution of Congress and financed by a congressional appropriation. Many European MPs took part, with other elites, but no members of Congress did so. Unable to convince the convention that a Streitian federation was the immediate solution to Alliance disunity (and Streit himself was there, pleading eloquently), the American federalists fell back on a "punting" solution. The meeting eventually proposed formation by NATO governments of the Special Governmental Commission to propose measures that would turn the alliance into a "true community." The latter term was doublespeak for a federation. While most governments were decidedly cool, that of the United States was hostile. The Atlantic federal pattern ran contrary to the Atlantic Partnership model of the administration. The "true Atlantic Community" proposal of the federalists had no chance of going anywhere, but the federal clique running the ACUS persisted for two or three years to mouth the mantra. This greatly annoyed old warhorses, such as Dean Acheson and Lauris Norstad, and deflected the council from doing much positive about the state of American political opinion. Precious time was wasted on such infighting.

I favored an Atlantic federation as a long-term aim. But after my experience in Europe and in government, I was convinced that an Atlantic federal union was an entirely unrealistic program goal for any serious citizens group that wanted to influence the policy of the United States. I felt—and still do—that some kind of transatlantic union would eventually result if groups like the Institute and the Council (plus a number of others) would simply work on the practical objectives of mutual understanding and solidarity among the peoples around the North Atlantic, brought about largely through elite/expert dialogues to achieve

consensus on specific problems and opportunities facing the NATO and OECD countries and widespread publication of the results. I also believed that the education systems of the Atlantic countries should and could be retooled to make it clear to students at all levels what the real shape and mission of the modern Atlantic community were, mining its especially rich history. My approach was essentially a nonpolitical one, stressing the nurturing of healthy trends in Atlantic societies that could be brought into historical convergence. I adopted the term "social tissue" to describe what we were trying to create; mine was an "applied anthropology" approach. Richard Wallace and his cohort were unrelievedly political, struggling for the "main chance" of quickly converting contemporary Atlantic arrangements into a fullblown federation. They used the Special Governmental Commission as a wedge to stimulate action on a necessarily vast scale. ACUS key personnel reflected this offbeat view.

In addition to Wallace, the council had recently acquired a full-time, unpaid, working vice chairman, just-retired Ambassador Theodore Achilles. He came into the office virtually every day for twenty-five years, until he died in 1987. The Council became his baby. He was the power behind the throne at any given time. Another volunteer was the immensely savvy diplomat Ambassador John (Jack) Hickerson, older and more malleable than Achilles, yet less willing to spend full time at the council. Hickerson and Achilles had been instrumental in the writing and adoption of the North Atlantic Treaty (1949); the Washington newspapers gave their simultaneous retirement from government and their plunge into the ACUS considerable coverage. Both men were admirers of Clarence Streit, as was Will Clayton, a venerable, long-retired cotton merchant from Texas who had served in important subcabinet posts under Presidents Roosevelt and Truman. Clayton has rightly been termed by some historians as the U.S. official most responsible for conceiving and energizing the Marshall Plan in 1947. Clayton, Hickerson, Achilles and I became close friends. Along with Wallace, Achilles was the one who

stuck most stubbornly, and longest, to the Special Intergovernmental Commission gambit.

Former secretary of state Christian Herter, also an admirer (but a practical one) of Streit, was the first chairman of the council. Most unfortunately, he died not long after its inception. Dean Acheson, who was also a founder and remained a board member for years, had nothing but contempt for the federalist schemes of the Streit cabal. He spoke for the pragmatists, and the board members always listened, even if some of them didn't like what he told them. My journal shows Acheson, at an ACUS Board meeting in early January 1964, finally asking the federalists in exasperation if the members wanted to be thought of "as people with poor judgment."

During Acheson's retirement from politics and government, I had gone to see him in 1960 to try to get his support for the Atlantic Institute idea; he rather scoffed at it, saying that "citizens' organizations aren't worth the time and effort. The governments will have to do the necessary things." Four years later, I was to hear him tell the board of the Atlantic Council (referring to a heated discussion of policy choices), "These are the kinds of things we should look into in *our* Institute." He became a staunch supporter of both the Institute and the Council. In retirement he also became convinced that governments could do more. In 1957 while attending a private conference in Brussels, he was reported by the press as urging major strengthening of the transatlantic institutional framework.

Buttressed by some lesser lights on the Atlantic Council staff—paid and unpaid—were several old "federalist warhorses" of the Streit stable. They were ready to fall on their swords to push the ACUS towards an unabashedly Streitian federal union. Wallace, a former Capitol Hill assistant to Senator Estes Kefauver of Tennessee (also a Streit enthusiast), was wily, calculating, and Machiavellian; his real intentions and feelings were almost always shielded by a mask of Southern geniality. He and his colleagues, as I saw it, were more than willing to accomplish their agenda "underground," so to speak, and to use the great names on

the board, if they could, as a screen for advancing just one view—their own “federation now” conception. The Council consequently put few resources into the huge task of public education. Later, it began forming study groups on policy questions. But in 1964, and for some years after, some of its leadership pursued the “Atlantic federal union will o’ the wisp” almost to the exclusion of other more obvious and potentially rewarding tasks.

Some of the voluble Atlantic federalists were either above the fray or outside it, in either case unwilling to engage in political game-playing. One such was Adolph W. Schmidt, head of the A. W. Mellon Charitable Trust in Pittsburgh. An officer in Col. “Wild Bill” Donovan’s OSS during World War II, Schmidt had been a conscientious and principled supporter of Clarence Streit and his ideas since the late 1930s. In his foundation post he was able to put funds at the disposal of such ventures as the Bruges conference on the North Atlantic Community (1957) and the Atlantic Congress (1959). He was one of the first to urge creation of the Atlantic Institute and provide some funds for it. Schmidt often argued forcefully at ACUS board meetings for the adoption of a Streitian vision and program; he spoke logically, with a good knowledge of history; but he could not persuade the Achesons or Norstads of this world (who styled themselves “realists”) and the many other distinguished diplomats, politicians, and military figures on the board that this should be done. Most were content with the prevailing Kennedy administration’s position—that the proper approach to U.S.-European relations emphasized the Europeans’ completing their unification, at which time we would form a strong partnership with them and together settle problems of the world. It took years to define such a partnership; but by then it was almost too late and the public concept tepidly, if at all, received.

Both positions—federation or partnership, as readers will have noted earlier in this work—seemed to me unworkable and unwise. In October 1963 when I arrived in Washington to take up my new duties with the Institute, there was obviously little point in tilting at the entrenched

positions of the Department of State and the White House on the matter. I felt much of the debate within the ACUS, both formal and behind the scenes, was a waste of time. I wanted some long-term educational and institution-building measures, developed soundly on long-term concepts for Atlantic togetherness. I also believed that major institutions could not be made to work well without a great cadre of multinational leadership spreading across the whole Atlantic world—people who could man positions in the existing international institutions and those to come and season relevant domestic institutions generously. In 1966 I wrote an article for the journal *Orbis* in which I tried to lay the theoretical groundwork for building such leadership. This bore heavily on my Harvard work under Crane Brinton, who pointed me towards the importance of a multinational elite such as that which had held together the far-flung Roman Empire. In my view, the Atlantic community lacked the human infrastructure—the social tissue—to insure its long-term cohesion and durability.

All of this would take time: here it is the 21st century and effective transatlantic unity still slips in and out of our grasp. But the state of transatlantic affairs is immeasurably better than it was in 1963. Gradual historic evolution, plus a lot of pointed programs, both governmental and nongovernmental, brought about long-term institutional and educational changes that mattered. Not least of these changes was the tangled and productive web of business, trade, and banking ties, today called globalization.

Some side remarks on General Lauris Norstad that might illumine the lack, in those days, of a cadre of strong Atlanticists (like him) in key U.S. positions: One day in November 1963, I had a long talk with the general, who had retired as SACEUR in 1962 and taken a top position in American business. From my journal:

[Norstad] said that while he found President Kennedy a very reasonable man, he got along poorly with Rusk and McNamara [secretaries of State and Defense], found them “insensitive” to



European problems. He said he argued heatedly with Rusk, asking him why he did not use the advice of the good people who reported to him from Europe. He also deplored the influence of McGeorge Bundy [the President's National Security Adviser] and his crew. Norstad has a sharp mind, and an incisive way about him, a rather poetic way of expressing himself at times, and a great impatience. He expects that the correct facts are always delivered to him and he makes up his mind on those, rather quickly.

A few months later at a lunch Norstad (again, from my journal): "made a number of enlightening statements about the present *and previous* administrations; substantially, his criticism was this: that we are 'insensitive' to our allies, that we do not trouble ourselves by trying to understand how they will react to what we do, that men such as MacNamara are so absorbed with the technical (and 'engineering', as Kissinger says) aspects of decision-making inside the U.S. that they entirely ignore what the Europeans think, or may think. . . . Norstad has really got a hold of something: the U.S. lacks so much in style and sensitivity in its diplomacy. We have not *Fingerspitzengefühl* (literally, feeling with the tips of your fingers). What to do about it? I don't know. We need a new breed of people."

In terms of the Atlantic Council's interminable policy debates, Norstad had little patience for the advocates of the Streit line (federation) but even less for those who pushed the partnership idea, which had been put forth definitively by President Kennedy in a speech in Philadelphia, 4 July 1963. The general's views on the transatlantic future generally coincided with my own, and I relished working with him. He, like most other Allied Supreme Commanders, had had to work in tandem daily with military and political leaders of the Alliance countries and thus had a practical sense of what teamwork could and should be. He had seen NATO in all aspects as a practical working entity, and he felt strongly that in his SACEUR position he had to

represent *all* Alliance countries' interests. In our own day, one of his successors, General Wesley Clark, found himself hung up in 1999 on the horns of the same dilemma: Only he and the NATO Secretary General were in a position to act and speak for *all* members of the Alliance in conducting the operations in Kosovo. Alliance solidarity, in its full form, is evident only at the most critical times, for example on 15 September 2001, when the NATO Council, for the first time in its history, voted to invoke Article 5 of the NATO Treaty, which obliges all members to come to the aid of any member that has been attacked. In the wake of the World Trade Center Towers and Pentagon destruction, all countries expressed their full solidarity with the people of the United States. Quite untypically, the French newspaper *Le Monde* even headlined an article: "We are all Americans now." Sadly, the Bush administration, while thanking its Allies, asked them *as an Alliance*, for nothing. The subsequent operations in Afghanistan were conducted not by NATO, but by the United States, which picked and chose assets from among the various Allied countries on which it might call. NATO and true multilateralism remained in the background; some top members of Bush's government did not seem to understand or appreciate them at all. NATO was eventually to supply a "stabilization force" in Kabul, but almost too late to do much good. The conduct of the 2003 Iraq War was an even more egregious, even flagrant, example of this pattern of U.S. behavior.

I was recovering from a minor operation on the day President Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas in November 1963. The whole country was rendered virtually comatose. I recorded some thoughts: "Probably not since Pearl Harbor, or perhaps since Lincoln's death, have the American people sustained such a shock. Its effects are incalculable, yet the Union is preserved. [At the president's funeral] a prelate read from Kennedy's favorite Bible quotations and from his inaugural address: 'Your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions,' and 'where there is no vision, the people perish.'" Historians often say today that,

had Kennedy lived, he probably would not have been able to enact the domestic agenda that his successor, Lyndon Johnson, did, especially the Civil Rights Act of 1965. We shall never know. But one thing that has never been recaptured by an American president since Kennedy's untimely death is the sense of wonderment—even awe—with which he was so widely regarded around the world. Kennedy put forth a vision the whole world could—and did—embrace.

A few weeks after the assassination, I saw my old friend Professor Arnold Bergstraesser. He told me that he had been eating in a restaurant in Freiburg, Germany, when news of Kennedy's death suddenly burst forth. "People poured out of the doors of all the shops and restaurants in that street, all of them with pain in their faces and tears on their cheeks." It had only been a few months earlier that Kennedy had stood in front of the Rathaus in Berlin and uttered the famous words, "*Ich bin ein Berliner!*" Despite his linguistic faux pas ("*ein Berliner*" is a jelly doughnut), everyone everywhere got the point: we are solidly one with you Germans!

Kennedy had embraced a strongly pro-Atlantic policy (although I did not agree with his preferred partnership concept). Later revelations about aspects of his private life were to tarnish somewhat the nobility and youthful optimism of his image, yet he had truly caught the imagination of the world. After Kennedy came the escalation of the Vietnam War, Watergate, the Iran-Contra scandal, the Monica Lewinsky affair, and other setbacks that have tended to fuel public cynicism. Tell-all history and the journalistic drive for immediate transparency sometimes cheat us of the fruits of American virtues.

A few days after Kennedy's death, I noted in my journal that the Department of State had begun a long-range training-and-assignment scheme for some of its best Foreign Service officers. Conceived by J. Robert Schaetzel (by far the most imaginative and energetic of the Monnet-Ball group who championed close U.S.-European relations via the partnership pattern), this went far beyond the modest efforts I had made in USIA to further the same goal: a group

of topnotch specialists in Atlantic/European affairs who could staff the key positions in and out of Washington that would be one key to keeping the Atlantic community on track, through thick and thin. Some of the best officers were subsequently involved in these two programs and served with distinction over the decade that followed. Unfortunately neither the training nor assignment programs continued when subjected to new vicissitudes that beset transatlantic ties.

Around 1976, I chanced to meet the head of the Foreign Service Institute, the Department of State's training arm. I was told that the Europe-oriented education courses, the traveling seminars focused on Europe, and—most regrettably—the career planning that sent top people to the new diplomatic missions that dealt with NATO, OECD, the European Communities, and the like had dropped away. Part of the reason was the waning interest on the part of FSOs headed for big things. Instead of looking at ambassadorships to the multinational organizations or to assignments with NATO and OECD staffs, for example, as the ultimate goals of their careers, most had fallen back on the traditional: They wanted above all to become ambassadors to the major national capitals—London, Paris, Bonn, Rome, Tokyo, and so on. So much for thickening the “Atlantic multinational elite,” one of the key components of my own long-term plan for gradually putting together a tightly linked group of government officials, military officers, businessmen, labor leaders, and others who would put the common good ahead of even their own national interests. (I was to become extremely wary of the whole concept of national interests, as it would apply to a wholly new set of relationships among mature democracies, and of “like-mindedness” as the indispensable quality of leaders. More on that later.)

The only government-sponsored training institution that tries to instill a multinational perspective in its students is the NATO Defense College, today located in Rome. When Eisenhower was NATO's supreme commander for Europe, he told Air Marshal Sir Lawrence Darvall to begin a

college—like the U.S. War College or the Imperial War College—to train field grade officers from all the Alliance countries, plus a few diplomats, in “multinational thinking.” Often, the majors, colonels, and naval commanders who finish this six-month course are assigned to a NATO command, where their freshly broadened perspectives can be used and further fed.

The way that NATO commands have operated in the past also requires that staff officers think *first* of their *common* interests and objectives. Naturally, they reflect their own national backgrounds, but they are first and foremost—at least while on NATO duty—the servants of the composite of twenty-six nations that today form NATO. The small NATO civilian staff in Brussels is similarly pointed in the direction of the multinational good. These are true multinational teams, but today thin on the ground.

Not long ago, a friend who spent years in the U.S. diplomatic corps remarked that the members of that important body were expected, in all their actions, to put U.S. national interests—as currently defined—first. Jean Monnet once famously put the alternative course thusly: If there is a problem that requires international action, the participants in the discussion should not sit around the green table, representing their various countries. Instead, they should all sit on one side of the table, and face the problem on the other side.

One might remark that that approach is not possible unless all the participants—and their countrymen—are reasonably like-minded. Traditional diplomatic methods are still required when dealing with the Iraqs, Irans, Nigerias, Sudans, North Koreas, and Burmas of this world. But it is different, or should be, when we are dealing with our close allies.

Is it beyond our capacity as thinking Americans to recognize that our country’s policy elite, and its larger pool of concerned citizens, must begin to think *internationally* more than nationally? In other words, should we follow a course (which at the turn of the century the Bush administration seemed inclined to take) of a *Pax Americana*,

or instead a *Pax Democratica*—in which our democratic partners would share with us major decisions about reordering the world? In the 21st century so far, the trend that has prevailed and unfortunately strengthened is to say, even to our closest allies: “Here’s the problem. Here’s how we see it. Here’s what needs to be done. Will you please come along?” And often, there is no “please.” For allies in this position, the question would then be, “Why should we be asked to share burdens unless we have a share in determining what those burdens are?”